



# MASARYK UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND ADMINISTRATION

## MPV\_COMA Communication and Managerial Skills Training Lecture 1: Basic Communication Skills

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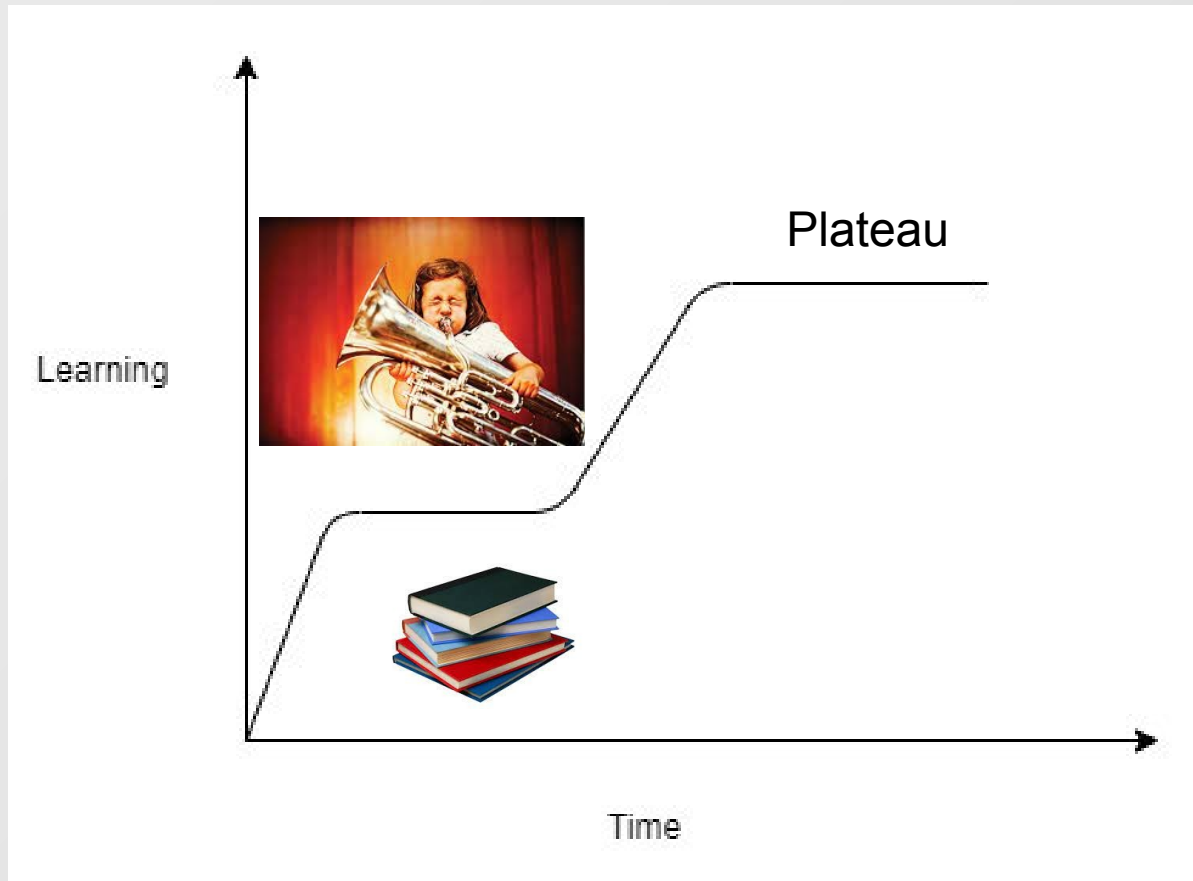
## How do you improve your communication skills?

- Learning is hard. Learning soft skills (like presentation skills and negotiation) is even more hard.
- *What are some common good ways to learn new skills? Music, math, language?*
- *How is it different when learning soft skills and difficult conversations? Salary negotiation, handling of criticism, asking for a promotion?*





## How do you improve your communication skills?



Practice is hard to get by for soft skills.

Passive reading of materials does not provide many benefits.



## How do you improve your communication skills?

■ Extremely important part of learning is having somebody teaching you, who gives good feedback, meaning:

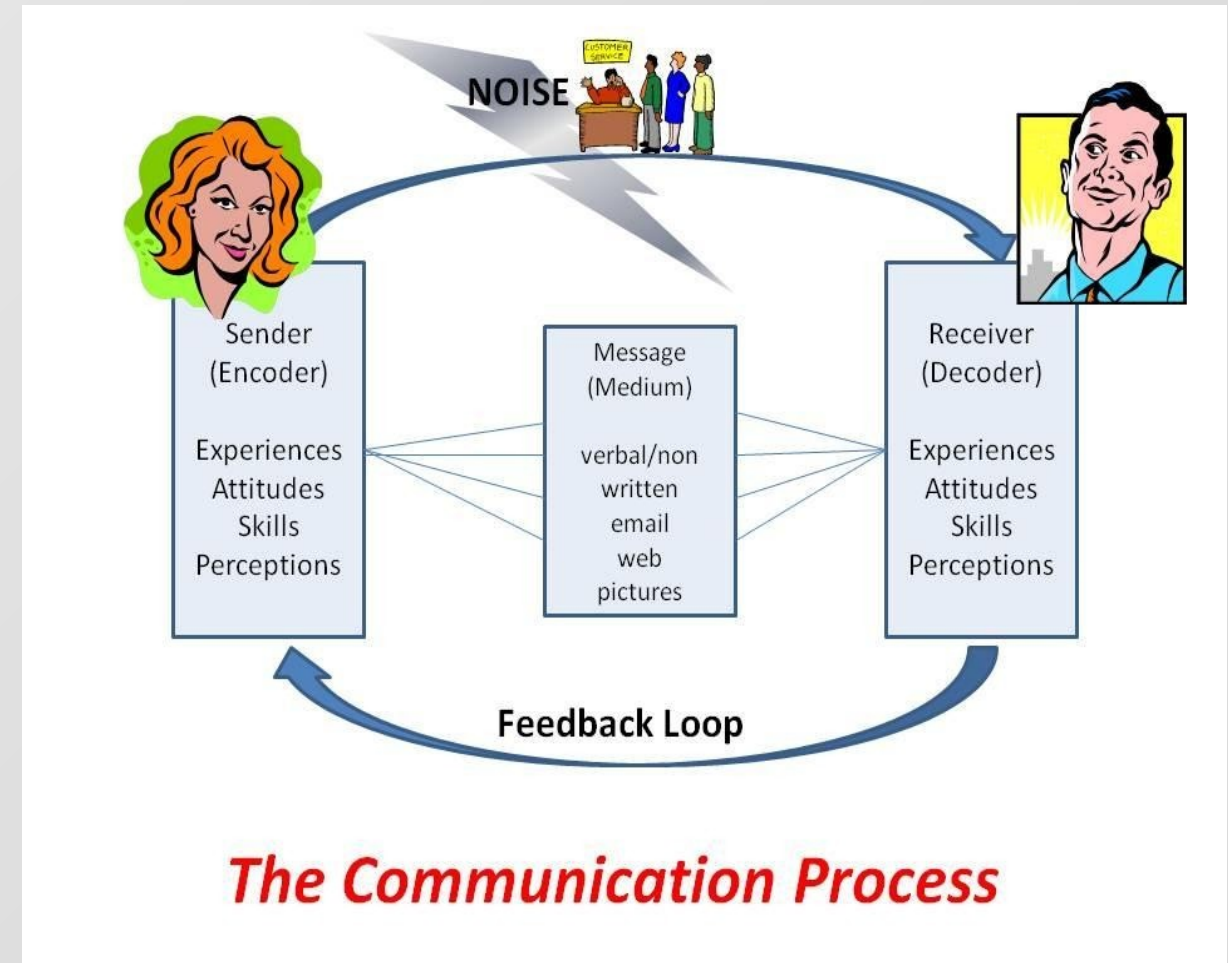
- Closely observes you;
- Identifies areas of improvement;
- **Breaks big tasks into smaller pieces;**
- Suggests changes;
- Monitors progress.

All this is for soft skills extremely rare in the world outside of seminars.



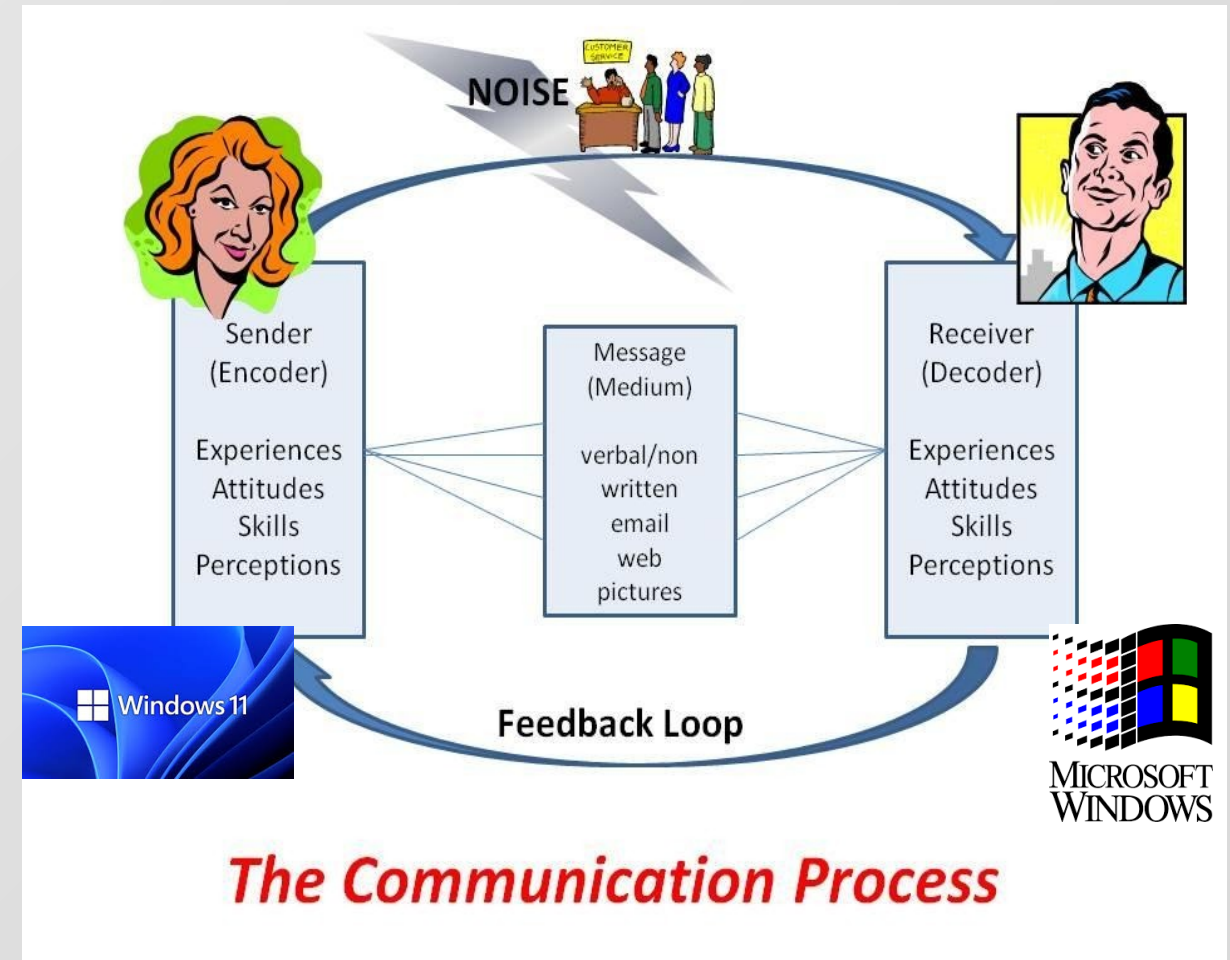
## Communication process

- To understand something, you have to go into bigger detail (granularity).
- To improve your ideas with others, you need to share the same vocabulary.
- By seeing communication as steps, it is easier to spot errors.



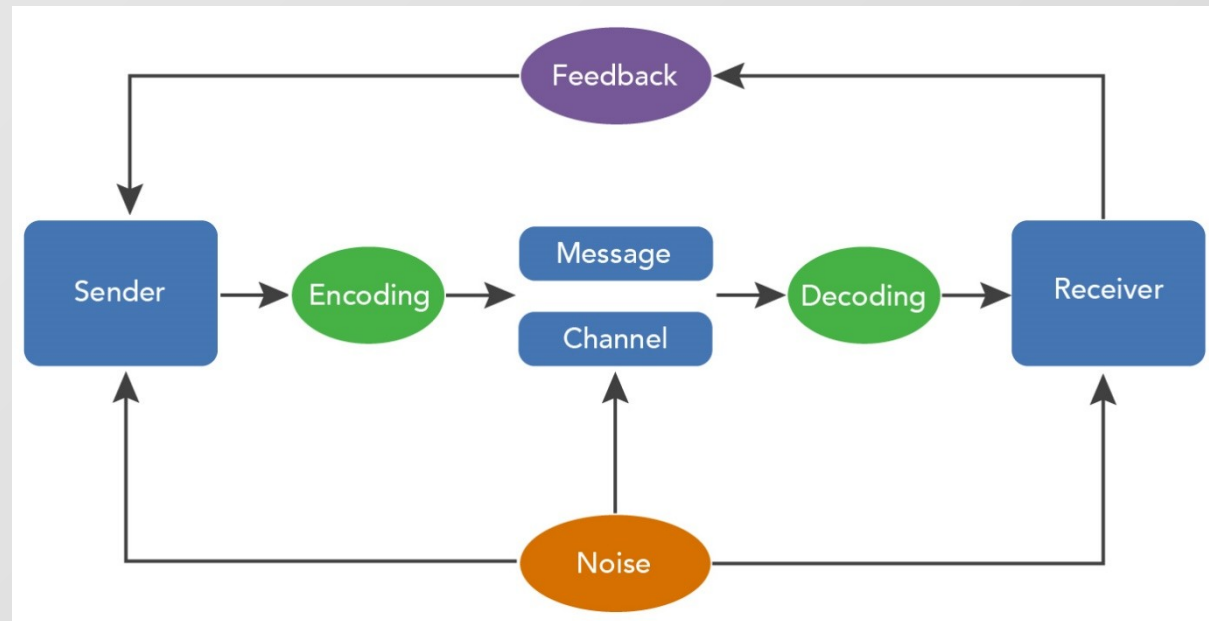
## Communication process – encoding and decoding

- There are multiple names about the actual actions behind encoding and decoding
- Mental models, belief system, framework of your mind, set of experiences...
- My favourite is the operating system of your mind – balanced importance, variation and changeability



## Communication process – example. Cultural differences?

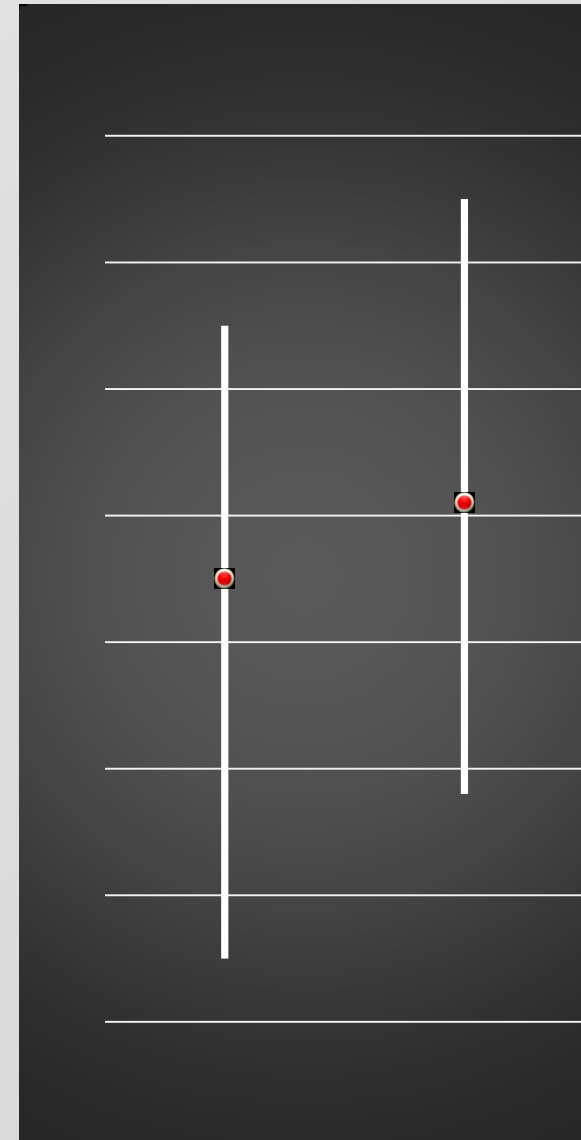
- Sender wants to apologize, and believes that words are important (saying “Sorry”). Receiver wants to accept an apology, and believes gestures and tone of voice are important.
- Sender encodes the apology as “Sorry”, in a flat tone of voice. This “Sorry” is decoded as insincere by Receiver, because it lacks emotion.





## Communication process – cultural differences?

- Culture (just like gender, age or wealth) differences exist, but they are much less significant than people expect.
- We have a tendency to see gaps and split our world into two separate groups. But **differences of people within the groups are bigger than differences between the group averages**, proven by both observations, surveys and brain scans.
- Donot treat people differently because you think they belong in a certain group. Rather be explicit (use clear words) in the way you communicate.



## Communication process – how to solve differences

- As a manager, you have to be able to listen before making judgements
- You will meet people from very diverse background.
- Being persistent in questions and getting a full picture are valuable skills.





## What is involved in verbal communication?

- Only words?





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- Only words?
  - Intonation
  - Dialect/jargon
  - Mistakes
  - Pauses
  - Quality of speech
  - Accent
- 
- What other forms of communication do you know?



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- Only words?
  - Intonation
  - Dialect/jargon
  - Mistakes
  - Pauses
  - Quality of speech
  - Accent
- 
- What other forms of communication do you know? Non verbal, signals (morse code), traffic sign, mafia symbols





## Pillars of effective communication - context

Communication is influenced by:

- Time
- Space
- The importance of the topic for both communicators
- Presence of emotions
- Relationship between communicators
- Situational frame
- Continuity





## Outcome of communication

- Level: pure exchange of information, matter of fact.
- Level: relationship status
  - their attitude to the agenda they are talking about;
  - attitude towards the person they are talking to;
  - attitude towards themselves;
  - current feelings.





## Pillars of effective communication - Listening

- To be heard, you need to hear others.
- Good listening skills are invaluable for many leadership positions.
- Listening can be considered a skill to be mastered.



## The art of listening

- **Listening** means **effort towards understanding**, not only hearing



- **Passive listening** – just accepting the voice signals without any effort to understand them and decode them, does not involve the context and situation
- **Active listening** - sensitive perception of the partner, connected with empathy, sympathy, the context and nonverbal behaviour is taken into account

## The art of listening

Goal . . .	Through . . .	By asking or saying . . .
<b>To encourage</b>	Choosing neutral words, varying intonation, encouraging the other person to keep talking	Can you tell me more? What else can you remember? What a good idea! You thought of a different way to...
<b>To clarify</b>	Asking for clarification, more or different information	Are you saying that...? What else can you tell me about...?

<b>To restate</b>	<b>Showing that you are listening and understand what is being said</b>	<b>I thought I heard you say... So, you need to know why I am asking you to share? This is a tough one. We may need to think about it.</b>
<b>To reflect</b>	<b>Showing understanding of the other's feelings and body language</b>	<b>This is really important to you. You seem worried about this. How proud you must feel!</b>



**To summarize**

**Reviewing the  
conversation,  
deciding what to  
do next**

**So it is about...  
Let me make sure  
that I understand  
what you mean...**

**To validate**

Acknowledging and  
appreciating the  
issues, effort and  
feelings discussed

I know how hard  
you have worked to  
help me to  
understand.  
Thank you for  
staying calm while  
you helped me  
learn why you were  
so confused.

## Open-ended and close-ended questions

- Closed-ended questions can be answered with “Yes” or “No,” or they have a limited set of possible answers
- Open-ended questions are questions that allow someone to give a free-form answer.



## Discussion

- Which are easier?
- Which are more effective to gain information?





## Open ended and close-ended questions

- Open-ended questions: "what", "how", "why".
- Open-ended questions are very useful when:
  - you need to gain maximum information, especially about a conversation subject you are not much familiar with;
  - you need to create a good atmosphere and build rapport;
  - you do not know your communication partner and for a successful negotiation you need to learn about their character as much as possible.
- Generally, open-ended questions are mainly suitable at the beginning of a meeting.





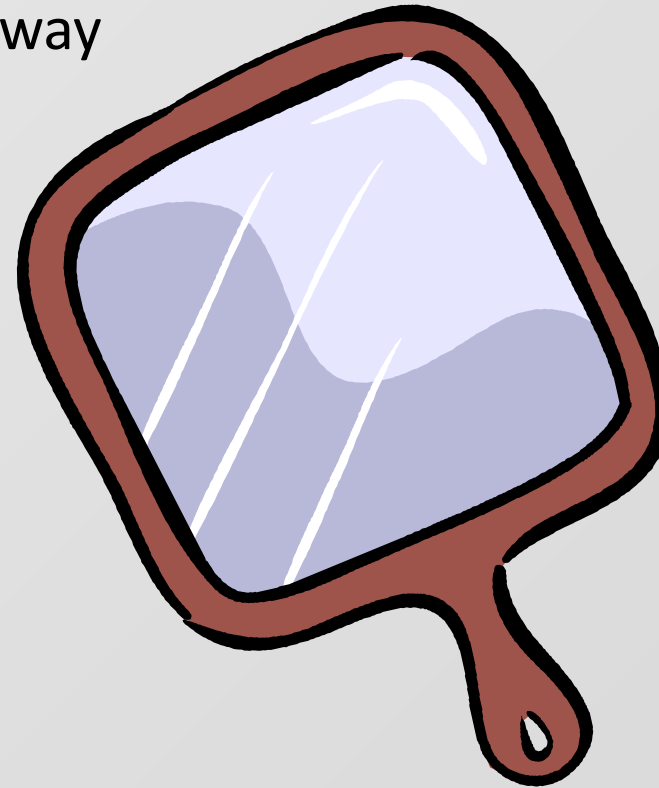
## Pillars of effective communication - feedback

- Observe the reaction of the listener
- Pay attention to the level of interest/no interest of the audience
- Request specific feedback from people with insight
- Adjust the content and form to your audience

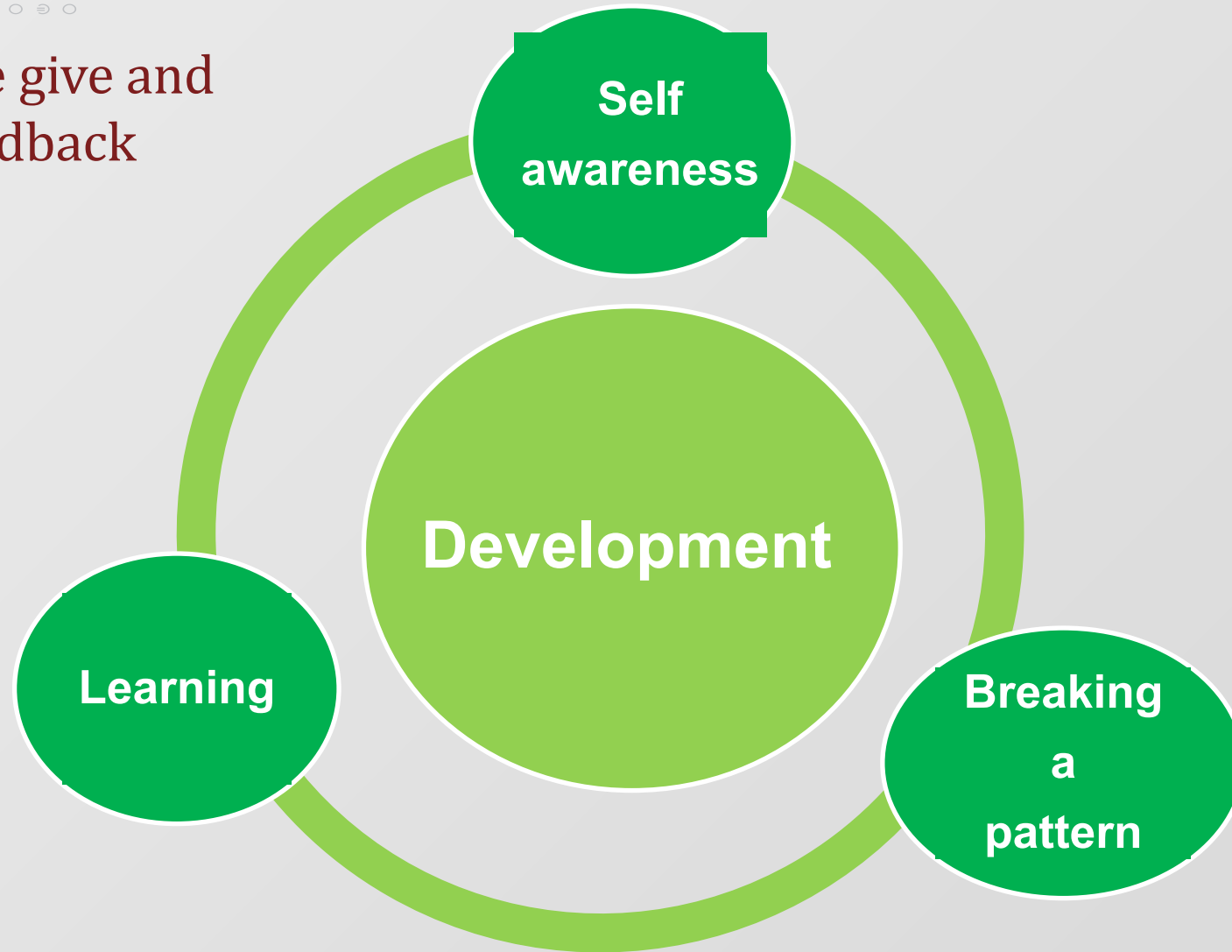


## Ideal feedback

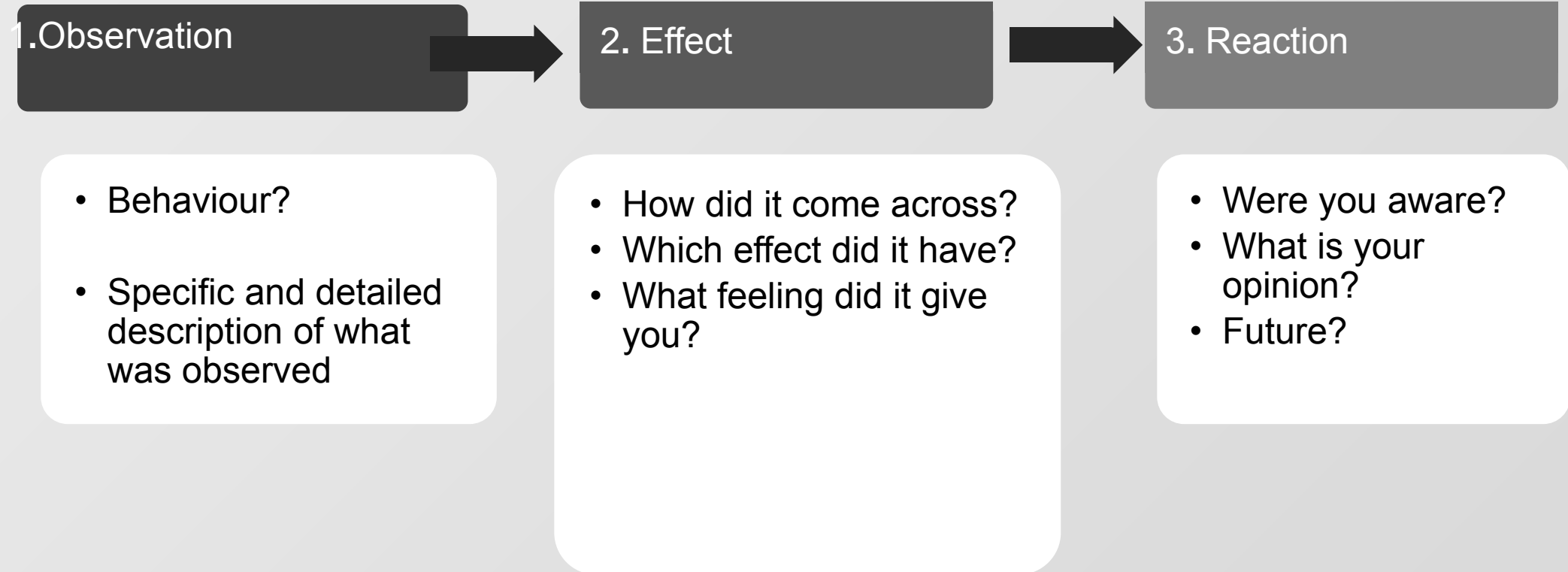
Looking in the mirror in an unbiased way



Why do we give and  
receive feedback



## Feedback structure





## Feedback rules

### Giving feedback:

- **Stay subjective!** What you think is an opinion, not a fact. „I think that...”
- **Stay specific!** Say what happened and when, so the person can learn.
- **Stay positive!** Helps best to say, what can be improved instead of what went wrong.
- Show respect. Like a mirror, more than an advisor

### Getting feedback:

- Let people finish talking
- Try to understand
- There is no need to defend yourself

Thank you for your attention

