

Feedback without theatre

A practical guide to giving and receiving useful responses.

The central idea

Feedback is not a verdict on a person. It is information about a specific encounter between a person and a piece of work.

What makes it useful?

Specific

Name the page, claim, interaction, or design decision you mean.

Observable

Describe what you saw or experienced before interpreting intent.

Actionable, when possible

Offer a correction, counterexample, source, or concrete question.

Respectful without flattery

You can disagree clearly without guessing at someone's character.

A simple message

On [page], I noticed [specific detail]. I read it as [interpretation]. My concern or suggestion is [one thing]. You may want to look at [source or example].

Choose the kind of signal

Different messages help in different ways.

Correction

Quote the claim or link. Explain the error. Provide an authoritative source where possible.

Disagreement

State the strongest version of the position you reject, then explain where your reasoning departs.

Usability report

Include device/browser, the step attempted, expected behavior, and actual behavior. Avoid sending passwords or personal account details.

Unexpected connection

Describe the work and the bridge to another field, book, observation, or question.

Appreciation

Mention what specifically mattered. You do not have to exaggerate the impact.

Before you send: three questions

- ☐ Could the recipient identify the exact subject?
- ☐ Have I distinguished observation from assumption?
- ☐ Am I sharing only information I am comfortable sending?

Receiving feedback well

A response can be valuable without being wholly correct.

Listen for evidence

Ask: What exactly did this person observe? What can be checked independently?

Do not confuse tone with truth

A beautifully written critique can be wrong. An awkwardly written one can reveal a real issue.

Triangulate when needed

One comment is one observation, not a representative survey. Compare it with the page, the evidence, and other independent experiences.

Credit corrections openly

When updating a factual claim, distinguish what changed and why. Public notes can increase trust.

Keep boundaries

Invitation is not an obligation to respond to everyone, justify every choice, or disclose private life.

A useful response template

Thank you for taking time to explain this. I understand the point as [summary]. I will check [specific issue]. If I update the work, I will distinguish what changed from what remains uncertain.

A small feedback worksheet

Use this on paper or as an outline for your email.

Page / project / precise URL:

What I observed (without interpretation):

How I interpreted it:

Evidence or counterexample (optional):

One suggestion or question:

Something worth preserving (optional):

Send to sahil@sahiltayal.com. No special format is required. Your email application handles delivery, and the website does not collect submissions.

Further exploration & sharing

A field guide, not a feedback scorecard.

Explore the wider work

Main home: <https://sahiltayal.com/>

About: <https://about.sahiltayal.com/>

Offline: <https://offline.sahiltayal.com/>

Feedback room: <https://feedback.sahilwho.online/>

Invitation

A reader is allowed to remain a reader. A visitor can write only one sentence. A critic can disagree. A generous idea can grow into a new direction. There is no prize for the perfect note.

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A final thought

Public work invites conversation, but no one owes agreement, approval, attention, or a reply. The work can be ambitious. The conversation can remain ordinary.