

You're receiving this email because of your relationship with The Human Factor, Inc. Please [confirm](#) your continued interest in receiving email from us.

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.

*Newsletter Issue #25  
When Good Acting is Bad for Business*



**THE HUMAN FACTOR, Inc.**

... helping companies, teams & individuals be better, faster, stronger



Are you swift?  
Can you move fast with focus and flexibility in today's rapidly changing world? Holly

can serve as your thought partner to help create the type of thinking you and your organization need to thrive.

It's not rocket science... it's harder! Call today. The world won't wait.

National Go Red For Women Day is this Friday, Feb. 5th so remember to be bold and wear red to help the American Heart Association promote awareness of the fight against heart disease as the #1 killer of women.



If you're in the San Diego area, you don't want to miss hearing Holly as the keynote speaker at the 10th Annual Go Red For Women Luncheon on Friday, February 12th at the Hotel del Coronado. Click [here](#) for more info and to purchase tickets for the event. And stay tuned for more info on the Orange County, CA event where Holly will once again be the keynote speaker on March 25, 2010.

When Shakespeare said that all the world's a stage, he probably didn't have employee performance evaluations in mind. But for anyone who has ever endured a less-than-candid performance appraisal, his words definitely ring true.



Giving and receiving feedback is a complex process made infinitely more complicated by our human emotions and reactions. In particular, our fears, uncertainties and doubts about the feedback process can make us very uncomfortable. So when we give or receive feedback, we often appear as though we are on stage, performing a role.

Performance evaluations often feature two primary roles: lead actors (the person providing the feedback) and supporting actors (the individual receiving the feedback). Do you recognize any of the following performers in your company?

"...and the Oscar goes to..."

**Leading Actors** (providing feedback):

- **The Magician** disguises her feedback so that the employee can only guess about the real message. "You did great & here's one thing to work on, but you did great..." In order to minimize conflict and keep the employee guessing, she only slips in negative comments when the employee isn't looking. The magician typically appears when a manager is afraid of hurting the employee's feelings or worried about not being liked. The receiver walks away wondering what the show was all about.
- **The Corporate Enforcer's** main goal is to protect his "good guy" status. His impersonal "I'm just doing my job and delivering the message; it's not like I wanted to or that I even believe it is necessary" approach gets him off the hook for having any negative thoughts or opinions about the employee.
- **The Hero** plays the part of protector while delivering the feedback as if he is there only to help. "Don't

Are your managers ready, aligned



ready, aligned

and focused on achieving the most possible in 2010? If you are in San Diego, be sure to join us at the **Management Development Institute** program launched in conjunction with San Diego State University. A certificate for **Core Essentials in Management** will be offered in March. [Click here](#) to download your priority registration code as well as more info.

***You can't afford to be mediocre!  
Are your managers the best?  
Are they continuing to learn and unlearn to keep up?  
Do they have the tools they need to thrive?***

## Keynote Presentations



Do you belong to a professional organization or industry group? Holly would love to speak to your group or conference.

You need real tools to thrive as a leader and manager in today's environment. You need new ways of thinking. Holly provides them in interactive keynotes and workshops. Contact [Holly](#) today to discuss how she can customize content to achieve the results you need. **What are you waiting for?**



**Are you twittering? ...have any friends on Facebook? ...Linked In yet? ...gotten on Plaxo? ...are you getting the More Than a Minute weekly blogs? Social media is powerful and a great opportunity to do more than ever before with fewer dollars.**

worry, I'll do it." He may pretend not to agree with the feedback while backpedaling out of the discussion, and will frequently step in and offer to resolve any issues for the employee.

- **The Interrogator** asks a series of tough questions, trying to get the employee to figure out what they might not have done well. "Do you think it went well...what do you think others thought? Do you think that was the best approach?" She remains in control by never providing the answer and by not offering any specifics on the behavior(s) in question.
- **The Game Show Host** prefers a guessing game in which the employee doesn't really know what the manager is thinking but is expected to play the game anyway. "Guess what I think is your strength? What do you think I want you to focus on?" As with the magician, the employee leaves the meeting wondering what it was all about.

### Supporting Actors (receiving feedback):

- **The Victim** is so hard on himself that any feedback is taken way out of context. "It's always my fault. I knew I would fail at this." He often perceives the feedback as a personal condemnation and overreacts.
- **The Sheepherder** believes there is safety in numbers. "Everyone does it that way." She finds or at least identifies other employees who engage in the same behavior. This is a perfect way to avoid responsibility & accountability for personal performance & it can be intimidating to a feedback giver since it feels like the whole organization is suddenly against you.
- **The Con Man (or woman)** creates tangents and diversions by bringing up other projects, issues or behaviors. "Did you hear about what is going on in X department?" The goal is to get the manager off track and avoid the real issues at hand.
- **Ex-Spouses** blame the other person for anything less than perfection. "It's your fault. No it's your fault!" In this scene, the lead and supporting actors both become defensive and stop listening altogether.

Do any of these casts of characters remind you of anyone? All of these lead and supporting roles require sophisticated acting skills. Yet, most people are not consciously aware of when they are performing. So when any of these actors appear on stage, it's time to yell "Cut!" and re-shoot the scene.

Start by recognizing that the role being played is nothing more than a way of avoiding fears. If you're the one doing

Connect to Holly via social media and learn even more about being a great leader and manager today!

- [Twitter](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Plaxo](#)
- [MTAM Blog](#)

the acting, take a look at the behavior getting in the way of your valuable feedback and try to develop a better understanding of why you do it. If the employee is the one on stage, show some empathy for their fears and then gently redirect the conversation back to the issue at hand.

In Hollywood, a best actor award will definitely advance your career. When it comes to being a great leader or manager and assessing your employees, not so much. Keep the acting to a minimum on both sides and you and your employees will enjoy more honest and productive performance evaluations.

Answer to last edition's *Who said this?* ""When it comes to the future, there are three kinds of people: those who let it happen, those who make it happen, and those who wonder what happened." John M. Richardson, Jr.

This issue's *Who said this?* "Performance appraisal is that occasion when once a year you find out who claims sovereignty over you." Find out who in the next newsletter.

<a href="#">View Website</a>	(858) 401-9380
------------------------------	----------------

[Please forward to 3 colleagues.](#)

✉ **SafeUnsubscribe®**

This email was sent to holly@thehumanfactor.biz by [holly@thehumanfactor.biz](mailto:holly@thehumanfactor.biz).  
[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



The Human Factor, Inc. | 12645 Picrus Street | San Diego | CA | 92129