

Feedback and Criticism

Rules of the game

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1. Get in tune with how you respond to feedback/criticism.
2. Realize it's never personal.
3. Realize it's necessary; You're here to learn; it's always intended to be constructive – to help you improve; we aim for the highest standard.
4. Let go; it's not your baby; it's your work; it's a shared ordeal.
5. Critique yourself – how do you feel about what you've done; what might you do differently or additionally if time permitted (but don't attack yourself or belittle your effort or make excuses). Then be open to the ideas of others.
6. Study the changes that are made in your story; compare the final product to the original; seek clarity about points that you have questions about.
7. It's OK to debate a point; editors are not always right; they just have the ultimate responsibility for decision-making. But pick your battles; learn to hear before you speak.
8. Get used to it. Feedback is a daily part of life as a reporter, whether it's coming to you directly or indirectly. It comes from peers, from supervisors, from readers, from sources. You need to develop an ear to hear, a thick skin because it can sometimes be nasty, and maintain a beginner's mind because it's all about learning. If taken properly, you grow and get better at what you do and all parties involved benefit. Remember this is your career, your signature; you want to be proud of what you do, and so do those who work with you.
9. Remember most editors won't hold what you don't know against you until you have had an opportunity to learn it. To not be the greatest – from the start – is not a crime. It's only after you've had time and opportunity that the expectation changes. **So grow with the flow...**