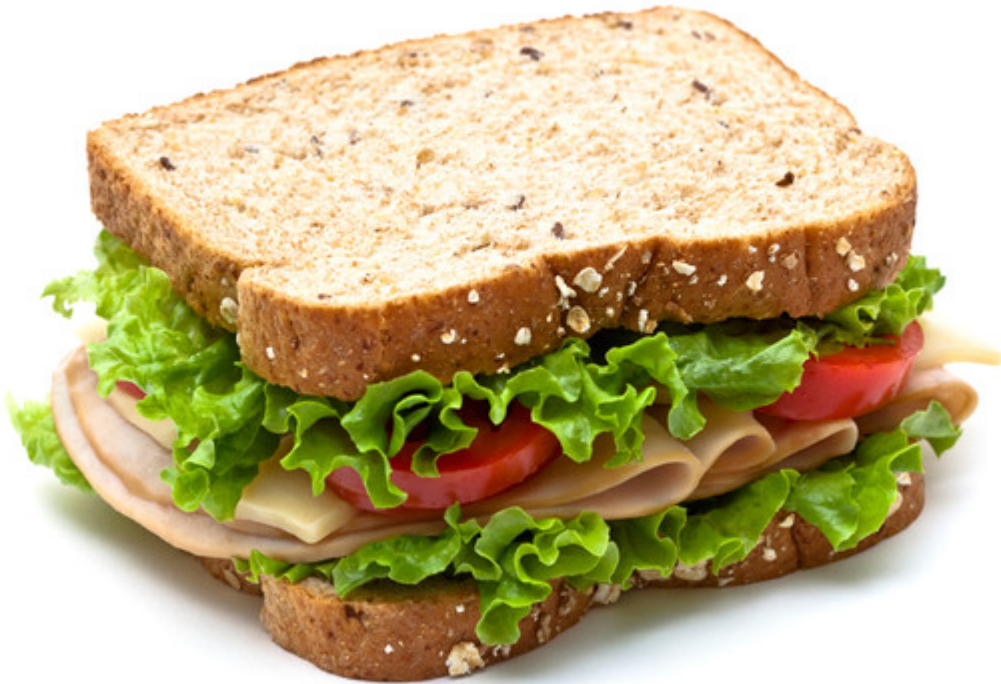


the ZALT group

THE ZALT BUBBLE - CARB FREE FEEDBACK IS
FINALLY HERE!!!

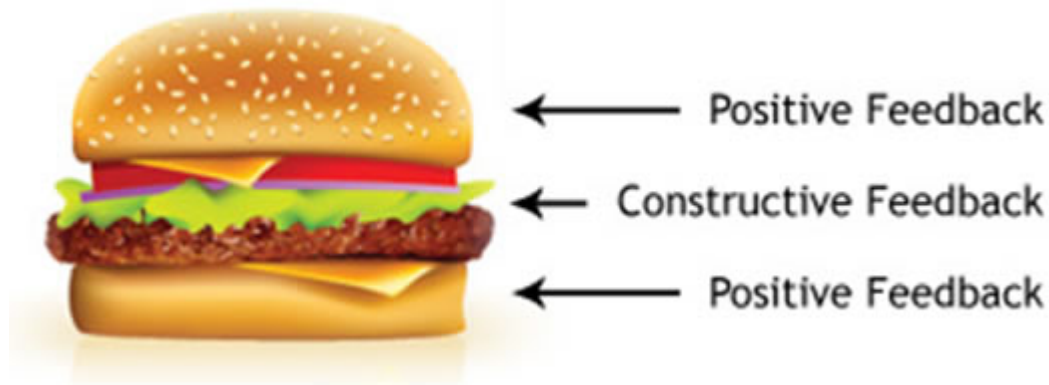


Join me in my office for a sandwich?

Sam, I need to have a word. Look you have been doing a good job in general. I really liked how you dealt with that client complaint yesterday. HOWEVER. There is something that I have been meaning to talk to you about for a while. I have received some feedback that your behaviour towards some of your fellow Team Members has not been great. Some people have mentioned that they find you a little abrupt and abrasive when they are trying to work with you. So going forward I want you to focus on how you talk to your colleagues. OK? Great. I must say it has been really good to have someone in the team who has your level of technical knowledge. It's been missing in this team. Thanks for your time Sam.

The classic sandwich approach

The above is an example of the classic sandwich feedback. You start with something good, then deliver a 'need to know message' and then finally return to a positive. Positive + Negative + Positive. The theory behind the sandwich is that if you start with something hard the person will automatically become defensive and will not be receptive to your message. So you are better off to start with something positive. Then deliver the hard stuff (the substance in the sandwich). Then you can finish with a positive message to show you value them and that they are not all bad. You want to keep them engaged after all!



The SANDWICH. It's alive and well, we hear people regularly deliver it and we hear it regurgitated during conflict *"He said I was good at that but then really he just wanted to give me a hard time about issue X, he often sends mixed messages"*.

Let's face it, in our opening example, does Sam recall anything that came before HOWEVER? And now Sam is too angry about the feedback being given to even appreciate that the bottom slice of bread, that their manager thinks that Sam has good technical knowledge.

Carb free feedback please, it's more effective.

Indeed the [Harvard Business Review](#) says that using the sandwich approach lacks *"transparency"* and is *"a unilaterally controlling approach"*. A study in the [Journal of Behavioural Studies in Business](#) calls the approach *"disingenuous"* as it calls into question the manager's truthfulness. Indeed the Journal lists 7 reasons how the Sandwich approach is *"bad practice"*.

So how then???

Address the topic. Early and directly. Don't shy away from what needs to be said. However if you are going to say it, own it! None of this "I've received some feedback" or "some people have said to me". All that happened here is that Sam is wondering which of their team mates has been dobbing on them, is a squib and not tough enough to talk to them face to face. Sam is not even hearing the issue being raised, only that someone... I wonder who... who is it who's out to get me.



Remember, as a manager if you are giving feedback you are doing it for a reason. You want this person to change how they are doing something. That is the impact you are after so how you deliver that message needs to be considered. What will work for that person??? Not, what works for you. That is however a topic for another day... Intention vs Impact

Let us repeat it... all together now... loud enough so Dr Atkins can hear ... "We want carb free feedback". When do we want it? NOW!