
A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON THE DYNAMICS OF DIRECT FEEDBACK FROM SUPERVISORS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE. IMPROVEMENT AT PT WANGSA JATRA LESTARI

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Abstract

This research entitled A Qualitative Study on the Dynamics of Direct Feedback from Supervisors on Employee Performance. Improvement at PT Wangsa Jatra Lestari is a study that discusses the Role of direct feedback from supervisors in supporting employee performance. improvement. It aims to observe: (1) the forms and processes of direct feedback provided by supervisors to employees; (2) the factors influencing the effectiveness of feedback in improving performance.; and (3) employees' perceptions toward the feedback received. This qualitative research used a case study approach and the data were collected through in-depth interviews and documentation. The informants consisted of management and employees who were directly involved in the feedback process. The data validity was tested using credibility and source triangulation. The data analysis technique was conducted through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions systematically. The results of this research showed that direct feedback from supervisors plays an important Role in improving employee performance., in terms of work quality, timeliness, accuracy, and work motivation. The forms of feedback consist of positive, corrective, and Developmental feedback delivered directly through face-to-face communication and daily work activities. The effectiveness of feedback is influenced by the clarity of delivery, timing of feedback, interpersonal relationships between supervisors and employees, and the communication skills of supervisors in conveying messages appropriately. Employees' perceptions toward feedback tend to be positive as it helps them understand mistakes, improve work methods, increase self-confidence, and strengthen working relationships with supervisors. The findings also indicate several obstacles, including the absence of written standard operating procedures (SOP) regarding feedback, differences in employee characteristics and understanding, as well as variations in supervisors' communication abilities in delivering feedback.

Keywords: Direct Feedback, Employee Performance, Organizational Communication, Human Resource Management

INTRODUCTION

The Role of Direct Feedback in Employee Performance

In today's competitive work environment, companies are required to implement effective human resource management in order to achieve organizational goals optimally. One important aspect of HR management is workplace communication between supervisors and subordinates, particularly through the provision of direct feedback. Direct feedback refers to communication delivered directly by supervisors to employees in the form of guidance, evaluation, appreciation, or correction regarding the work performed.

The provision of direct feedback is considered important because it helps employees understand both their strengths and weaknesses in carrying out their work, enabling them to continuously improve their performance. This is consistent with the interview results with the HR Manager of PT Wangsa Jatra Lestari, who stated that:

“For us, direct feedback is a form of communication delivered directly by supervisors to employees. It is usually constructive and motivational, not merely criticism. In delivering feedback, we always try to emphasize what has already been done well and deserves appreciation, then continue with aspects that can still be improved.” (HR Manager, June 19, 2025)

Furthermore, the HR Manager also explained that direct feedback has a significant impact on employee performance:

“Yes, quite significant. For example, we once observed an employee who initially had difficulty completing tasks efficiently. After receiving direct input from the supervisor, within one month the employee's performance improved and tasks were completed more punctually.” (HR Manager, June 19, 2025)

The Dynamics of Feedback Delivery Between Supervisors and Employees

In practice, the provision of direct feedback does not always run smoothly. The effectiveness of feedback is influenced by various factors such as the method of delivery, supervisors' communication skills, employee characteristics, and interpersonal relationships between supervisors and subordinates. Differences in employees' abilities to receive and understand instructions require different communication approaches for each individual. Based on the interview results, the HR Manager of PT Wangsa Jatra Lestari revealed that the biggest challenge in providing feedback lies in differences in communication abilities and individual understanding:

“The biggest challenge lies in the differences in communication skills and understanding among individuals. Therefore, the delivery of feedback must be adjusted to the characteristics of each employee.” (HR Manager, June 19, 2025)

These conditions indicate that the dynamics of feedback depend not only on the content of the message but also on the quality of communication and interpersonal relationships in the workplace.

The Effectiveness of Direct Feedback on Performance Improvement

Direct feedback plays an important role in helping employees improve work quality and achieve company targets. Through feedback, employees are able to identify mistakes that need

correction, understand the work standards expected by the company, and receive guidance to improve their performance.

“After receiving feedback, I became more organized in completing tasks. I also became more careful and attentive so that I would not repeat the same mistakes.” (HR Employee, June 19, 2025)

In addition to affecting the technical aspects of work, feedback also has psychological impacts in the form of increased feelings of being cared for and appreciated by the company. This was expressed by an HR employee as follows:

“Of course. I feel more noticed by my supervisor. It makes me feel that my work is recognized, and I am encouraged to do better.” (HR Employee, June 19, 2025)

Another employee also explained that feedback can create more open workplace communication between supervisors and subordinates:

However, the implementation of direct feedback at PT Wangsa Jatra Lestari still faces several obstacles. The HR Manager stated that the company does not yet have a specific written policy regarding feedback provision:

“There is no specific written policy. However, we already have an evaluation form used as the basis for providing feedback. Therefore, the process remains structured even though it is not yet in the form of an official policy.” (HR Manager, June 19, 2025)

Therefore, this study was conducted to further examine the dynamics of direct feedback from supervisors on employee performance improvement at PT Wangsa Jatra Lestari. This research is expected to provide an overview of feedback effectiveness and serve as evaluation material for the company in improving the quality of workplace communication and human resource development.

RESEARCH METHOD

Qualitative Approach

According to Sugiyono (cited in Adlini et al., 2022), qualitative research is research that aims to understand phenomena experienced by research subjects holistically through descriptive methods in the form of words and language within a specific natural context. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at exploring in depth how direct feedback from supervisors influences employee performance improvement at PT Wangsa Jatra Lestari.

Data Collection Techniques

The data collection techniques in this study were adjusted to the characteristics of the qualitative approach, which seeks to capture meaning and processes in depth through direct interaction in the field. The techniques used are as follows:

1. Participatory Observation. The researcher conducted participatory observation by becoming involved in daily work activities within PT Wangsa Jatra Lestari.
2. Semi-Structured Interviews. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with employees and supervisors who served as the main informants.
3. Documentation Study. In addition to observation and interviews, the researcher also utilized internal company documents, such as performance evaluation reports, work procedure documents, and other human resource policy documents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Direct Feedback According to Employees

This subsection discusses employees' understanding of the meaning of direct feedback from supervisors based on the views and experiences of each informant. These understandings reflect how employees interpret direct feedback within the context of their daily work activities.

“Responses/input regarding the work carried out or the obstacles experienced.” (DD, GA Administrator, December 16, 2025).

DD's statement shows that direct feedback is understood as a form of supervisor response toward work outcomes as well as problems faced by employees while performing their duties. This interpretation emphasizes the function of feedback as a two-way communication tool that helps employees understand whether their work aligns with the supervisor's expectations or whether there are still deficiencies that need improvement. In addition, feedback is also viewed as a tool for resolving work-related problems, so employees are not left to handle obstacles independently without guidance.

“Direct feedback is a response given immediately after an action, behavior, or message is delivered.” (YDP, Senior Sales, December 16, 2025).

YDP emphasizes the timing aspect of direct feedback, namely that it is delivered immediately after an action or behavior occurs. This understanding shows that the effectiveness of feedback largely depends on the timeliness of its delivery because employees still have a clear memory of the situation or work performed. Through immediate feedback, employees can promptly reflect and make improvements without waiting for formal periodic evaluations. This illustrates that direct feedback is viewed as a continuous learning mechanism in daily work activities.

Frequency of Receiving Direct Feedback from Supervisors

This subsection describes how often employees receive direct feedback from supervisors and whether there are particular patterns or schedules in delivering such feedback. The frequency and patterns of feedback reflect how communication practices between supervisors and subordinates are implemented in daily work activities.

“Spontaneous and scheduled during year-end performance evaluations.” (DD, GA Administrator, December 16, 2025).

DD's statement shows that direct feedback is received through two mechanisms: spontaneously and on a scheduled basis. Spontaneous feedback usually emerges as an immediate response to certain situations or work activities, while scheduled feedback is delivered during formal moments such as annual performance appraisals. This pattern demonstrates a balance between informal situational feedback and formal evaluative feedback. Through both types of feedback, employees have opportunities to receive short-term guidance as well as comprehensive evaluations of their performance.

“It is spontaneous and occurs almost every day, either verbally or through WhatsApp groups.” (YDP, Senior Sales, December 16, 2025).

YDP revealed that direct feedback is received very frequently, almost every day. This indicates that communication between supervisors and subordinates occurs intensively and continuously. Feedback delivered verbally or through WhatsApp Groups (WAG) reflects

flexibility in communication media used within the workplace. This high frequency allows employees to continuously receive guidance, corrections, and reinforcement directly, enabling them to adjust their performance quickly and consistently.

AF revealed that direct feedback is received routinely through a combination of scheduled and spontaneous patterns. Feedback delivered on specific dates indicates that the company or supervisors have periodic evaluation mechanisms, while spontaneous feedback functions as immediate correction for ongoing or completed work. This pattern benefits employees because they receive continuous guidance both in the short and long term to improve work quality.

“Usually once a week by meeting directly with supervisors to report our department’s condition, although feedback is often spontaneous.” (DDS, Finance Supervisor, December 17, 2025).

Although feedback occurs weekly, it remains spontaneous depending on the issues or problems discussed. This indicates that feedback is not merely one-way communication but also part of two-way discussions between supervisors and subordinates.

Discussion of the Influence of Direct Feedback on Employee Performance

The results of this study indicate that direct feedback from supervisors plays a significant role in improving employee performance, particularly in terms of work quality, changes in work methods, motivation, timeliness, as well as self-confidence and initiative at work. These findings reinforce previous studies stating that feedback is one of the main mechanisms in the process of improving individual performance within organizations. However, this study provides additional emphasis that the “direct” or immediate nature of feedback serves as a distinguishing factor that strengthens its impact on employee performance in daily operational contexts.

From the aspect of work quality, the findings reveal that direct feedback helps employees work more carefully, accurately, and in accordance with the standards established by the company. Employees find it easier to identify mistakes and make improvements when feedback is delivered specifically and immediately after the work is performed. These findings are consistent with Aguinis (2019), who argued that feedback functions as a learning mechanism. However, this study expands upon that finding by demonstrating that the timeliness of feedback delivery is also an important factor in enhancing workplace learning effectiveness. In other words, not only does the content of feedback determine work quality, but also when the feedback is delivered.

Discussion of Factors Influencing Feedback Effectiveness

The findings show that feedback effectiveness is determined not only by the content of the message being delivered but also by various other factors such as the delivery method, timing, interpersonal relationships, and nonverbal communication aspects. Therefore, feedback effectiveness cannot be understood merely from the message content but must also be viewed comprehensively through the context in which it is delivered. Employees perceive feedback as more effective when it is delivered specifically, clearly, relevant to the job, and accompanied by solutions or follow-up guidance. This finding is consistent with the effective feedback model proposed by Hattie and Timperley and supported by Wisniewski et al. (2020). However, this study demonstrates that, in practice, employees place greater emphasis on the practical aspect

of feedback, namely the extent to which it can be directly implemented in their work. This indicates that employees tend to prefer feedback that is practical rather than conceptual in nature.

Discussion of Employee Perceptions of the Feedback System

The findings reveal that employees' perceptions of the feedback system implemented within the company vary considerably, indicating differences in experiences and evaluations among employees. These findings suggest that the existing feedback system has not yet fully met the needs of all employees equally. Therefore, system effectiveness is determined not only by its design but also by its implementation in practice. Employees also perceived that formal evaluations do not fully reflect actual performance in the field. These findings are consistent with the studies of DeNisi and Murphy (2017) as well as Kim and Holzer (2022), which criticized overly administrative evaluation systems. This study strengthens those findings by demonstrating that discrepancies between formal assessments and actual workplace conditions can create perceptions of unfairness among employees.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study conducted through in-depth interviews with employees regarding the practice of direct feedback from supervisors, several key conclusions can be drawn in accordance with the research problem formulation. These conclusions illustrate how direct feedback is understood, implemented, and perceived by employees within the context of their daily work activities.

1. Direct Feedback from Supervisors in Employee Work Practices

Based on the first research problem, this study concludes that direct feedback from supervisors has become an integral part of daily workplace communication practices within the company. Employees understand and experience direct feedback as an immediate response from supervisors regarding work performance, behavior, or work outcomes delivered either formally or informally.

2. Employees' Experiences and Perceptions in Receiving Direct Feedback

In response to the second research problem, this study concludes that employees' experiences in receiving direct feedback from supervisors vary considerably and shape different perceptions of the feedback itself. These experiences include positive feedback, corrective feedback, and feedback perceived as unclear.

3. The Impact of Direct Feedback on Employee Performance and Work Motivation

Based on the third research problem, this study concludes that direct feedback from supervisors has a significant impact on employee performance and work motivation. These impacts are experienced both technically and psychologically.

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