

How to Respond to Unfair Criticism from Your Boss...

And Present Your Story with Clarity and Impact.



A short guide for employees who want to take control of the narrative.

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Your Introduction to This Guide

You sense it's coming. You're getting constant unjustified criticism and you feel you're on the road to getting fired. But you don't want to go down easy. In fact, if you decide to leave, you want it to be on your terms.

So you start — **"documenting everything."**

But it's not just about keeping receipts — it's about how you present them. Hi, I'm Lorraine. I spent many years as a Head of HR, and I've seen it all — messy manager-employee conflicts, unfair feedback, and a whole lot of emotion.

Here's what I learned:

The person who brings clear, concise, emotionally neutral, example-based documentation to the table? That's the person who gets taken seriously. More often than not, that's the manager. Why? Because they're coached. HR helps them tell their story in a way that's easy to understand...which often translates to believable

Employees? Not so much. Even with solid "proof," I've watched employees bury their own case in rambling detail and emotion.

That's where this guide comes in. I'm sharing the kind of documentation that would have caught my attention — and made me stop and say, **"Okay, there's definitely more to this story and I want to hear it!"**

Hope this helps!

Lorraine



What's the Process?

1. **It usually starts with a conversation**

When you get feedback that feels off — confusing, unfair, or downright shady — don't react emotionally.

Listen. Take notes. And say:

"Thanks for the feedback. I'd like to reflect on this and schedule a follow-up to make sure we're aligned."

2. **Send a follow-up email using this template:**

Subject: Follow-up on Feedback Discussion



Clarify your intent in the first paragraph - What do you want? Clarity? Re-alignment? Get the facts straight?

Hi [Manager's Name],

Thank you for sharing your feedback. I've taken some time to reflect on our conversation and want to make sure we're aligned. I also hope we can clear up any misunderstandings so we can move forward productively. Below, I've outlined my understanding of the issues, my perspective based on the work I've done, and included a few documents for context.



Show your cards

Use a clean 3-column table:
Feedback received | My perspective |
Additional context (aka your receipts)
This will force you to keep it short and to the point. *Remember: the idea is to get them curious to hear more. Elaborate in your follow-up conversation..not in this document.*



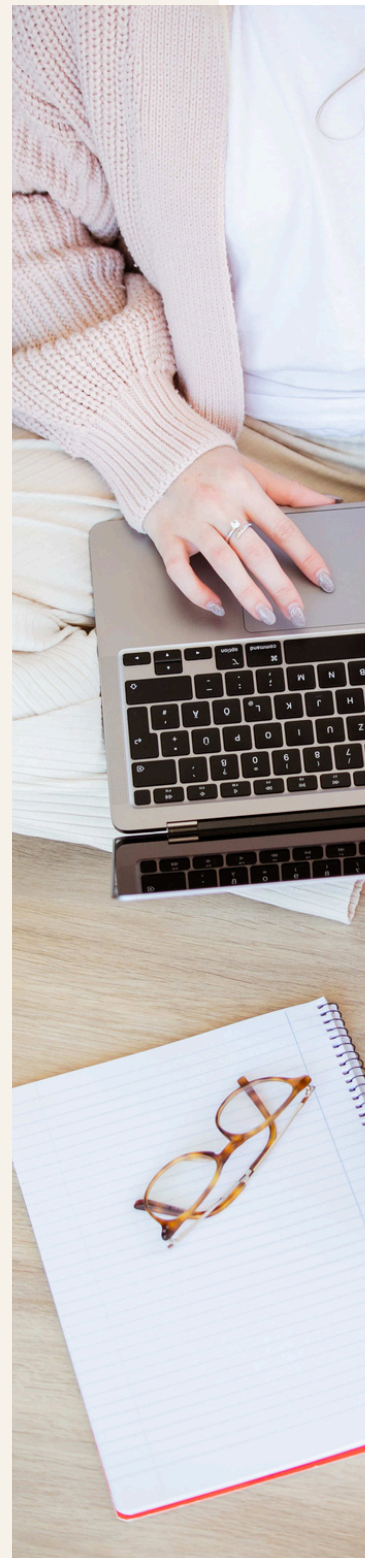
Propose next steps:

Do you want a check-in schedule?
Guidance? A touchpoint to revisit progress?



Close professionally:

Say: I appreciate the opportunity to gain clarity and move forward. Please let me know a convenient date and time to reconnect.



A Sample Document

Subject: Follow-up on Feedback Discussion

Hi [Manager's Name],

Thank you for sharing your feedback. I've taken some time to reflect on our conversation and want to make sure we're aligned. I also hope we can clear up any misunderstandings so we can move forward productively. Below, I've outlined my understanding of the issues, my perspective based on the work I've done, and included a few documents for context.

Feedback Received

August 25th - Customer Complaint

You mentioned a customer complaint regarding response time.

My Perspective

I reviewed my emails and I believe I responded within the agreed timeframe. The issue may have stemmed from a misunderstanding.

Additional Context

See **Attachment A** for customer exchange. (Please note email dates/times.

September 7th-Project X Contribution: Feedback received that I am not pulling my weight.

I have completed assigned tasks on schedule and contributed in meetings. Specific concerns on expectations would be helpful

See **Attachment B** for task list and project tracker.

September 20th - Missed Deadline: Feedback indicated that I did not submit my portion of the quarterly report on time.

I was waiting for input from another team before I finalized. Advice on how to deal with this in the future would be appreciated.

See **Attachment C** for email correspondence regarding dependencies.

Next Steps

- **Clarification Needed:** Could you provide specific examples or expectations regarding my role in Project X?
- **Appreciate Advice:** How can I better handle the team so I'm not late again?
- **Maintaining alignment:** Would you be open to regular check-ins to make sure we're aligned and that I'm meeting your expectations?

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss next steps and gain a clearer understanding of your expectations. Please let me know when would be a convenient date and time.

Regards,

[Your Name]



Hey there, I'm Lorraine Kolega Hubbard, a certified career coach. As a former Head of HR and Global Talent Director, FAST-TRACKING careers was my full-time job and now I'm thrilled to do it as a career coach.

Discover how I can help - DM me "contact" for more information about my services --and who knows you may want to schedule a complimentary consultation. I'd love to meet with you.

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