**Professional Experience - how to receive and act on feedback positively**

Picture the scene: It's Monday morning; you've been told about an unexpected meeting with your Supervising Teacher/School leader. Then the words no professional wants to hear: “Please don't take this the wrong way, but…”.

It does not matter how many years of experience we have under our belt, taking on board criticism or feedback is something few professionals really get used to or feel comfortable about. For all our willingness to learn and develop professionally, there's often a clash with our innate need to be accepted the way we are and expectations in the workplace.

Overriding this instinct, and being able to receive and respond to feedback positively takes practice, but it can be done. Here are our top DOs and DON'Ts:

**DO**

**Understand the triggers**
Negative criticism can trigger a natural urge to become defensive and reject what's being said. Being aware of this instinct (and the triggers that cause it) will stop you being caught off guard and reacting in a knee-jerk fashion. Try to understand the ‘full picture’, inquire in a professional manner to grasp where and why your actions/behaviour were perceived in a certain way.

**Get the whole story**
Ensure you are 100% clear on what's being said. You need to make sure you haven't missed any potentially significant details. Ask the person delivering the news to clear up any doubts. Take notes if needed. Kindly request a follow-up meeting after you processed all the information.

**Let the dust settle**
The feedback might not sit well with you at first, but be patient. If you feel yourself getting angry or upset, you might want to request a few hours to fully digest the criticism before responding to what's said.

**DON'T**

**Shoot the messenger**
Dissecting the feedback from the person giving it is an important step in allowing you to view it constructively. Feedback is a valuable tool to guide your professional development. While it may not always seem like it, your manager will usually have the best of intentions for you and your development.

**Automatically agree**
At the same time, there's certainly no rule that states you have to accept every piece of criticism that's directed at you. You have the right to reject or take issue with any feedback that isn't appropriate or warranted.

As unwelcome as it might sometimes seem, the goal is to consider feedback as a guidance that, in most cases, can have a positive impact on your professional development. With this approach, you might even benefit from starting to request feedback to reflect on your learning and development processes..