

Triadic Feedback Sessions

A handout developed by Matthew Baxendale, as part of the 2015 CEU Philosophy R&P Lab sessions. (Source: <https://ceurplab.wordpress.com/>).

A triadic feedback session is designed to develop feedback skills, both in terms of offering critical feedback on the work of others, as well as integrating the comments of others into your own work. The interesting structure of the session gives all participants the chance to receive considered feedback on their work, give feedback to others, and develop discussion skills. Furthermore it is an enjoyable way to work together with others on your own work!

Set-up

For a triadic feedback session you need to be divided up into groups of three participants (other combinations are possible but three people per group works best). Each participant must have a piece of work with them that they wish to receive feedback on. The time required will depend on how long each stage of the session is divided up (as will be explained below). As a minimum you will probably need 45 minutes. For the purposes of explaining the session let's call each participant: person (a), (b), and (c). There are three 'stages' to each 'round' of the session which are then repeated dependant on the amount of people in the group, so ideally this will be three times. Each stage must be allocated a set amount of time in advance, a minimum of 5 minutes is advisable and around 10 minutes is probably ideal – although there is no limit on the amount of time!

Stage (1)

At this stage person (b) & (c) read person (a)'s work. If the texts to be discussed are longer (e.g. more than 1000 words), the texts should be read before, as preparation for the session. (b) and (c) are allowed to ask *clarificatory* questions and (a) is allowed to respond briefly. No discussion between (b) and (c) should take place at this stage, rather they should try to understand (a)'s work as best as possible. (a) should try to give as much information required to clarify their work but no more than that at this stage.

Stage (2)

At this stage person (b) & (c) openly discuss (a)'s work. They will discuss aspects they liked, potential areas of improvement, and ideally raise critical issues for the piece. Importantly, at this stage, person (a) is *not allowed* to comment on this discussion. (a) must listen attentively and consider the points being raised. This is a crucial, and novel, aspect of the triadic feedback session format. This stage gives (a) the opportunity to develop their skills in response to feedback. Rather than offering a quick response to suggestions, the requirement to stay silent means that (a) must consider the discussion carefully, absorb the critical points, before formulating a response. This can be difficult! To help (a), (b) & (c) must try not to talk *to* (a), rather they must try to ignore (a)'s presence as best they can.

Stage (3)

In the final stage (a) is given the opportunity to respond to (b) and (c)'s discussion. The authors (a) can thus ask clarificatory questions, push (b) & (c) on critical points that may have been unclear or are in need of development, and offer responses to feedback that they may disagree with. The author (a) should be encouraged to only respond to constructive feedback, critical points that can be used to improve the text.

This completes one round of the session, after which the three stages are repeated for each participant's work.