

Feedback Is Food That Strengthens

The famed management consultant Peter Drucker wrote in *Drucker on Asia* that the most important thing we can know about ourselves is our personal strengths.

Drucker believed that the Jesuits, a Catholic order founded by St. Ignatius Loyola, and the Calvinists, a Protestant Reform movement founded by John Calvin—both started in the mid-16th century—developed a very valuable technique called “feedback analysis” to help their priests and ministers find their strengths and grow into what they were called to be. Drucker wrote:

Whenever a Jesuit priest or a Calvinist pastor does anything of significance (for instance, making a key decision), he is expected to write down what results he anticipates. Nine months later, he then feeds back from the actual results to these anticipations. ... I have followed this method myself now for 50 years. It brings out what one's strengths are—and this is the most important thing an individual can know about himself or herself. It brings out where improvement is needed and what kind of improvement is needed. Finally, it brings out what an individual cannot do and therefore should not even try to do. To know one's strengths, to know how to improve them and to know what one cannot do—they are the keys to continuous learning.

Feedback analysis provides valuable insight.

In the last year, I made journal notes of key decisions as I made them. I'm just now understanding the impact of those decisions and adjusting my thinking accordingly. I clearly see areas of strength and weakness.

Feedback analysis provides evidence of strengths.

There is little emotional bias in historical review. Facts seem to preach good sermons.

Our personalities may push us forward into a project, but it's our strengths that will propel success.

Leaders will do best when they find their lane and work in it. The Holy Spirit will lead us. We just need to learn to listen to His voice.

I take comfort in the fact that He knows me best.