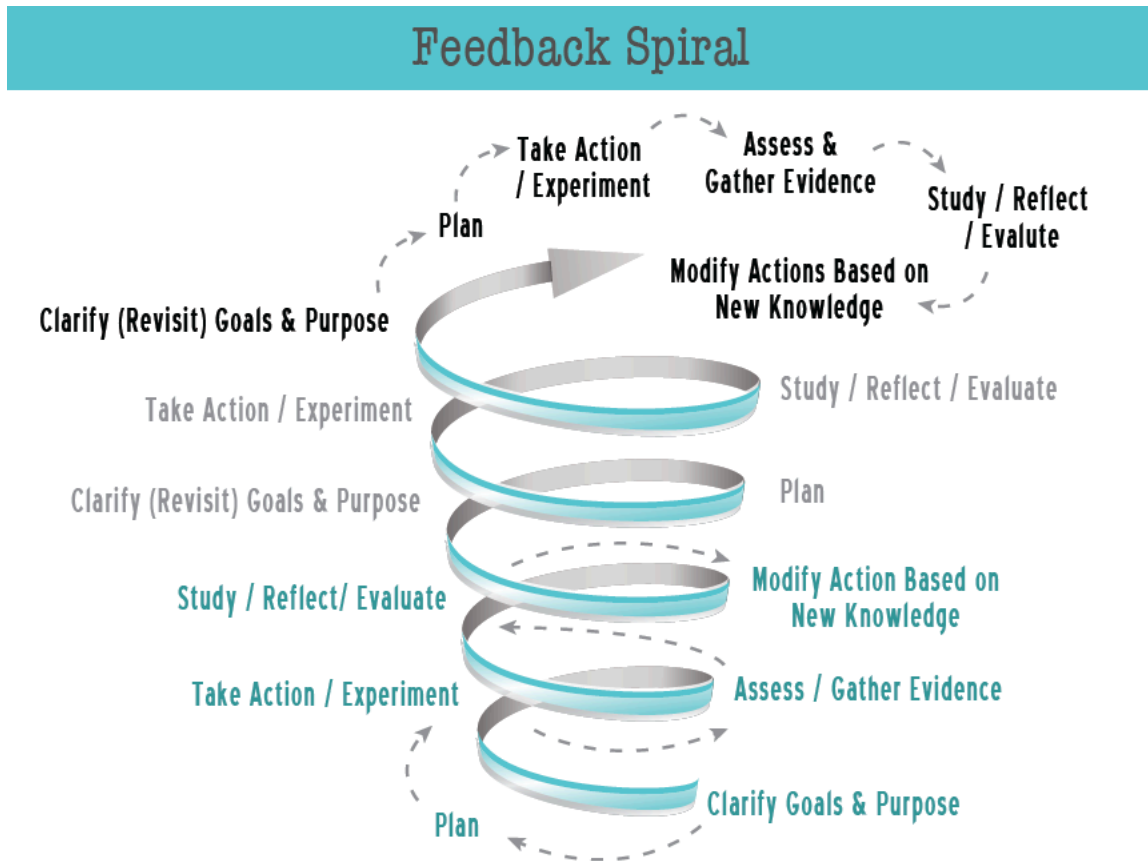


FEEDBACK APPROACH

Remaining Open to Continuous Learning

Purpose: Often as educators we assign deadlines to provide feedback or schedule conferences based on our pressed availability or spend time after hours writing down guidance to grow student's thinking. Ultimately, our aim is to help students think about feedback as they work, know how to reach out for sources who can provide credible feedback to them, and receive the feedback with the intention of growing and improving their work. The feedback spiral provides an approach that suggests stopping points where they can solicit feedback. Each of the phases offers an opportunity as students progressively move from teacher generated to student generated : clarify goals and purpose, plan, take action/experiment, assess and gather evidence, study/reflect/evaluate, and modify actions based on new knowledge.



Purpose or Outcomes: As students start their projects, they must **define their purpose**. Why is it that they have chosen this particular topic or format for communication of ideas? *All feedback, at whatever stage of the process that a person is in, must ground itself in the purpose of the author of the project.* All feedback needs to ascertain this intention in order to provide good feedback. This is a critical aspect of moving from teacher driven to student driven work.

Plan: When students are planning their project, they often request feedback. The kinds of questions they ask are often about time management, setting priorities, or how they will be able to contact resources. Once again, this is **an opportunity to listen with understanding and empathy**. The person offering feedback needs to restrain from giving advice until he is certain that he understands the questions and challenges that the student is posing. It is often helpful to have a feedback circle where students who are struggling with the same sorts of questions co-create strategies as they apply from past knowledge. Teachers join these circles and share from their own experiences.

Take Action/Implement: Getting started is sometimes the scary part of any important work. We want to know the to such questions as—

- *“Am I on the right path?”*
- *“Do you think that this will work in the end?”*
- *“How am I doing?”*

It is important to provide feedback **based on the questions the student is asking**. This is a time when it is important to remember that the target is **self-discovery** so when students are asking those sorts of questions, they are feeling a disequilibrium about themselves. According to Piaget, this is a primary opportunity for learning. Again, critical friends groups, where students give feedback to one another based on their presentation of work in progress, is often an excellent way for students to learn.

Gather Evidence/ Assess: This is a **good time to return to the rubrics, standards, or any other criteria** that have been established as a guide to the anticipated quality of the work. Since we are aiming for students to learn how to monitor their own work and to become more self-evaluative. The feedback should be based on the author’s intent (purpose). It should include both “warm” and “cool” descriptions (Joe McDonald). The warm feedback attends to the critic’s response to what is appealing, imaginative, positive about the work. The cool feedback attends to what the critic thinks might improve the work. This serves as excellent formative feedback for the next stage.

Study, Reflect, Evaluate: The student is able to **consider the feedback and determine next steps**. Very often, students do not want to deal with the feedback that is given. Sometimes, they really like what they have done and will discount any external perspectives. At other times, they will feel that they do not want to do the revisions that are called for. Learning how to receive good feedback is as complex as giving good feedback. It is usually **helpful to allow for time to absorb the constructive criticism**. In our rush to meet deadlines, we often do not allow for the formative assessment to be acted upon. We often call for more planning time. We would suggest that time to reflect and evaluate one’s own work is equally important.

Modify actions based on new knowledge: When feedback is acted upon, powerful learning takes place. However, this takes time for revisiting the work and remodeling based on what the student is learning. A High School English Teacher considers receiving and acting upon feedback so important, he assess the progress students make from one revision to the next based on feedback.

Revisit and Clarify Goals: Sometimes an insight brings a student back to the original purpose with the realization that either the original purposes were not in line with the thinking of the project. In that instance, the student needs to restate the purpose. In other instances, the student will realize that the next project is being uncovered through this one. For example, one student said that when he completed his project he realized that he had more questions to answer than when he started.