



**Do we want to overcome the failure  
of feedback?  
New analyses for new times**

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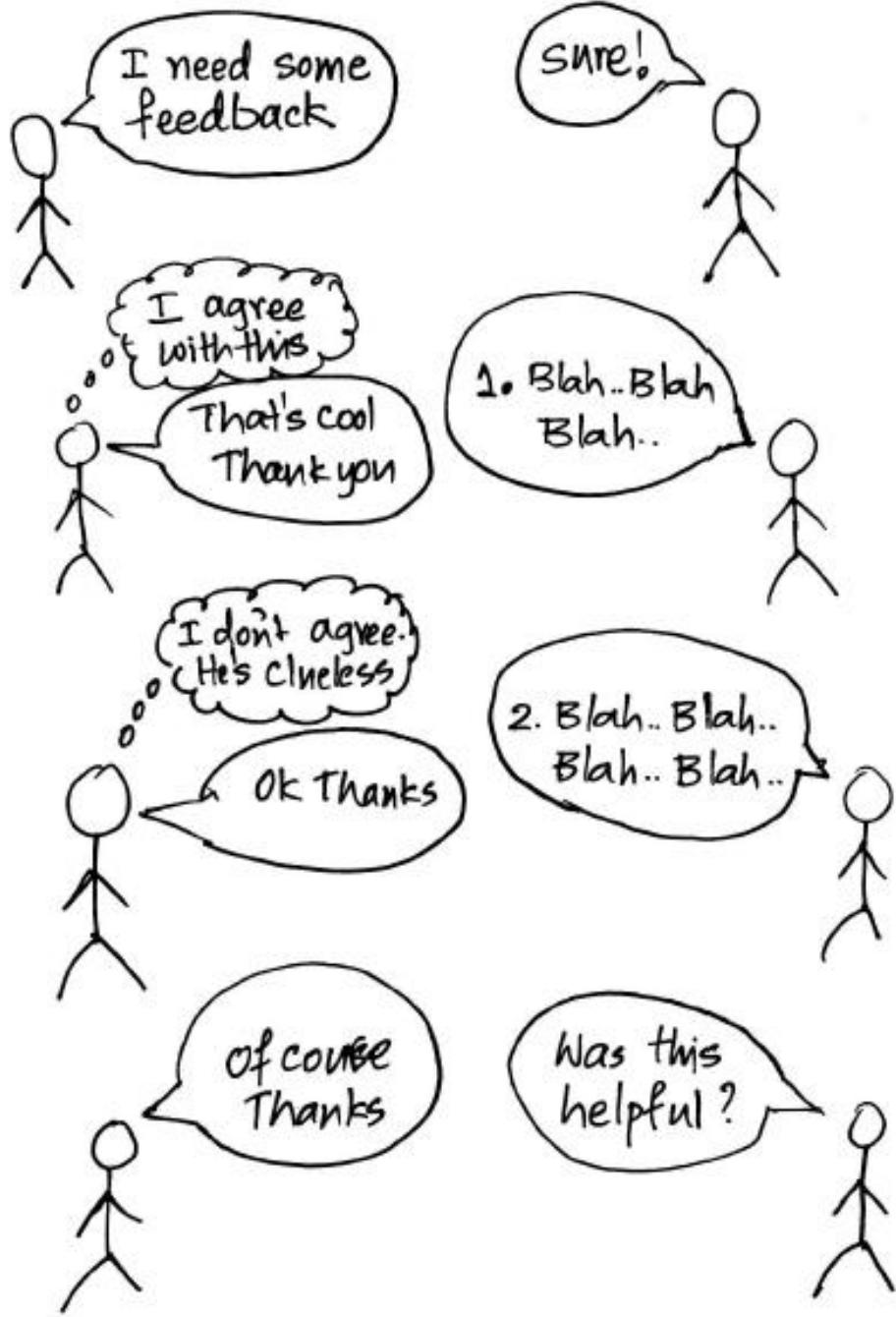
YOU'RE DOING GREAT!





# Feedback







# What is the problem?

- No matter what we do in the area of feedback, it is always found wanting and students criticise us (NSS, CEQ)
- Is it just a matter of taking the problem more seriously and doing what we currently do more vigorously and comprehensively? Or, ...?



# Some typical solutions

- More feedback means better feedback
- Quicker turnaround time means better feedback
- Automated feedback means better feedback

# Conventional 'feedback'

- Adjunct to 'marking'
- Undertaken by teachers on students
- Focuses on what teachers do
- A vague hope that it might be taken into account
- But, no direct response is required or expected



Without the conventional approach,  
how might good feedback be created?

- Judge it in terms of effects
- Focus on what learners do, not what teachers do
- Examine key ideas from feedback in other disciplines
- Ensure that feedback is self-improving

# Generations of feedback

***Feedback Mark 0*** Conventional. Pre-feedback

***Feedback Mark 1*** Behavioural. Closed

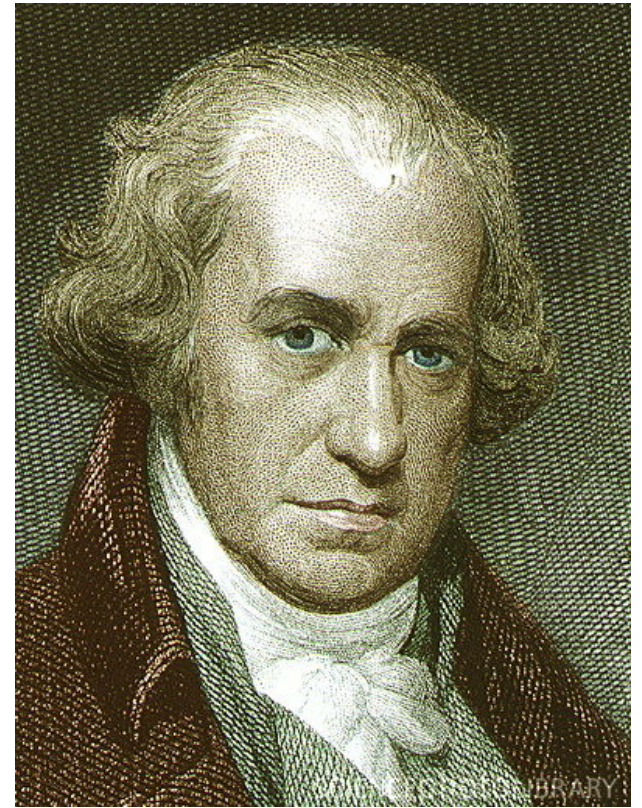
***Feedback Mark 2*** Agentic. Open



# The role of feedback

- It bridges the gap between teaching and learning, to ensure that the curriculum adjusts to the needs and learning of students
- It cannot be enacted without the engagement of actual participants—students and teachers.
- It is not meaningful as an independent act; it is necessarily stimulated by what students do.

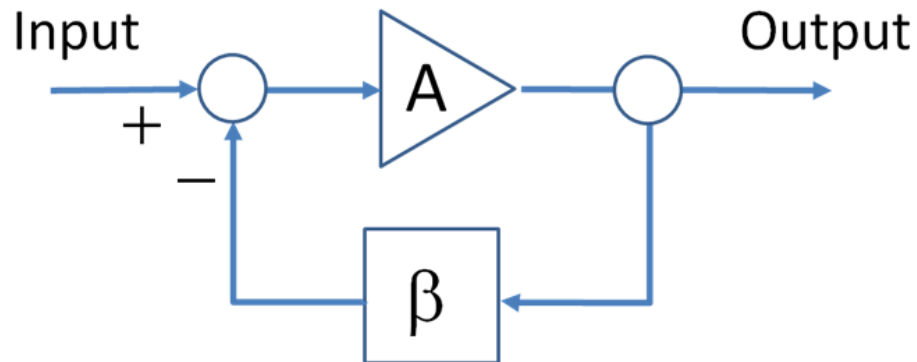
	<b>Feedback Mark 0</b>
<i>Approach</i>	Conventional
<i>Locus</i>	Teacher initiated
<i>Features</i>	Taken-for-granted act of teacher/assessor
<i>Location</i>	At end of teaching sequence
<i>Effects</i>	Effects not detected directly
<i>Learner involvement</i>	No student involvement needed
<i>Information provided</i>	Information provided not influenced by effects
<i>Goal</i>	Study improvement
<i>Feedback loop</i>	None explicitly



# Feedback Mark 1

- Idea of 'feedback' taken from control systems
- Information from the student is used to influence their subsequent work
- This work is monitored to determine if the desired effects have been achieved
- Knowledge of effects is subsequently used to provide further information to the same students and for later cohorts

What is *essential* in feedback Mark 1?



	<b>Feedback Mark 0</b>	<b>Feedback Mark 1</b>
<i><b>Approach</b></i>	Conventional	Behavioural/cognitive
<i><b>Locus</b></i>	Teacher initiated	Teacher-driven
<i><b>Features</b></i>	Taken-for-granted act of teacher/assessor	Closed system Classic feedback Tight loop
<i><b>Location</b></i>	At end of teaching sequence	During learning
<i><b>Effects</b></i>	Effects not detected directly	Effects closely monitored by teachers
<i><b>Learner involvement</b></i>	No student involvement needed	Student involvement in response to specific stimulus
<i><b>Information provided</b></i>	Information provided not influenced by effects	Information provided changes in response to immediate effects
<i><b>Goal</b></i>	Study improvement	Task performance improvement
<i><b>Feedback loop</b></i>	None explicitly	Single loop



# Problems with Feedback Mark 1

- The teacher (or teaching system) is the driver and needs to continually provide comments and monitor the situation
- The learner is dependent on the teacher (or teaching system) to generate what they need to learn
- It is not *sustainable* assessment. It doesn't equip the student beyond the immediate task or course

# What is sustainable feedback?

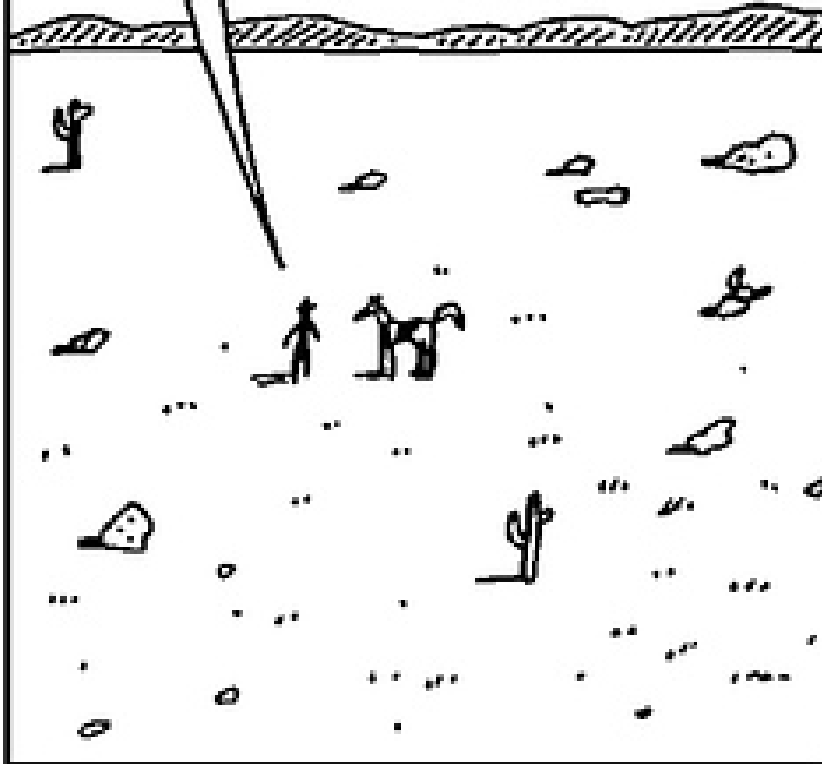
- That which doesn't continually need a teacher (or teaching system) to generate
- Helps develop a student's judgement of their work
- Develops learner's capacity to identify appropriate standards and criteria
- Develops learner's ability to locate and access useful sources of feedback
- Involves learners working with multiple others in giving and receiving feedback



# Feedback Mark 2

- Taken from open adaptive systems
- Central role for learners as active
  - two-way interactions/dialogue between giver and receiver
  - use of peers, non-human sources and practitioners as well as teachers
  - other parties used to enable learners to calibrate own judgements

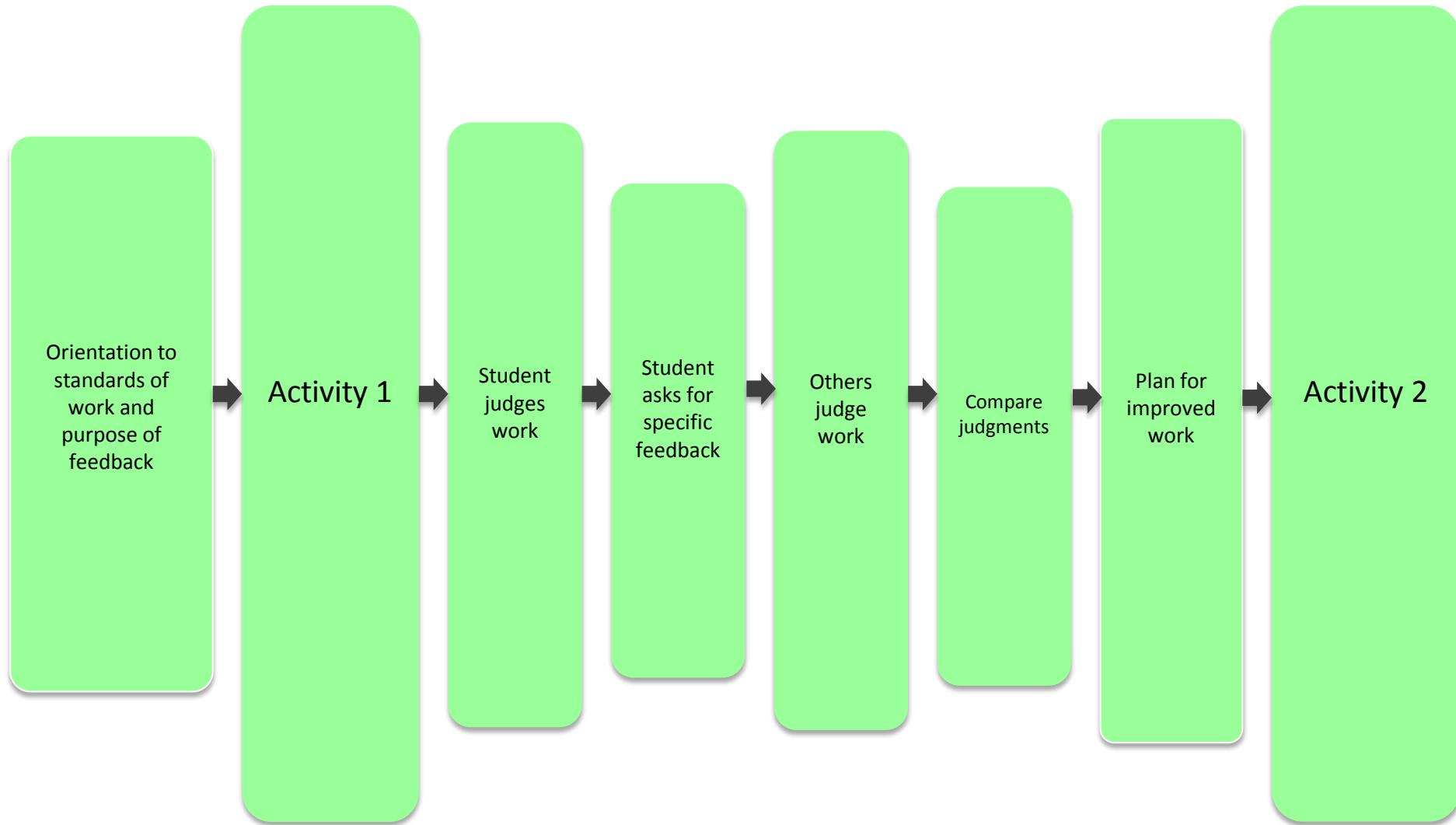
WELL, YOU'VE BEEN A  
PRETTY GOOD HOSS, I GUESS.  
HARDWORKIN'. NOT THE  
FASTEST CRITTER I EVER  
COME ACROST, BUT...



NO, STUPID, NOT  
FEEDBACK. I  
SAID I WANTED  
A FEED BAG.



# Active role of students in eliciting, processing and using feedback



# Feedback Mark 2

- Feedback is a curriculum element responding to and driving learning
  - a pedagogical practice integral to all learning processes
  - deployed by learners as needed for their own learning paths
  - feedback becomes a design feature of courses, located to enable:
    - sufficient practice to be had
    - feedback loops to be completed
    - effectiveness in self-judgement developed as a learning outcome

	Feedback Mark 0	Feedback Mark 1	Feedback Mark 2
<i>Approach</i>	Conventional	Behavioural/cognitive	Agentic
<i>Locus</i>	Teacher initiated	Teacher-driven	Learner-driven
<i>Features</i>	Taken-for-granted act of teacher/assessor	Closed system Classic feedback Tight loop	Open system Adaptive/responsive
<i>Location</i>	At end of teaching sequence	During learning	During learning and beyond
<i>Effects</i>	Effects not detected directly	Effects closely monitored by teachers	Effects monitored by teachers and learners
<i>Learner involvement</i>	No student involvement needed	Student involvement in response to specific stimulus	Student engagement intrinsic to process—dialogic
<i>Information provided</i>	Information provided not influenced by effects	Information provided changes in response to immediate effects	Information provided changes in response to effects
<i>Goal</i>	Study improvement	Task performance improvement	Judgement performance improvement
<i>Feedback loop</i>	None explicitly	Single loop	Double loop



# Feedback-enabled curriculum

- Early strategies to shift learner identity to becoming self-regulated
- Position feedback as part of learning, not as an adjunct of assessment
- Students skilled and comfortable with negotiating learning outcomes, feedback processes and information needs
- ‘Dialogue’ between students and teachers about curriculum priorities, feedback processes, the nature of standards and opportunities for the practicing of judgement.
- Activities to enable students to calibrate their judgement (of their own work and that of others)



# What is the role of the digital environment?

- It offers some affordances, but without thinking differently about what feedback does, it just means doing bad feedback more efficiently.



# Examples of the role of the digital environment for Mark 2 feedback

- *For students, it can offer:*
  - More practice
  - More/different occasions for practice
  - Quick knowledge of results/ calibration of judgements
  - Remedial sequences instantly at hand
- *For teachers, it can offer:*
  - Instant records of prior feedback data and student responses to it
- *For both, it can offer:*
  - More opportunities for dialogue on standards and judgements
  - Management of self and peer feedback

# In conclusion

- New conceptions of feedback are needed, not just new practices
- They must position students differently, and in an active role
- Feedback must shift from being an adjunct of marking to a key strategy of curriculum and pedagogy

I just  
love feedback,  
don't you?



# Some useful websites on feedback in higher education

University of Edinburgh:

<http://www.tla.ed.ac.uk/feedback/index.html>

University of Strathclyde: Feedback is a dialogue

<http://www.strath.ac.uk/learnteach/feedback/>

Re-Engineering Assessment Practices in Scottish Higher Education

<http://www.reap.ac.uk/>

Assessment futures

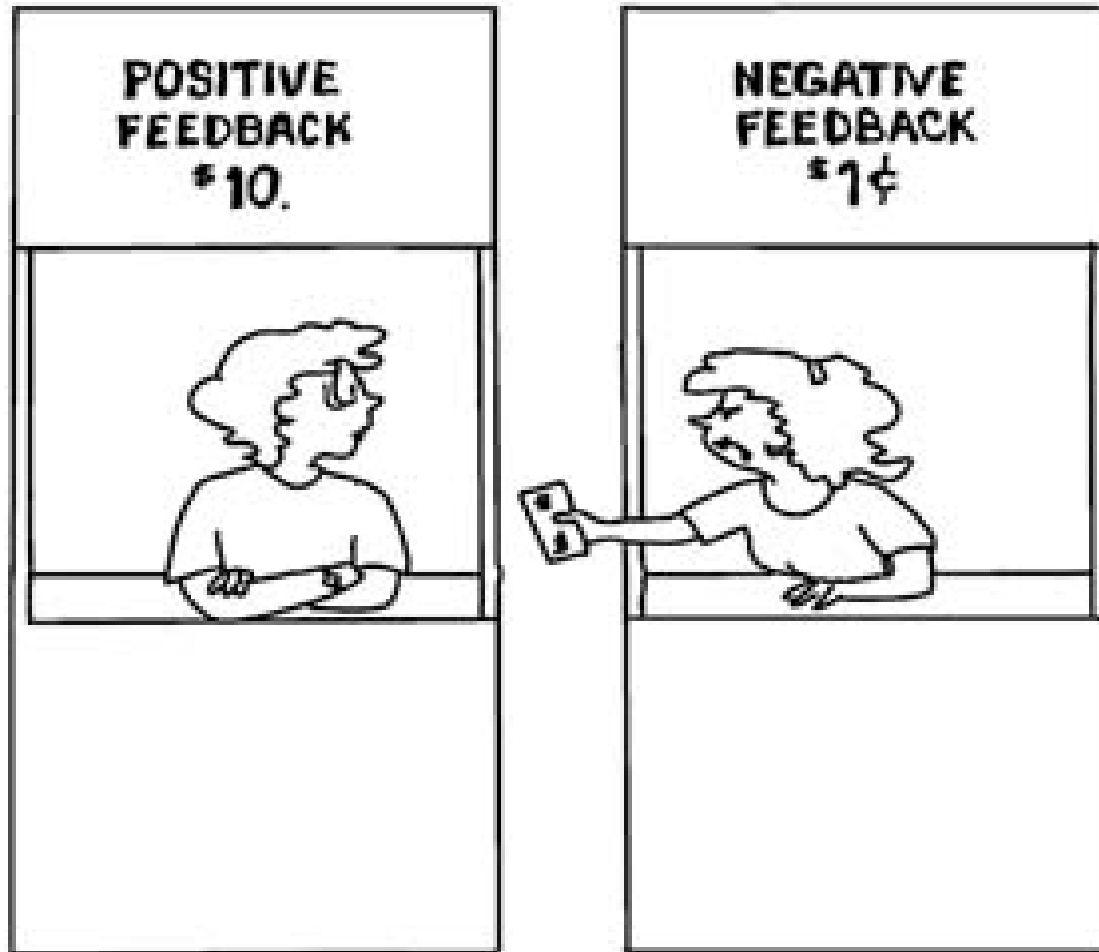
<http://www.assessmentfutures.com>

University of Hong Kong: Exploring the Feedback Conundrum

<http://hkufeedback.blogspot.com/>



Feedback,  
Where's Mine?



"Here! Do me!"



Thanks for the  
feedback !



WOW!  
He listened?