Establishing a culture of critique

Reenergising studio engagement and collaborative design thinking

A human-centred approach

For a framework for design in the open

Reenergise

Reenergise Reconnect

Reenergise
Reconnect
Around design

Design in the open

A **foundational concept** in many design and content teams we look up to for best practice.
But what does it **mean**?

A culture of feedback across the studio

Sharing best practice while practicing

Considering other insights and perspectives

Increasing visibility of design decisions

Critique

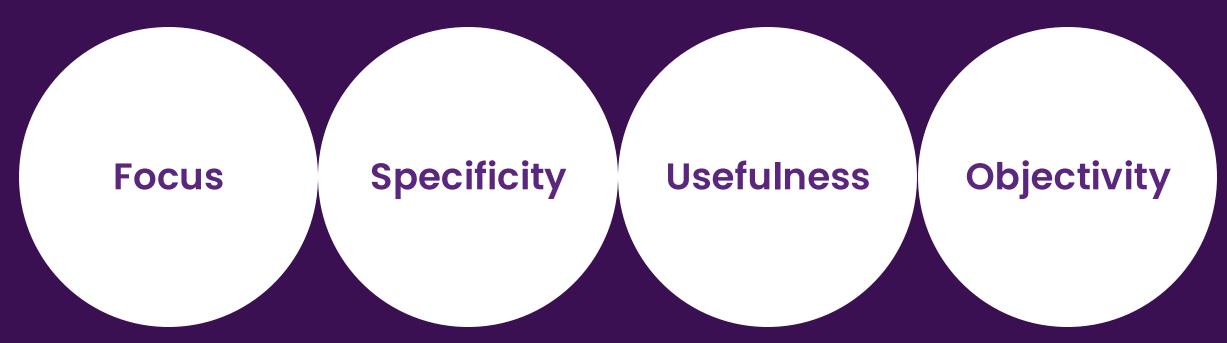An opportunity to design in the open and improve work through **structured** feedback

Feedback is fine...

Validate your assumptions
Spark ideas
Improve on your solutions
Engage other members of the team

...but structured feedback ensures

Focus

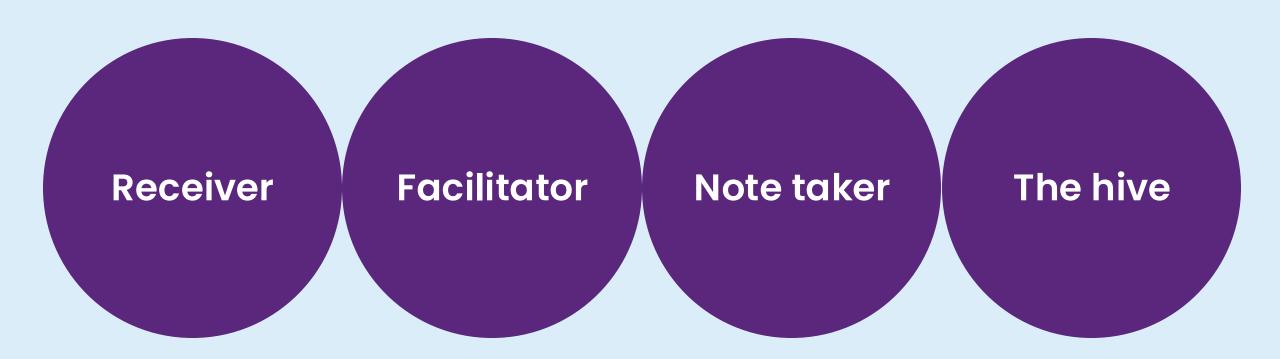**Specificity**

Usefulness

Objectivity

And another one I forgot

Without structure, feedback can become

Sporadic

Unwelcome

Inconsistent

Subjective

Assign the roles
Set the scene
Unleash the hive

Assign the roles

Receiver   **Facilitator**   **Note taker**   **The hive**

Set the scene

Context:

- What you are sharing today (The actual problem you are trying to solve with this work)
- What stage is the work is at (ideation, post-research, review)
- The constraints you are dealing with ("I only have two weeks," or "We don't have x data available")

You only need **just enough context** to enable the hive to understand what the work is about

Set the scene
Things you do want feedback on:

Try and be specific about **the feedback you're looking for** based on the problem you're trying to solve.

- Information hierarchy?
- Interaction patterns?
- Very specifically this one gnarly button?
- Brand execution?
- The words what you wrote?
- Best practice guidance?

Set the scene

Things you don't want feedback on:

It's important to let the hive know what's **out of scope** for the critique so we don't get sidetracked or ratholed or focusjacked

- Visual design? **Not in scope**
- UX Writing? **No that's being looked at separately**
- Typeface? **Yeah, no.**
- Fundamental problems with the entire ecosystem that you might not have thought of, but I have because I'm kind of clever? **Well, no, but thanks.**

A guide for receivers

- **Early ideas** are better. You don't need shiny things. Unless the things is supposed to be shiny
- People are not judging **you** or **your ability**
- You don't have to take on **all the feedback** you receive
- Some people are very **direct** - people are diverse
- Some people hate speaking up - encourage **offline feedback** if you want it
- Critique is a **safe space**. It's the **facilitator's role** to ensure everything is appropriate to the session.

A guide for the hive

- Think before you speak. Take an extra few seconds to be **structured**.
- Does your feedback **align** to the objectives and what receiver is looking for?
- If you think something doesn't work as it should, zoom in on the **specific elements** that are not working and the reason why you don't think it will work
- Avoid jumping to conclusions - **ask clarifying questions** if you need, to before providing feedback
- Remember, this is about **problem solving together**

Things to remember while we're setting up

Step 1. Assign roles

Step 2. Set the scene

Context:

- What you are sharing today (the actual problem you are trying to solve with this work)
- What stage is the work is at (ideation, post research, review)
- The constraints you are dealing with ("I only have two weeks," or "We don't have a date available.")

You only need just enough context to enable the hive to understand what the work is about

Step 2. Set the scene

Things you do want feedback on

Try and be specific about the feedback you're looking for based on the problem you're trying to solve.
- Information hierarchy?
- Interaction patterns?
- Very specifically this one pixelly button?
- Brand execution?
- The words what you wrote?
- Best practice guidance?

Step 2. Set the scene

Things you don't want feedback on

It's important to let the hive know what's out of scope for the critique so we don't get sidetracked or rathelad or focusjacked
- Visual design? Not in scope
- UX things? Yes that's being looked at separately
- Typeface? Yeah, no.
- Fundamental problems with the entire ecosystem that you might not have thought of? Well, not today thanks.

---

1 - Assign roles

Receiver:
EDIT THIS

Facilitator:
BECKY PRIEBE

Note-taker:
EDIT THIS

2 - Set the scene (Receiver to complete)

Context:
EDIT THIS: Short description about problem, stage of the work, any constraints or things we need to know.

What you do want feedback on:
EDIT THIS: Specific feedback you're looking for based on the problem you're trying to solve

What you don't want feedback on:
EDIT THIS: What's out of scope for this critique so we don't get distracted

---

3 - The session (Receiver, your stuff goes here)

Criticism vs Critique

Things to remember while providing feedback

Step 3: WE WANT THE HIVE

Hang on. Some important guidance for the hive

Common types of feedback

Reactive: "I hate green"
Directional: "Make it green"
Critique: "Can you explain the choice of colour?"

Criticism vs Critique

Critique structure

"When I read [that copy] it made me [feel/think]. I think it's because [what's provoke the feeling/reaction]. Could you share the [reason/desire] behind why you choose this copy?"