1. Title of the Practice: Three-tier-feedback system.

2. Objectives of the Practice

Presumably the shortest word in the English language that contains the letters 'abcdef' is feedback! This literal quip apart, metaphorically too - the 'abc' of a good communication assuredly includes 'feedback' as its core component.

On the principle that feedback ought to be a critical element in the performance management of a teaching-learning process, Vidyamandira, for over a decade, has been following a three-tier-feedback system. These feedback sessions take place during and after the learning activity. Involving as it does students, teachers, and monastics, this feedback system aims at an all-round development of the college by incorporating the received suggestions.

3. The Context

"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." This piquant observation by George Bernard Shaw provides the right context for the need of 'feedback' in a vital communication process such as teaching-learning. Indeed, it is not uncommon to find 'teaching' going on in its own set pattern, blissfully unaware of the views of the learners. Such one-way communication becomes counter-productive soon enough. Just as teachers need to be apprised of the doings of the students, the students, no less, ought to be allowed to appraise the quality of teaching imparted to them.

Vidyamandira recognized the need for a multi-layered feedback system to offset such insufficiency of the existing teaching-learning process. Exploring the possible sources of feedback, Vidyamandira settled for

- o Open-house-feedback (by students about teaching) during each semester
- o monastics-feedback (about students) during each semester
- o online-feedback by the students at the end of the course

4. The Practice

What follows is the synoptic view of each of these feedback processes.

Tier1- Open house: Students-teachers interaction in each department: This feedback session takes place in each department after a semester has ended and the new semester is well on its way. The agenda of this meeting include the following points

- Discussion by the teachers on the performance of the students in the last semester examination
- Requirement of remedial coaching for some of the students
- Feedback from the students on the syllabus and Teaching-learning methodology of the last semester
- Feedback from the students on the progress of the syllabus and the teaching learning of this semester.
- Other academic activities of the department

Tier2- Open house: Feedback of monastics on students' performance: Ours being a residential college, the academic performance of our students is to a great extent linked with their study habits during hostel hours. Superintendents of the hostels being the monastic members of Vidyamandira - it is they who provide the feedback on the hostel performance of the students. This Tier2-Openhouse is held at the very beginning at each semester to take stock of the performance of the students in the last semester. As part of this

- Non-performing students in particular are asked to trace the possible reason of their poor performance
- Hostel superintendents share their feedback on the study habits of their wards

These feedbacks greatly help to take corrective actions to bring the not-so-good-performers back in track.

<u>Tier3- Online feedback by the students ate the end of course:</u> The online feedback system has been developed to receive feedback on all aspects of the college and hostel.

- ✓ The first part of the system consists of 14 questions each having 5 grades as options: A, B, C, D, and E. A denotes 'Excellent, B 'Good, C 'Average', D 'Less than average', and E 'poor'. Each student is asked to evaluate teachers by putting an appropriate grade of his choice against each question.

- ✓ The second and third part of the system is descriptive where students can write comments and opinions for the improvement of the functioning of the college.

- ✓ A feedback report is generated for each department, hostel, library, and college office.

- ✓ Once all the feedback reports are printed, the Principal distributes them to all the teachers in a sealed envelope.

- ✓ Each teacher goes through the report and after that, a departmental meeting is arranged to discuss the suggestions made by the students.

5. Evidence of Success

The constructive suggestions made by the students have resulted in a slew of improvements of the teaching-learning methodology as well as of the other aspects of college.

- ✓ The classes have become decidedly interactive. ICT classrooms have been introduced. Visual media has found prominence in the teaching process.

- ✓ An interesting upshot of the feedback system has been the introduction of the mentor-mentee structure. This set-up provides every student (mentee) an opportunity to seek guidance from his mentor through informal interactions. In this scheme :

  - Each departmental teacher acts as a guide or mentor for a number of students assigned to him.
  - Mentees are assigned to mentors either semester-wise or year-wise

- Mentor-teacher meets the mentee-students at least once in a month to know the academic progress of the students

This scheme has turned out to be a great success in that the students, outside class hours, get to have many of their issues resolved through the informal interactions with their mentors.

- ✓ Remedial classes for students-not-doing-so-well have proved greatly efficacious in terms of enabling these students register excellent progress in their subsequent tests.

- ✓ The students' feedback has made the administration go beyond its financial capacity and appoint faculty members on its own.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

- ➢ Problems Encountered: Despite its high points, our feedback process is occasionally vitiated by the personal prejudice of the feedback-provider as well as by the garbled response arising thereby. Some such generic situations can be briefly touched upon:

    - ❖The feedback-provider, sometimes failing to distinguish between the actual state of affairs and his imagined one, ends up painting a lurid picture that well belies the reality.

    - ❖ Though very rare, the concerned responder to a constructive feedback tends to get defensive and provide justification for the raised issue that makes the situation even worse.

➢ <u>Resources Required:</u>   While the college has the suitable resource necessary to successfully run the feedback system, an important action point that devolves on us is the continual grooming of our resources who as

- ❖ feedback-givers would distinguish constructive feedback from a feedback tinged with personal likes/dislikes.

- ❖ responders would recognize feedback as an opportunity for growth.

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