

## Online Supplement B: Scenario, Manipulation, and Items used for Study 2a

### Scenario

Imagine you are a manager at company XYZ. Your direct report is in charge of leading weekly “staffing meetings.” The purpose of these meetings is to ensure that Human Resources and Production are on the same page with regard to staffing needs. However, you have heard several complaints recently about how poorly these meetings are being conducted. You decide to have a feedback session with your direct report, who typically performs his/her other job duties well. Your direct report has been running the staffing meetings for a couple of months. After hearing several complaints, this is the first time you are providing him/her corrective feedback about these meetings. So that you can provide the feedback in private, you invite your direct report to your office and provide him/her with the following corrective feedback:

“Thank you for meeting with me. It’s come to my attention that the weekly staffing meetings you’re conducting aren’t meeting our company standards. I want to discuss some of the specific issues and how you can improve. First, some of the people who are supposed to attend the meeting haven’t been attending. The time of the meeting doesn’t work well for them, because it falls during the busiest time of their workday. The Production Manager, Department Supervisors, Human Resources Representative, and Human Resources Manager all must be present so that necessary information can be shared. Please find a recurring 30-minute timeslot that works well for all parties who need to attend the meeting. Don’t forget to send a recurring calendar invite with the time, date, and location for each meeting, as some parties have reported forgetting about the meeting altogether.

Additionally, the first few minutes of the meeting are often spent looking for an open conference room in which to have the meeting. Attendees feel frustrated by this—they’re wasting valuable time. Please reserve a conference room with the Executive Assistant in advance to ensure the meeting starts on time.

It’s important to also come to the meetings better prepared. Several people have commented that you seem to be conducting the necessary prep work for the meeting during the meeting rather than beforehand. Prior to the meeting, update the Excel spreadsheet with any positions that have been filled by removing them from the “Open” to the “Filled” worksheet tab. Also update positions that are in the process of being filled by entering in the candidate’s name and expected start date. Take note of the number of open positions for each department and be prepared to speak to each. On the day of the meeting, visit the IT department in order to check out an HDMI cord. Bring your laptop and your notes. Arrive to the meeting location ten minutes early to connect your laptop to the projector and ensure there are no technology issues.

Finally, there is some confusion during the meetings, because Department Supervisors are speaking out of turn and talking over one another. It’s your responsibility to ensure that the meeting runs smoothly. Be sure to go through one department at a time, updating all parties at the meeting on candidate progress in the hiring process. Address any inconsistencies between your record and the production manager’s record by updating the spreadsheet during the meeting accordingly.

I know you have a lot on your plate, but I hope this feedback will help you run the staffing meetings more effectively. Doing so will ensure that we are aware of all of our staffing needs.”

### **Manipulation of Feedback Recipient’s Reaction**

**Emotionally disturbed reaction condition. Your direct report seems visibly shaken and disturbed by this feedback. Although s/he is trying to keep calm, cool, and collected, it is obvious to you from his/her body language and facial expressions that s/he feels embarrassed and truly disappointed in him/herself by this feedback.** With his/her voice cracking somewhat (as if flustered or about to cry), your direct report says, “I’m so sorry that I’ve not been conducting these staffing meetings up to company standards. I’ve been a bit overwhelmed lately and haven’t made the meetings as much of a priority as they should be. I didn’t realize my performance had slipped so much. I’m ashamed of myself. Thank you for providing me with this feedback and bringing this to my attention. It will help me run the staffing meetings more effectively in the future. I’ll certainly try hard to do so.”

**You leave the feedback session with the impression that your direct report took the feedback very hard, but that s/he is motivated to improve and is sincerely accepting of and grateful for the feedback.**

**Emotionally undisturbed reaction condition. Your direct report does not seem visibly shaken or disturbed by this feedback. In fact, s/he appears calm, cool, and collected, rather than embarrassed, ashamed, or overly disappointed in him/herself by this feedback.** With a positive and receptive tone, your direct report says, “I appreciate you alerting me that how I’m running the meetings isn’t up to company standards. I’ve been a bit overwhelmed lately and haven’t made the meetings as much of a priority as they should be. I didn’t realize my performance had slipped so much. Thank you for providing me with this feedback and bringing this to my attention. It’ll help me run the staffing meetings more effectively in the future. I’m confident I can do so.”

**You leave the feedback session with the impression that your employee took the feedback very well, and that s/he is sincerely motivated to improve and is accepting of and grateful for the feedback.**

Study 2a Items

| <b>Construct</b>                                      | <b>Items</b>   |
|---|--|
| Manipulation Check (ad hoc)                           | In the scenario you read about, how emotionally disturbed was the feedback recipient in response to the feedback? (1 = <i>Not at all emotionally disturbed</i> ; 2 = <i>A little emotionally disturbed</i> ; 3 = <i>Moderately emotionally disturbed</i> ; 4 = <i>Significantly emotionally disturbed</i> ; 5 = <i>Extremely emotionally disturbed</i> )   |
| Trait Empathy (Davis, 1980; 7-items; $\alpha = .85$ ) | 1( <i>Strongly Disagree</i> ) to 5( <i>Strongly Agree</i> ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When I see someone being taken advantage of, I feel kind of protective toward them.</li> <li>• When I see someone being treated unfairly, I sometimes don't feel very much pity for them. (reverse-scored)</li> <li>• I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me.</li> <li>• I would describe myself as a pretty soft-hearted person.</li> <li>• Sometimes I don't feel sorry for other people when they are having problems. (reverse-scored)</li> <li>• Other people's misfortunes do not usually disturb me a great deal. (reverse-scored)</li> <li>• I am often quite touched by things I see happen.</li> </ul> |
| Job Title   | What is your job title?  |
| Industry  | In what industry do you work?  |
| Organizational Tenure                                 | Approximately how long have you been with the current organization?  |
| Hours Worked  | On average, how many hours a week do you work at your current job (please round to the nearest hour)?  |
| Gender  | What is your gender? (1 = <i>Male</i> ; 2 = <i>Female</i> ; 3 = <i>Other</i> )   |
| Race  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be. (1 = <i>White</i>; 2 = <i>Black or African American</i>; 3 = <i>American Indian or Alaska Native</i>; 4 = <i>Asian</i>; 5 = <i>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</i>; 6 = <i>Other</i>)</li> <li>• Are you Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino? (1 = <i>Spanish</i>; 2 = <i>Hispanic</i>; 3 = <i>Latino</i>; 4 = <i>None</i>)</li> </ul>  |