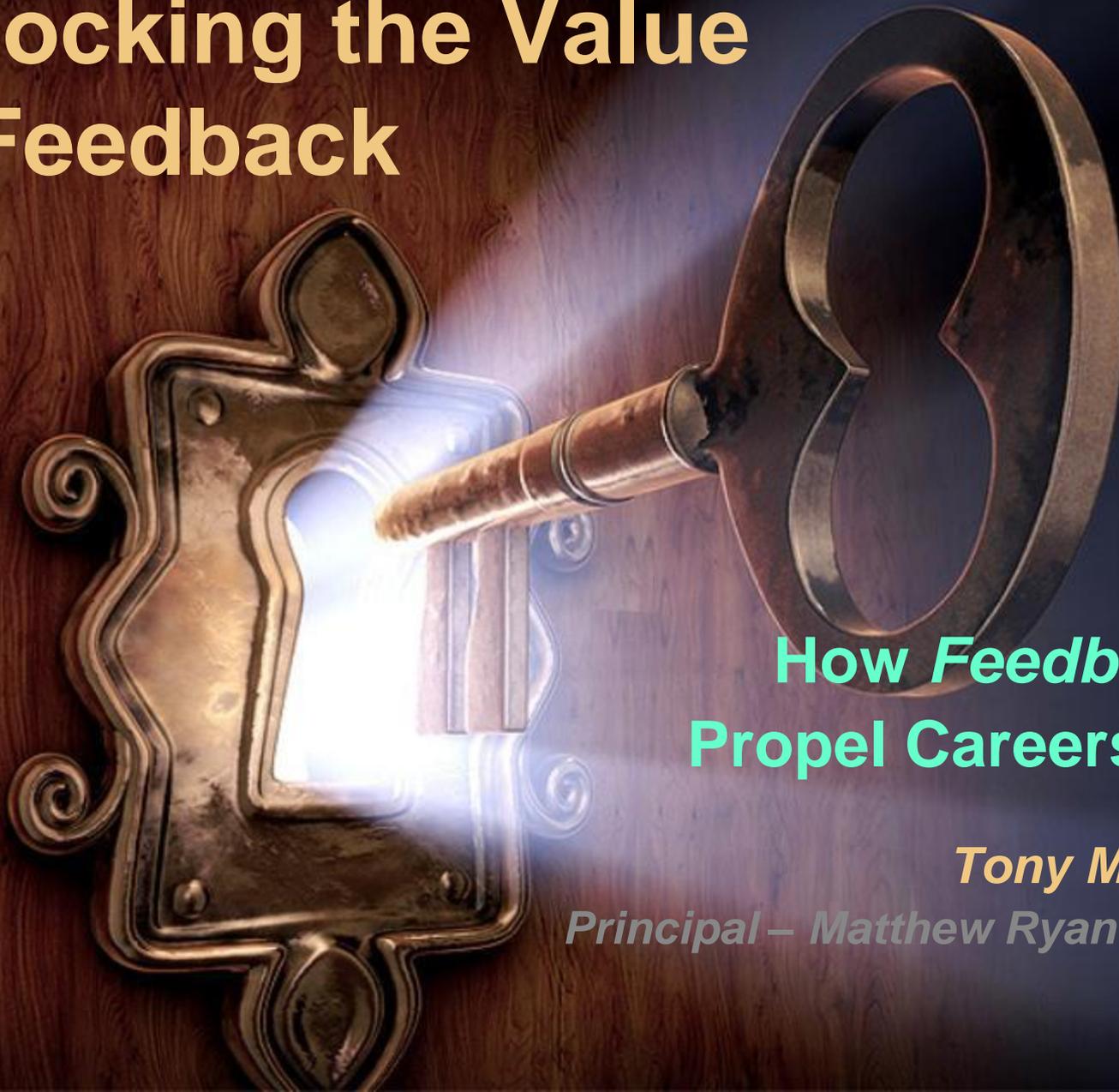


# Unlocking the Value of Feedback



**How *Feedback* Helps  
Propel Careers Forward**

***Tony McKeon, BCC***  
***Principal – Matthew Ryan & Associates***



# Feedback Is Always Valuable

***Without feedback, we really don't know how we are doing***

## **KEY QUESTIONS**

Do we limit or interfere with our own career progress by bypassing feedback?

It's easy to accept feedback from friends, but how do we get feedback from those who can influence our careers most?

Why do those leveraging feedback tend to outperform those who ignore it?

So what is feedback anyway?

***“People say I don't take criticism well, but I say, “What the hell do they know?”***



# Feedback Defined

**Definition:** Feedback (*in a professional context*) is information one person shares with another to influence and/or help improve an understanding or the way something is handled.

- ✓ *Feedback is easily and quite often mishandled*
- ✓ *Feedback often explains how someone is doing or how they are presenting something – which could be verbally or in writing*
- ✓ *Feedback is about actual recent personal observations*
- ✓ *Good feedback is shared in simple terms and in a timely manner*
- ✓ *The Center for Creative Leadership advocates use of the SBI Technique*

*SBI Technique: Situation – Behavior - Impact*

Feedback is a **positive** form of communication – even when it involves a **negative**



# Feedback Requires Courage

## Relationship between *Striving* and *Valuing Feedback*

Ever noticed how those who are unsure of themselves rarely ask questions?

There is a direct correlation between those who are observed *striving* – and those who ask questions and are *open-minded about feedback*

In other words, there is a direct correlation between those who are *not observed striving* – and those who are *closed-minded about feedback*

Therefore, the common sense rule is:

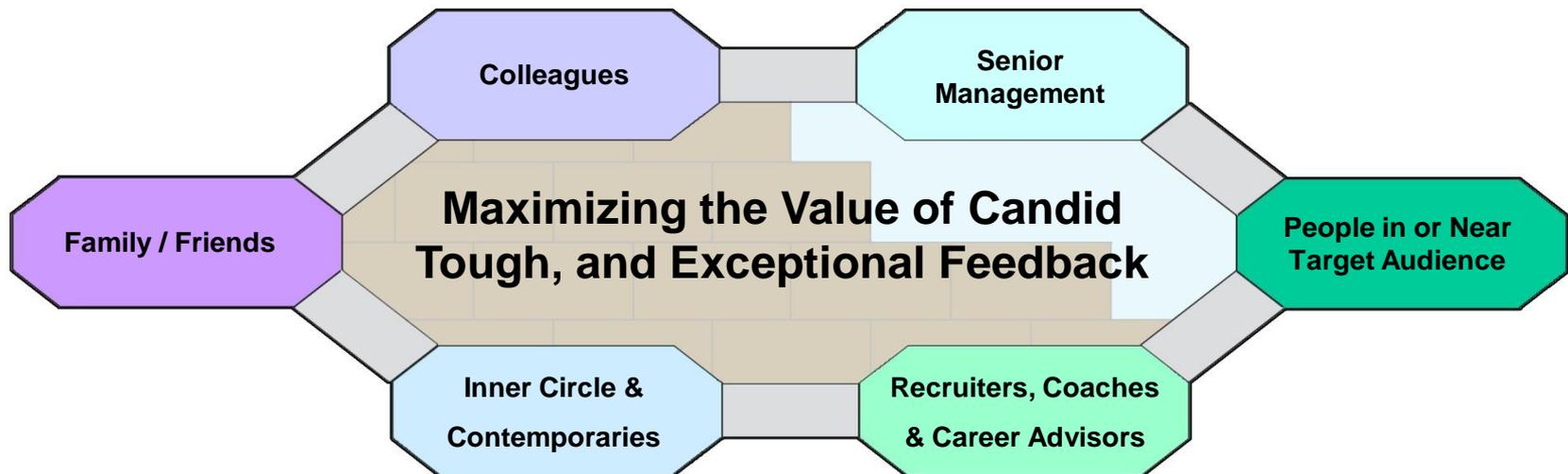
***Have courage when striving – seek feedback!***

***“You can’t solve a problem with the same consciousness that caused it.”***



# Seeking Out Feedback

While there is always value in feedback, many who need it lack either the gumption, courage and/or know how to seek it out. Research shows that after some providers of feedback help someone – they can often also refer the feedback seeker to someone else who could provide feedback from yet another perspective.



Feedback is great not just for what it is, but for what comes from it.  
*Some of the best feedback one can get, they have to go get on their own.*



# Easy & Candid Feedback

It is worthwhile to improvise with four *loosely defined* types of feedback:

**Easy Feedback – Candid Feedback – Tough Feedback – Exceptional Feedback**

**EASY FEEDBACK** (*Friends, family and casual acquaintances*)

- ✓ *Easy to get and even easier to accept ... and do little with*
- ✓ *Not likely to have much affect on career or change of behavior*

**CANDID FEEDBACK** (*Colleagues and coworkers - natural advocates*)

- ✓ *From people who may expect to see utilization of their feedback*
- ✓ *May require some hard work striving to act on the feedback*
- ✓ *Should cause you to re-think matters and make adjustments*

**To differentiate oneself from others, one needs to ask more questions – *and listen***



# Tough & Exceptional Feedback

It takes a working knowledge of feedback to deal purposefully with accepting and acting on tough and exceptional feedback.

## **TOUGH FEEDBACK** (*Superiors, recruiters, consultants - not natural advocates*)

- ✓ *Usually ambitious no-holds barred comments meant to make a difference*
- ✓ *Usually necessitates acknowledgement is action not just words*
- ✓ *Performance appraisals and more – meant to influence serious change*

## **EXCEPTIONAL FEEDBACK** (*Professionals in or near a hard to reach audience*)

- ✓ *Example: CFO candidate seeks input (feedback) from other CFOs*
- ✓ *Example: Input from a member of an executive team (to be approached)*
- ✓ *Example: Feedback from an HR executive who knows a business setting*

**When executives need their resumes to impress top level decision makers, there is immense value to them *seeking feedback* well before they seek approval**



# Asking for Feedback

***When asking for feedback, we can influence how it is delivered.***

## **CLASSIC SOUNDBITES ASKING FOR FEEDBACK**

*“I am committed to doing this well. May I get your feedback on my work thus far – anything specific would be helpful?”*

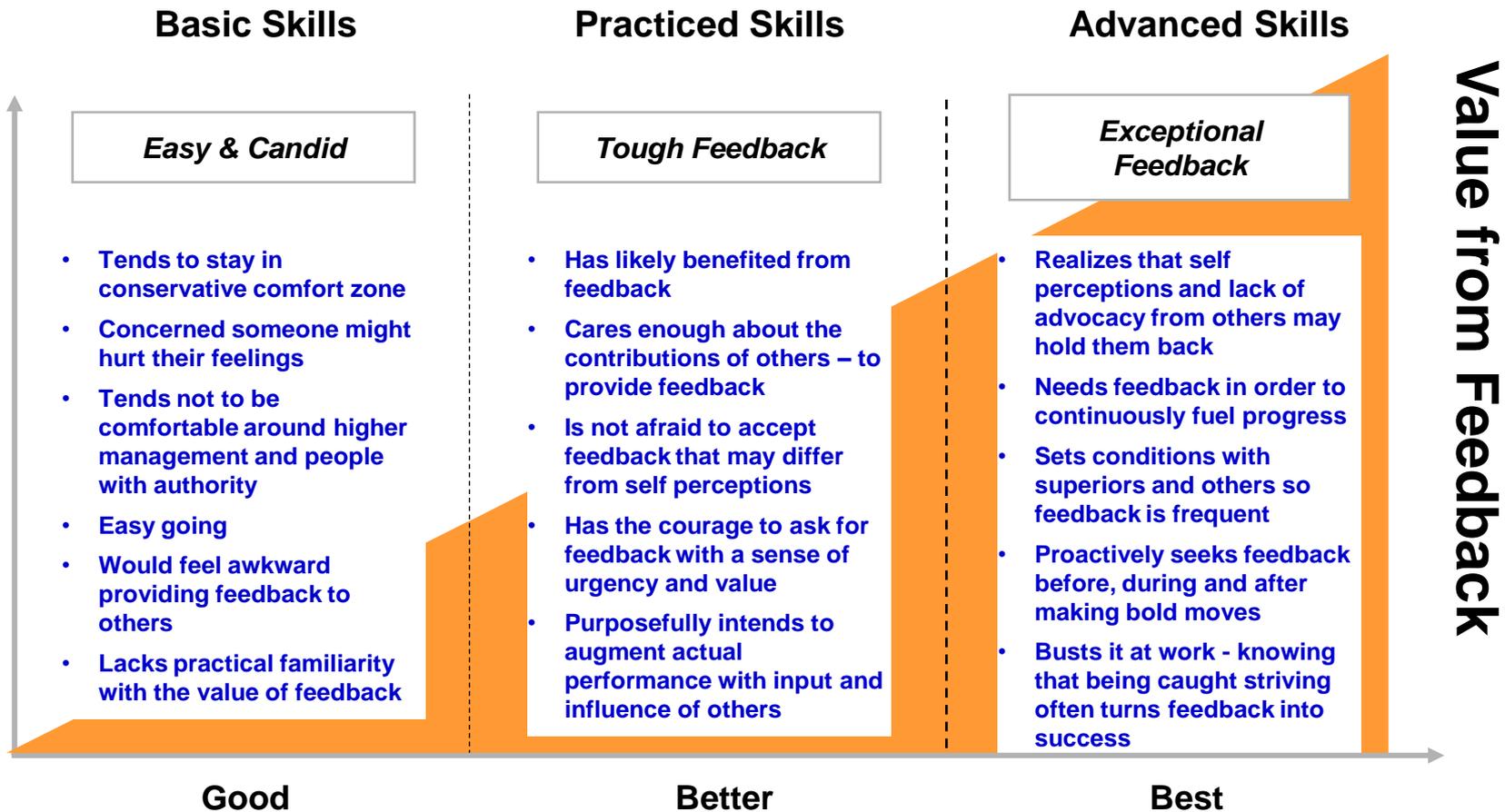
*“I would value your feedback on this matter – and it would be helpful if you could identify some specific matters that may warrant attention.”*

*“I associate a great deal of value with candid feedback – it often helps me focus attention on specifics I can improve. May I get your feedback?”*

**One may want to ask a potential feedback giver about the value *they* place on feedback**



# Developing Feedback Skills





# Get the Character Out

**Regarding ones own persona: One need not get out of character.  
Instead – *get the character out.* Ask for feedback!**

Passivity has taken its toll on millions of careers.

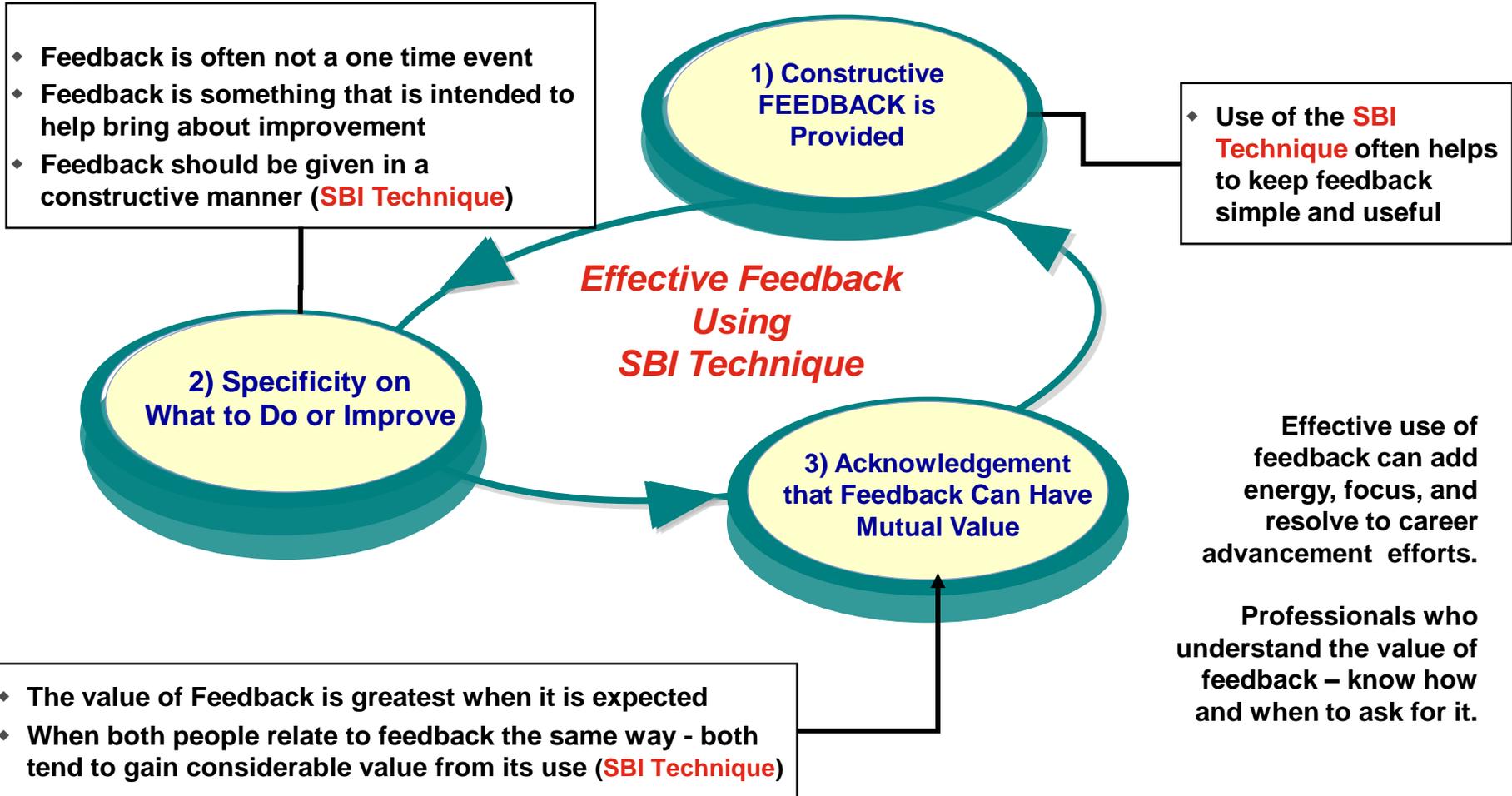
By the time someone waits to be noticed and promoted, their window of time for advancing their career may be closing or already closed.

As a natural born introvert, I know how hard it is to ASK someone for something. However, as a 25-year career advisor who has positively influenced several hundred career transitions, I can say with certainty:

***“You don’t get it if you don’t ask for it!”***

**There are three aspects to feedback – *giving, receiving, and processing***

# Giving & Accepting Feedback





# Take Advantage of Feedback & Wrap-Up

The times when feedback is being discussed are often times when career advancement can be part of the same conversation. Largely, it's up to you to drive the conversation.

**TAKEAWAYS ~ COMMENTS ~ QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

*Your feedback is welcome!*

My thanks to all of you and ASIS for allowing us this opportunity to discuss what I trust is relevant and important to each of you

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During or after the conference, I will be happy to make time for everyone here to talk one-on-one about how they can draw more benefit from proactively using feedback

***THANK YOU!***