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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the feedback-seeking behaviors of faculty in their third year of employment at five colleges and universities. A total of 121 faculty completed a mailed questionnaire on their feedback- and information-seeking behaviors, and a subset of 86 responded to interview questions about feedback. Statistical analyses of the survey and interview results indicated that faculty at 2-year institutions sought feedback more frequently; reported more credence, amount, and satisfaction with feedback from chairs and colleagues; and reported more job satisfaction and less academic stress than faculty at 4-year institutions. At 4-year institutions, male faculty reported more credence given to feedback from colleagues and students, more satisfaction with feedback from colleagues, and less stress than female faculty. Faculty with minimal teaching experience reported more feedback from students while those with extensive experience reported more feedback from colleagues and greater satisfaction with feedback from chairs. Faculty who sought feedback more frequently reported more stress but essentially the same perceived teaching success and job satisfaction as those that did not seek feedback at all. (Contains 10 references.) (MDM)

Feedback Seeking and Receiving by College and University Faculty

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Feedback Seeking and Receiving by College and University Faculty

College and university professors naturally feel some anxiety about how they are doing. Newly hired faculty, in particular, need to learn what attitudes and behaviors lead to positive performance reviews and eventually to advancement (Olsen & Sorcinelli, 1992). Uncertainty about what is needed to succeed in a new job can be reduced by information from others, including feedback from colleagues, administrators, and students. This paper deals with faculty feedback-seeking, that is, with the ways faculty seek feedback about their work and with some correlates of feedback-seeking.

Viewing faculty as feedback-seekers shifts the focus of socialization research from the reactive, that is, faculty as reacting to organizational initiatives and policies (see much of the research reviewed by Dunn, Rouse, & Seff, 1994) to the proactive, that is, faculty actively acquiring information and initiating occasions for feedback.

Research using the concept of feedback-seeking has previously been conducted in non-academic organizations (Miller & Jacklin, 1991; Morrison, 1993a). Ashford and Cummings (1983) first identified two modes of feedback-seeking. "Monitoring" involves attention to cues from information that is readily available, for example by consulting personnel manuals or by observing others. "Inquiry" involves active solicitation of information, for example, by questioning one's supervisor or gathering data from clients or customers. Monitoring occurs more frequently than does inquiry. In fact, Northcraft and Ashford (1990) note that employees, especially poorly performing employees, are reluctant to engage in inquiry.

A study of recently hired faculty applied this research to an academic setting. This study assesses these modes of feedback-seeking in a sample of faculty during their third year of employment at five colleges and universities, documents faculty experience with feedback-seeking and feedback received and relates them to several outcomes relevant to postsecondary education. It also identifies implications for faculty and institutions about uses of feedback.

METHODS

The data for this study came from the New Faculty Project survey that was sent to tenure-track faculty hired in 1991 and 1992. (The New Faculty Project was supported by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) of the United States Department of Education through the National Center on Postsecondary Teaching, Learning, and Assessment (NCTLA), an effort of a consortium of universities located at Pennsylvania State University. The New Faculty Project, based at Northwestern University, was under the direction of Robert J. Menges, Professor of Education and Social Policy.)

Sample

The sample for this study were faculty from two cohorts who were new to their institutions in 1991 and 1992. These faculty came from five institutions: two liberal arts colleges, one community college district, one

comprehensive university, and one research university. These faculty were surveyed for three years; responses used in this study came from year three when 252 surveys were mailed and 176 returned. A subset of faculty were also interviewed. While faculty of all ranks were included in the survey, the sample used in this study were below the rank of full professors. The data used in this study comes from 121 faculty for whom survey responses were available for all of the feedback variables and 86 faculty who responded to the interview questions about feedback. The sample consisted of 58 female and 63 male faculty whose teaching experience ranged from minimal to extensive.

Instruments and Instrumentation

Survey items to assess feedback-seeking mode were adapted from Morrison (1993b). These items asked about the frequency with which new hires sought information from various sources, slightly modified from the earlier application in a business setting to one more appropriate for a postsecondary setting. Feedback-seeking mode was measured by an item that included nine activities by which faculty sought feedback. "Other" (option i) was not included in the scaling. "Consult memos, handbooks, etc." (option h) was eliminated from the scale because of poor fit with the remaining items but was used as a single indicator of more general information-seeking--one that is more impersonal in nature. The survey item on which this variable was based is as follows:

> *Think about your teaching and research/creative activities in the past academic year. In trying to figure out how well you were performing your work, how frequently in general did you do the things listed below. Please use the following scale:*
>
> *0 = never*
> *1 = once a month*
> *2 = few times a month*
> *3 = once a week*
> *4 = few times a week*
> *5 = once a day*
> *6 = few times a day*
>
> *a. ask your chair for feedback*
> *b. ask a more experienced senior colleague*
> *c. ask another junior faculty member*
> *d. ask an administrator other than your chair*
> *e. pay attention to how colleagues behave*
> *f. socialize with colleagues to learn how they behave and what they value*
> *g. observe what behaviors are rewarded and use this as a clue to what is desirable or expected*
> *h. consult memos, handbooks, or other written documents*
> *i. other*

From the responses to this item a variable for feedback-seeking mode was developed using a Rasch analysis. The scores for this variable were normally distributed and ranged from 0 to 10 with an average score of 5.00 and a standard deviation of 1.07. The (Rasch person separation) reliability for this scale was .80. The mean of the information-seeking item for the sample was 2.12 and the standard deviation was 1.75.

Interview data were examined to further explore feedback seeking. Questions concerning feedback from students were the focus. The questions asked were: *Have you received feedback from your students in this course? On a scale of 1-10, how useful was the feedback you received?*

Other variables were created from items in the survey. Data on information or feedback received came from the following item:

> *Faculty receive feedback on their work in a variety of ways and from different people. For each of the following, please indicate the degree of credence you give to that feedback, the amount of feedback received, and your level of satisfaction with the feedback. [The response scale for credence was from little (1) to great (4); the scale for amount was none (0) to a lot (4), and the same for satisfaction was very dissatisfied (1) to very satisfied (4) with NA for not applicable.]*
>
> *a. chair's evaluation of your teaching*
> *b. colleagues' (faculty in your unit) evaluation of your teaching*
> *c. student responses on teaching evaluation forms*

Credence given to feedback from chairs, colleagues, and students were each measured by a single item using a four-point scale: 1 = little or no credence, 4 = great deal of credence. Summary statistics for the sample are as follows: chair (mean = 3.21; standard deviation = 0.86); colleagues (mean = 3.18; standard deviation = 0.75); mean = 3.23; standard deviation = 0.75). Amount of feedback received from chairs, colleagues, and students were each measured by a single item each using a four-point scale: 1 = a little, 4 = a lot. Summary statistics for the sample are as follows: chair (mean = 2.31; standard deviation = 1.00); colleagues (mean = 2.37; standard deviation = 1.02); students (mean = 3.23; standard deviation = 0.81). Satisfaction with feedback from chairs, colleagues, and students were each measured by a single item each that was on a four-point scale: 1 = very dissatisfied, 4 = very satisfied. Summary statistics as a whole are as follows: chair (mean = 3.06; standard deviation = 0.86); colleagues (mean = 3.05; standard deviation = 0.86); students (mean = 3.27; standard deviation = 0.84).

A variable thought to have an influence on feedback behavior was included in the study: attribution of teaching proficiency and control over teaching performance. External attribution of teaching proficiency was measured by six parts (advanced preparation and planning, previous training and experience, natural ability, overall strategy, difficulty of tasks, and luck) of an item (*To what extent does each of the following factors contribute to your teaching proficiency?*) on a 10-point scale: 1 = does not contribute, 10 = contributes a great deal. These items were used to create a scale which indicated the extent to which success was attributed to external sources. A Rasch analysis was conducted to create the attribution scale. The scores on this scale were essentially normally distributed and ranged from 0 to 4 with a mean of 1.33 and a standard deviation of 0.38. The (Rasch person separation) reliability for this scale was .56. Because of poor reliability, this variable was eliminated from the subsequent analyses.

Demographic variables which have been shown to influence faculty outcomes were also considered. Gender designations were taken from the survey data and the institution type was classified as 2-year or 4-year. An index of teaching experience was created from responses to items asking faculty the number of years they taught either part-time or full-time in various capacities (teaching assistantships, teaching in elementary/secondary schools, and teaching in colleges or universities). From this index, faculty were classified into three levels of teaching experience: minimal (equivalent to 0-2 years of relevant experience), moderate (equivalent to 3-6 years of relevant experience), and extensive (equivalent to 7 or more years of relevant experience).

Three outcomes were investigated: job satisfaction, perceived teaching success, and academic stress. Job satisfaction was measured by a single item (*How satisfied or dissatisfied do you personally feel about each of the following aspects of your job at this institution?*) that was on a four-point scale: 1=very dissatisfied, 2=dissatisfied, 3=satisfied, 4=very satisfied. The mean for the overall sample was 3.31 and the standard deviation was 0.68. Perceived teaching success was measured by a single item (*Comparing yourself with other faculty of similar experience and with your qualifications, how successful have you been (in your teaching) since you arrived at this institution?*) that was on a ten-point scale: 1=very unsuccessful, 10=very successful. The mean for the overall sample was 8.27 and the standard deviation was 1.63. Academic stress was measured by seven parts (time pressures, teaching load, research/publishing demands, review/promotion process, committee work/faculty meetings, students, and colleagues) of an item (*Please indicate the extent to which each item has been a source of stress for you during the past twelve months.*) that were on a three-point scale: 1=not at all, 2=somewhat, 3=extensive. These items were used to create a scale which indicated the extent of academic (as opposed to personal) stress perceived. A Rasch analysis was used to create the academic stress scale. The scores on this scale were essentially normally distributed and ranged from 0 to 8 with a mean of 4.19 and a standard deviation of 1.24. The (Rasch person separation) reliability for this scale was .71.

Analysis

In this study, quantitative techniques were used to analyze data from the New Faculty Project survey and qualitative techniques were used to analyze Project interview data. Multiple regression was used to determine the influence on the outcomes (job satisfaction, perceived teaching success, and academic stress) of ten variables: feedback-seeking mode and credence to, amount of, and satisfaction with feedback from chairs, colleagues, and students. Variables controlled for in these analyses consisted of: gender, type of institution, and amount of teaching experience. Independent sample t-tests and one-way analysis of variance were used to test for differences across the control variables in both predictors and outcomes. Finally, thematic analysis were performed on interview responses.

RESULTS

In the analyses, a measure for feedback-seeking mode was developed and its relationship (and that of various aspects of feedback received) to subsequent outcomes was determined. Presented below are the results of

comparisons of subgroups of faculty on these variables, a description of the feedback-seeking measure developed, and results from the modeling of subsequent outcomes using feedback variables.

Differences across faculty

To understand the relationship between faculty experiences with feedback and subsequent outcomes, it is important to examine how faculty differ in respect to these experiences. The differences in feedback variables and outcomes by gender are presented in Table 1, the results by type of institution are presented in Table 2, and the results by amount of teaching experience are presented in Table 3.

Table 1
Differences in Feedback Variables and Outcomes By Gender

	Females (n=86)		Males (n=81)		
	mean	s.d.	mean	s.d.	*t*
Feedback-seeking Mode	4.192	1.133	4.201	1.286	0.05
Feedback Receiving					
Credence (Chairs)	2.744	1.374	2.778	1.275	-0.16
Credence (Colleagues)	2.761	1.213	2.988	1.048	-1.30
Credence (Students)	3.045	0.940	3.107	0.728	-0.49
Amount (Chairs)	2.293	1.024	2.236	0.957	0.35
Amount (Colleagues)	2.295	1.033	2.250	0.981	0.28
Amount (Students)	3.302	0.841	3.136	0.771	1.33
Satisfaction (Chairs)	3.000	1.013	2.907	0.857	0.61
Satisfaction (Colleagues)	2.840	0.955	3.066	0.822	-1.59
Satisfaction (Students)	3.049	0.915	3.232	0.775	-1.38
Job Satisfaction	3.271	0.762	3.153	0.699	1.05
Perceived Success	8.189	1.715	7.768	1.807	1.57
Academic Stress	4.172	1.550	4.475	1.374	1.37

While there were no differences in feedback variables or outcomes by gender, when examined separately by institution type (not shown), gender differences were found for faculty at 4-year institutions. At 4-year institutions, male faculty report more credence given to feedback from colleagues (t=2.25, p=.027) and students (t=2.01, p=.048), more satisfaction with feedback from colleagues (t=2.18, p=.031), and less stress than female faculty (t=-3.53, p=.001). Differences were found for both feedback variables and outcomes by type of institution. Faculty at 2-year institutions sought feedback more frequently, reported more credence, amount, and satisfaction with feedback from chairs and colleagues, and reported more job satisfaction, and less academic stress than those at 4-year institutions. Faculty also differed in feedback variables by amount of teaching experience: faculty with minimal teaching experience reported more feedback from students while those with extensive experience reported

Table 2
Differences in Feedback Variables and Outcomes By Type of Institution

	2-year (n=57) mean	s.d.	4-year (n=116) mean	s.d.	*t*	
Feedback-seeking Mode	5.839	1.212	4.375	1.168	2.79**	(2yr>4yr)
Feedback Receiving						
Credence (Chairs)	3.429	0.710	2.423	1.431	6.07**	(2yr>4yr)
Credence (Colleagues)	3.263	0.856	2.673	1.213	3.67**	(2yr>4yr)
Credence (Students)	3.193	0.875	3.017	0.823	1.29	
Amount (Chairs)	2.709	0.916	2.000	0.938	4.47**	(2yr>4yr)
Amount (Colleagues)	2.582	1.013	2.101	0.964	2.91**	(2yr>4yr)
Amount (Students)	3.056	0.856	3.301	0.778	-1.84	
Satisfaction (Chairs)	3.245	0.782	2.794	0.978	2.89**	(2yr>4yr)
Satisfaction (Colleagues)	3.208	0.817	2.817	0.911	2.63**	(2yr>4yr)
Satisfaction (Students)	3.269	0.795	3.080	0.871	1.33	
Job Satisfaction	3.702	0.462	2.965	0.719	7.04**	(2yr>4yr)
Perceived Success	8.321	1.790	7.828	1.741	1.73	
Academic Stress	3.303	1.283	4.156	1.316	-6.93**	(2yr<4yr)

Table 3
Differences in Feedback Variables and Outcomes By Amount of Teaching Experience

	Minimal(n=58) mean	s.d.	Moderate(n=55) mean	s.d.	Extensive(n=47) mean	s.d.	*F*	
Feedback-seeking Mode	4.056	1.020	4.022	1.035	4.523	1.551	2.810	
Feedback Receiving								
Credence (Chairs)	2.690	1.231	2.818	1.249	2.915	1.457	0.394	
Credence (Colleagues)	2.790	1.031	2.965	1.180	2.878	1.210	0.340	
Credence (Students)	3.069	0.915	3.123	0.868	3.118	0.711	0.711	
Amount (Chairs)	2.076	0.896	2.380	1.067	2.422	1.011	1.845	
Amount (Colleagues)	1.942	0.802	2.380	1.008	2.575	1.083	5.363*	(Ext>Min)
Amount (Students)	3.411	0.757	3.226	0.824	3.020	0.812	3.211*	(Min>Ext)
Satisfaction (Chairs)	1.887	0.824	2.796	0.935	3.286	0.970	3.674*	(Ext>Min)
Satisfaction (Colleagues)	2.827	0.857	2.925	0.917	3.156	0.852	1.761	
Satisfaction (Students)	3.093	0.853	3.151	0.886	3.280	0.757	0.679	
Job Satisfaction	3.193	0.743	3.196	0.672	3.320	0.741	0.528	
Perceived Success	7.763	1.784	8.018	1.804	8.520	1.432	2.764	
Academic Stress	4.313	1.351	4.209	1.232	4.549	1.785	0.765	

more feedback from colleagues and greater satisfaction with feedback from chairs. When examined by type of institution and amount of teaching experience (not shown), faculty with extensive experience at 2-year institutions also reported greater job satisfaction ($F=3.34$, $p=.043$), greater perceived teaching success ($F=3.88$, $p=.011$) and less academic stress ($F=3.66$, $p=.033$) than those with moderate experience while faculty at 4-year institutions with minimal experience also report seeking feedback more frequently ($F=3.16$, $p=.046$) than those with extensive experience.

Measuring feedback seeking

The measure developed for feedback-seeking mode is illustrated in the map presented in Figure 1. To the left of the vertical line, this map shows the distribution of extent of feedback-seeking on the part of these faculty; faculty toward the top of this distribution sought feedback frequently and faculty at the bottom of this distribution never sought feedback from any source. To the right of the vertical line, this map shows the frequency of feedback-seeking from four sources: 1) monitoring the behavior of others, 2) making inquiries of colleagues (either junior or senior), 3) making inquiries of chairs and, 4) making inquiries of administrators. Using the map of feedback seeking modes from multiple sources, faculty can be categorized into three groups: those who neither monitor nor inquire, those who monitor but don't inquire, and those who both monitor and inquire.

Influence on subsequent outcomes

The influence of feedback-seeking mode, credence given to feedback, amount of feedback received, and satisfaction with feedback received was determined on three outcomes: overall job satisfaction, perceived teaching success, and extent of academic stress. In each of these analyses, gender, type of institution, and amount of teaching experience was controlled for by entering them in the regression model prior to the entry of the independent variables. (When the effect of gender, type of institution, or level of experience was significant on the influence of the feedback variables and the outcomes, the analyses were conducted separately by these control variables. The results of these analyses are presented in Menges, Bode, Reyes, & Letwat, 1996.)

Feedback-seeking mode was found to be related to academic stress ($t=2.51$, $p=.013$) but not to teaching success or job satisfaction; that is, faculty who sought feedback more frequently reported more stress but essentially the same perceived teaching success and job satisfaction as those who didn't seek feedback at all. The other aspect of feedback-seeking, consulting handbooks, etc., was related to job satisfaction ($t=2.71$, $p=.008$) and academic stress ($t=-2.70$, $p=.008$); that is, faculty who frequently consulted written documents for information reported more job satisfaction and less academic stress but essentially the same perceived teaching success as those who did not seek information from written sources.

Interviews were available for a small number of the members of three groups: those who monitored and inquired, those who monitored only, and those who neither monitored nor inquired. We compared responses to questions about handling stress, information desired about students, responses to student difficulties, and plans for course evaluations. In general, those in the monitoring and inquiry group (n=5) were most likely to actively solicit

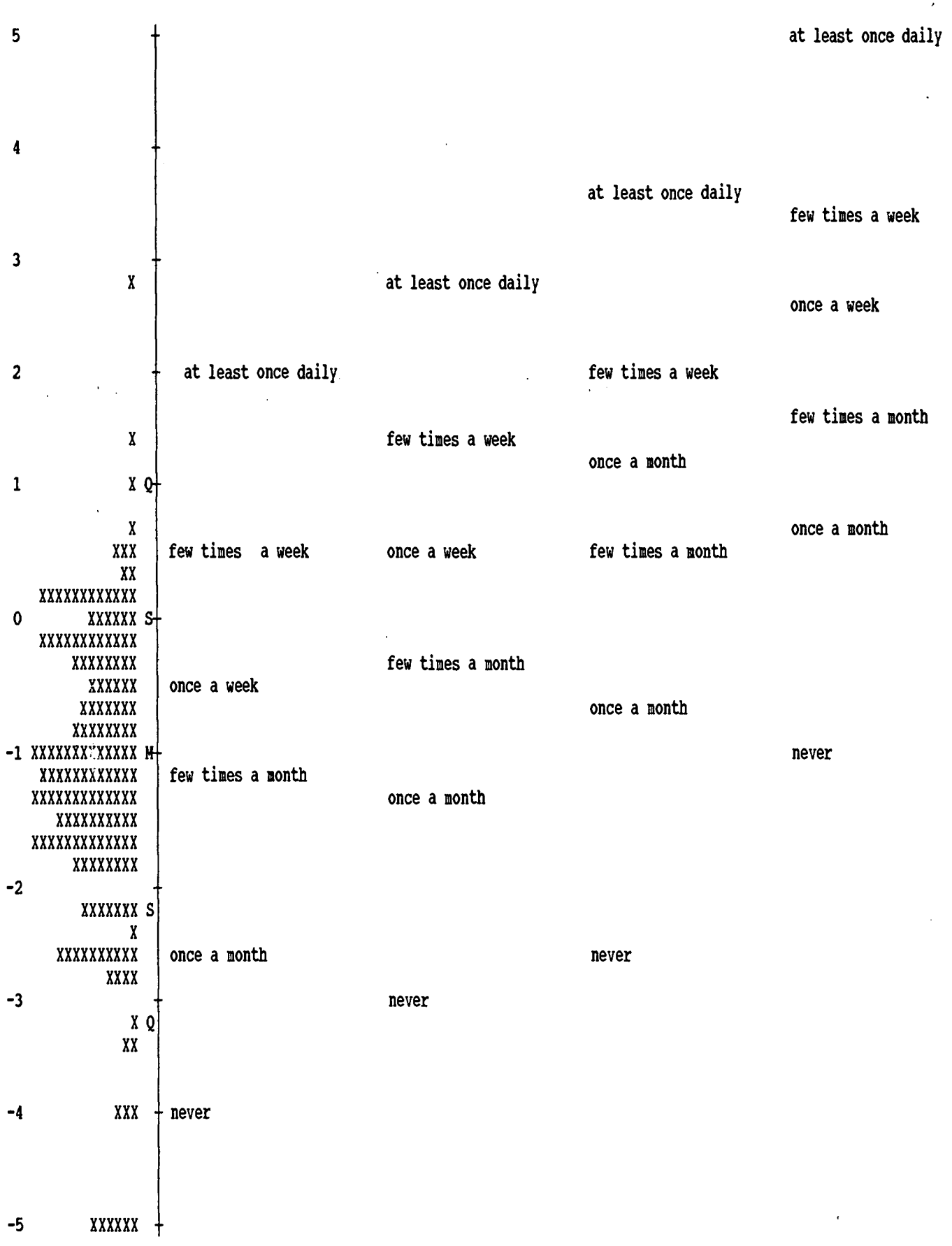

Figure 1. Map of New Faculty Feedback-seeking

information, those in the monitor only group (n=4) attended to available cues but did not solicit new information, and those in the neither monitor nor inquire group (n=6) attended to few cues and solicited no new information.

Feedback received was found to be related to at least some outcomes; however, these relationships varied depending on the aspect (credence, amount, and satisfaction) and source (chair, colleagues, and students) of the feedback. The results are presented in Tables 4-6; Table 4 contains the results for the modeling of job satisfaction, Table 5 contains the results for the modeling of perceived teaching success, and Table 6 contains the results for the modeling of academic stress.

Table 4
Influence of Feedback Received on Job Satisfaction

	Credence		Amount		Satisfaction	
Source	*t*	R^2	*t*	R^2	*t*	R^2
Chair	2.183*	.260	0.171	.228	0.990	.235
Colleagues	2.110*	.258	-.794	.232	1.811	.250
Students	0.561	.230	0.881	.233	2.073*	.257

Table 5
Influence of Feedback Received on Perceived Teaching Success

	Credence		Amount		Satisfaction	
Source	*t*	R^2	*t*	R^2	*t*	R^2
Chair	0.823	.065	1.888	.089	0.963	.067
Colleagues	0.236	.060	1.348	.075	1.164	.071
Students	0.804	.065	0.965	.067	1.908	.089

Table 6
Influence of Feedback Received on Academic Stress

	Credence		Amount		Satisfaction	
Source	*t*	R^2	*t*	R^2	*t*	R^2
Chair	-2.322	.303*	-0.411	.271	-1.854	.291
Colleagues	-2.252	.301*	-0.843	.274	-2.948	.323**
Students	0.319	.270	-1.741	.289	-1.315	.281

Job satisfaction and academic stress are influenced by credence given to feedback: faculty who report more job satisfaction and less academic stress give more credence to feedback from chairs and colleagues. Job satisfaction is also influenced by satisfaction with feedback: faculty who report more job satisfaction are more satisfied with feedback from students and those who report less academic stress are more satisfied with feedback from chairs and colleagues. The amount of feedback received from any source was not influential on any outcome nor was perceived teaching success influenced by credence given to or satisfaction with feedback from any source.

Some differences in the influence of feedback received was found for faculty who Monitor Only versus those who Monitor & Inquire (not shown). Controlling for the same variables, job satisfaction was influenced by satisfaction with feedback from colleagues for faculty who Monitor Only (t=3.96, p=.000) but not for those who Monitor & Inquire. Perceived teaching success was influenced by the credence given to (t=2.23, p=.032) and satisfaction with (t=3.01, p=.005) feedback from students for faculty who Monitor Only but not those who Monitor & Inquire. Academic stress was influenced by satisfaction with feedback from colleagues (t=-3.96, p=.000) for faculty who Monitor Only but by credence to feedback from chairs (t=-2.65, p=.011) for those who Monitor & Inquire.

In general, feedback received accounted for slight to moderate variation in the outcomes. Controlling for gender, type of institution, and amount of teaching experience, modeling academic stress with control and feedback variables accounted for less than one-third of the variance; modeling job stress accounted for approximately one-quarter of the variance; and modeling perceived teaching success accounted for less than 10% of the variance.

Discussion

The survey results confirm business environments, showing that faculty more frequently monitor the activities of others than make inquiries of them. Unclear in previous results was the relationship between monitoring and inquiry behavior. These characteristics are not polar opposites; people don't either monitor or inquire but differ together in the frequency with which they seek feedback via monitoring and inquiring. At any level of feedback seeking, faculty more frequently monitor than inquire. For faculty who make inquiries, colleagues are the most frequent source from which feedback is sought with inquiries from chairs less frequent and inquiries from administrators least frequent. The distribution of the measure of feedback-seeking shows that most faculty seek feedback from some source while few do not seek feedback at all and only relatively few seek feedback frequently from multiple sources.

Differences in the frequency of individual feedback variables should be considered in evaluating the relationships between them and the outcomes. Although faculty give more credence to feedback from students, the credence they give to feedback from chairs and colleagues is significantly related to job satisfaction and academic stress. Thus while feedback from students might be considered informative, feedback from chairs and colleagues could be considered more useful. Sheer volume of feedback does not appear to be important. The amount of feedback received from any source (most from students) is not related to any subsequent outcome examined. Finally,

faculty are equally satisfied with feedback from all the sources of feedback, but satisfaction with feedback from students is related to job satisfaction while satisfaction with feedback from colleagues is related to academic stress..

Interview data provide further insight into what faculty mean when they rate their satisfaction with feedback. Satisfying feedback (i.e., feedback that faculty say is useful) is most likely to be from colleagues and students (especially from students' open comments), less likely from chairs, and rarely from other administrators or from student performance. Faculty especially desire information that can lead to improvement (corrective feedback). Information that confirms what faculty are doing (affirmation feedback) and information that clarifies what is expected from faculty (expectation-clarifying feedback) is also valued. Faculty believe that feedback for improvement should be separated from evaluation for personnel review and that results of student evaluations could be made more timely and constructive.

Based on the interview data and the other results from this study, several recommendations can be made for ways of improving feedback seeking and receiving. The best source of feedback differs depending on the kind of information desired. For informative feedback concerning teaching and learning, faculty should obtain feedback from students. If the formal student evaluations are not informative, faculty should seek information on their own and to the level of detail that is meaningful to them. For useful feedback concerning expectations in the review and promotion process, faculty should obtain feedback from their chairs and colleagues. Feedback from these sources can help new faculty learn the important behaviors and attitudes that are necessary to succeed at a particular institution. The amount of feedback received isn't important, so faculty should concentrate on quality and not quantity of feedback. Since the level of academic stress faculty feel appears to reflect the frequency with which feedback is sought, faculty should determine their own comfort level and gear their need for feedback to the level of stress they feel. Finally, based on its lack of relationship with perceived teaching success, frequency of feedback seeking does not appear to be a reflection of how well faculty are performing; therefore, faculty should not hesitate to seek feedback for fear of being perceived as being unsuccessful. In fact, Boice (1992) found that actively seeking feedback and advice from colleagues was a characteristic of the most successful newcomers, those he labeled as "fast starters."

What can the institution to do help? Institution may be a good source of information that is difficult to obtain informally. Among other things, institutions might be advised to: 1) develop teaching centers to provide assistance to faculty; 2) provide workshops on teaching methods and knowledge about how students learn and are motivated; and 3) provide leaves, conference attendance, and decreased teaching loads to increase the content expertise of faculty. If faculty can obtain information on these aspects of teaching from institutional sources, they can concentrate their informal feedback seeking to aspects that are more relevant to job satisfaction.

Conclusions

Academics receive limited training for their teaching responsibilities and typically report feeling overwhelmed by the demands placed on them during the early years of an appointment (Finkelstein & LaCelle-Peterson, 1992). By their third year on campus, faculty tend to seek feedback infrequently, mostly by monitoring

the behavior of colleagues. More than feedback-seeking mode, the credence given to and satisfaction with feedback received by new faculty are important in predicting job satisfaction and academic stress. The amount of feedback received from chairs, colleagues or students varies across source but is unrelated to subsequent outcomes. Institutions devote considerable resources to recruiting and orienting new members of their faculties. Attention to feedback variables may increase the likelihood of their retention and success.

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