

# LEVERAGING NEGATIVE FEEDBACK FOR STUDENT EXPERIENCE IMPROVEMENT

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# AGENDA

- ❑ Introduction – the benefits of embracing negative feedback
- ❑ Types of Feedback
- ❑ How to successfully run a student focus group
- ❑ Tips on how to avoid becoming defensive
- ❑ EC Vancouver case study
- ❑ Discussion
- ❑ Q & A

# THE POWER OF FEEDBACK

A collage of business-related items including a laptop, calculator, smartphone, and various documents. The items are arranged on a wooden surface. A blue rectangular box is overlaid on the center of the collage, containing the text "CREATING A CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT".

**CREATING A CULTURE OF  
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

# CUSTOMER CENTRIC ORGANIZATION IS KEY

- Actively seeking and responding to negative feedback showcases a customer-centric approach. It indicates a willingness to listen, learn, and prioritize customer satisfaction, which can positively impact a center's reputation.



# LEARNING ABOUT CUSTOMER PREFERENCES

- Negative feedback often provides insights into customer preferences, expectations, and desires. Understanding these preferences can help centers tailor their offerings to better align with student needs.



# IDENTIFYING AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

- Negative feedback points to specific areas where a center may be falling short of meeting customer expectations. This information is invaluable for identifying weaknesses and areas that require improvement.
- Analyzing this feedback can provide a deeper understanding of customer / student perceptions, helping centers make informed decisions.



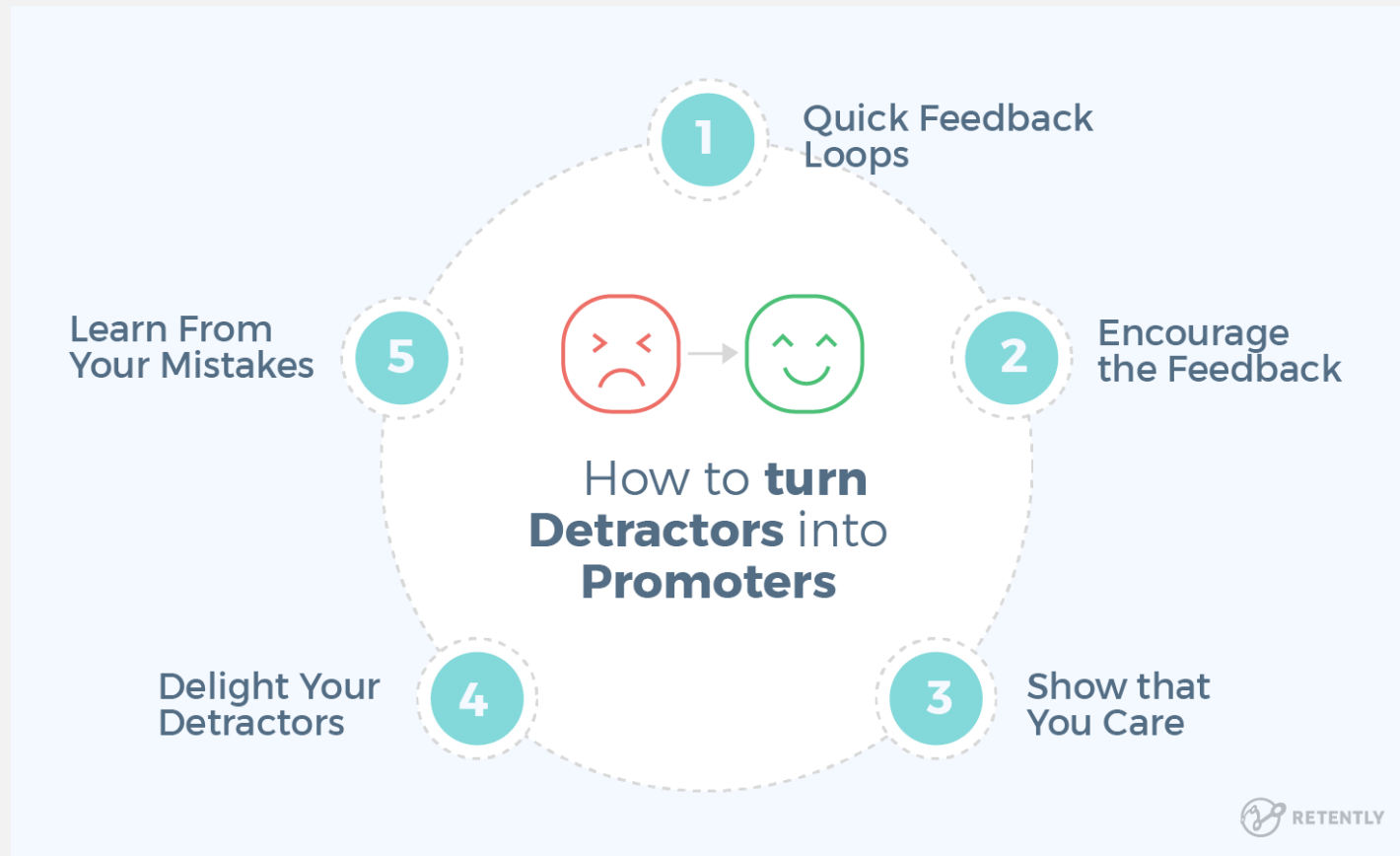
# ENHANCING PRODUCT OR SERVICE QUALITY

- Understanding what dissatisfies students allows centers to make targeted improvements to their products or services. This can lead to higher quality offerings and an increased likelihood of student satisfaction.
- Addressing negative feedback effectively can turn dissatisfied customers into loyal advocates. By showing a commitment to improvement and customer satisfaction, centers have the opportunity to convert detractors into promoters.



# PREVENTING CUSTOMER CHURN

- Addressing negative feedback promptly can prevent customer dissatisfaction from escalating and potentially leading to customer churn. Proactive measures to resolve issues can help retain customers and build long-term relationships.





# BUILDING TRUST AND CREDIBILITY

- Acknowledging and addressing negative feedback demonstrates transparency and a commitment to student satisfaction. This can enhance trust and credibility, showing students that their opinions are valued and taken seriously.

# Customer Service

It's an attitude,  
Not a department.

# STAYING COMPETITIVE

- In a competitive market, centers need to adapt to changing customer preferences and market trends. Negative feedback can reveal areas where competitors may be outperforming, helping centers stay competitive by making necessary adjustments.



# TYPES OF FEEDBACK

- **Anonymous Surveys (NPS)**
- **One-to-One Meetings**
- **Open Door Policies**
- **Focus groups**

# HOW TO ORGANIZE AND FACILITATE A SUCCESSFUL FOCUS GROUP

# DEFINE OBJECTIVES

- Clearly outline the objectives of the focus group. What specific aspects of the services do you want feedback on? Whether it's accommodation, academic support, cultural programs, or other services, having a clear focus will guide the discussion.



# RECRUIT DIVERSE PARTICIPANTS

- Ensure diversity among the participants, representing various countries, cultures, and backgrounds. A diverse group will provide a more comprehensive range of perspectives and experiences.



## DEVELOP A DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Create a structured discussion guide that includes **open-ended questions** related to the service areas you want to explore. Ensure questions are clear, concise, and encourage participants to share their opinions and experiences.
- *“In what ways do you feel your language skills have improved since starting at EC Montreal?”*
- *“What kind of academic support or resources do you feel are crucial for international students, and how can EC Montreal enhance them?”*
- *“What advice would you give to future international students considering studying at EC Montreal?”*

# CHOOSE A COMFORTABLE VENUE

- Select a venue that is comfortable, neutral, and conducive to open conversation. Make sure the environment encourages participants to express their thoughts freely.





# FACILITATE BY SKILLED MODERATORS

- Choose experienced and impartial moderators who can guide the discussion, ensuring that all participants have an opportunity to share their views. Moderators should keep the discussion on track and encourage constructive dialogue.



# ICE-BREAKER ACTIVITIES

- Begin with icebreaker activities to help participants feel at ease. This can foster a comfortable atmosphere and encourage more open communication.



## ANALYSE AND SUMMARIZE

- After the focus group, analyze the data collected. Identify recurring themes, common concerns, and specific suggestions. Summarize the findings in a clear and concise manner.

# IMPLEMENT ACTIONABLE CHANGES

- Use the insights gained from the focus group to make actionable changes and improvements to the services. Clearly communicate how the feedback has influenced decision-making and highlight any planned changes.



## THANK PARTICIPANTS

- Express gratitude to the participants for their time and valuable contributions. This creates a positive impression and encourages future engagement.

**The best  
response to  
negative  
feedback is  
*“thank you”***

# HOW TO AVOID BECOMING DEFENSIVE

## STAY CALM AND LISTEN

- Take a deep breath and remain calm. Listen actively to what the person is saying without interrupting. Give them your full attention to understand their perspective.
- If you feel an immediate urge to defend yourself, consider delaying your response. Take some time to reflect on the feedback before reacting. This can help you respond more thoughtfully.
- Instead of making excuses, try to understand the feedback objectively. Acknowledge the validity of the concerns raised and focus on finding solutions or ways to address the issues.

## ASK CLARIFYING QUESTIONS

- Seek clarification if certain aspects of the feedback are unclear. This not only shows that you're open to understanding but can also provide additional context that may be helpful.



# FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

- Instead of dwelling on the negative aspects, shift the conversation toward finding solutions. Discuss how you can work together to address concerns and make improvements.



# SEEK FEEDBACK REGULARLY

- Make a habit of seeking feedback regularly, not just when negative feedback arises. This can help create an environment where feedback is a normal part of communication.



# DEVELOP YOUR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

- Enhance your emotional intelligence by being aware of your emotions and managing them effectively. This includes recognizing when you're feeling defensive and taking steps to respond more objectively. Remember that handling negative feedback with grace and openness is a skill that can be developed over time. It's an essential aspect of personal and professional growth, contributing to stronger relationships and continuous improvement.



# EC VANCOUVER CASE STUDY

# HOMESTAY PROGRAM CASE STUDY

## 1. Student Accommodations

- Three adult Mexican university exchange students: brother, sister, friend
- Booked accommodations: shared bedroom and one single room
- Placed in a spacious, clean, and aesthetically pleasing home
- Host family: Muslim, consisting of mother, father, and two grown sons

## 2. Host Family Background

- Personally inspected by the coordinator
- Commendable track record
- Concurrently hosting a long-term Japanese student and a 4-week short-term Swiss student

## 3. Serious Complaint

- Agent alleges discrimination and abuse by the host family
- Differential treatment observed in house rules and meals with the long-term Japanese student

# HOMESTAY PROGRAM CASE STUDY

## **4. Formal Investigation**

- Coordinator conducts interviews with Mexican and other students
- Review of homestay manual to confirm expected services
- Clarification of house rules based on the family's Muslim culture
- Addressing misunderstandings about food customs and cleanliness

## **5. Additional Insights**

- Host mother providing extra care to the sick Japanese student
- Contributing to the perception of differential treatment

## **6. Student Decision**

- Offered the option to move to a different host
- Three Mexican students choose to remain, expressing satisfaction

# HOMESTAY PROGRAM CASE STUDY

- **Management Actions**
  - Collaboration with the regional sales manager for Mexico
  - Meetings with the university and the agent responsible for the exchange program
  - Identification of the need for more effective pre-arrival information
- **Pre-Arrival Briefing**
  - Thorough briefing for university representatives, students, and parents
  - Emphasis on homestay program rules and responsibilities in Vancouver's multicultural environment
- **Feedback Sharing**
  - Negative feedback shared with the host family
  - Development of a plan to better explain house rules to future students upon their arrival
  - Loop back to students to share the planned improvements
- **Conclusion**
  - Illustrates the importance of continuous improvement through feedback
  - Enhancing the overall homestay experience for all participants



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
PARTICIPATION!**