



# Schachter Monthly

By Ephraim Schachter • Oct 10, 2023

Smart Brevity® count: 4.5 mins...1232 words

🍂 **Happy October** to my senior, executive and HR leaders across industries and academia!

🏆 **Let's be the best leaders we can be.** Here are some straightforward insights and actionable tools & tips.

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## 1 big thing: AI is a CHRO leadership opportunity

🔮 **Generative AI is penetrating the workplace** with all the speed, imprecision and resultant freakout of an alien invasive species infesting a million backyards.

- **CEOs are under pressure** to harness and integrate gen AI optimally AND before the competition beats them to it. They want guidance.
- **Large companies** are hiring “AI leaders” as fast as they can, despite no clear definitions of [what they even do](#).

**Why it matters:** C-Suites will soon formulate plans with the potential to transform — and I do mean “transform” — their organizations’ Strategy, Ops, and People processes.

⚡ **The HR Imperative:** Gen AI could enable automation of up to 70% of business activities, across almost all occupations by 2030, per recent McKinsey [research](#). HR is uniquely positioned to guide the C-Suite in how to think broadly about:

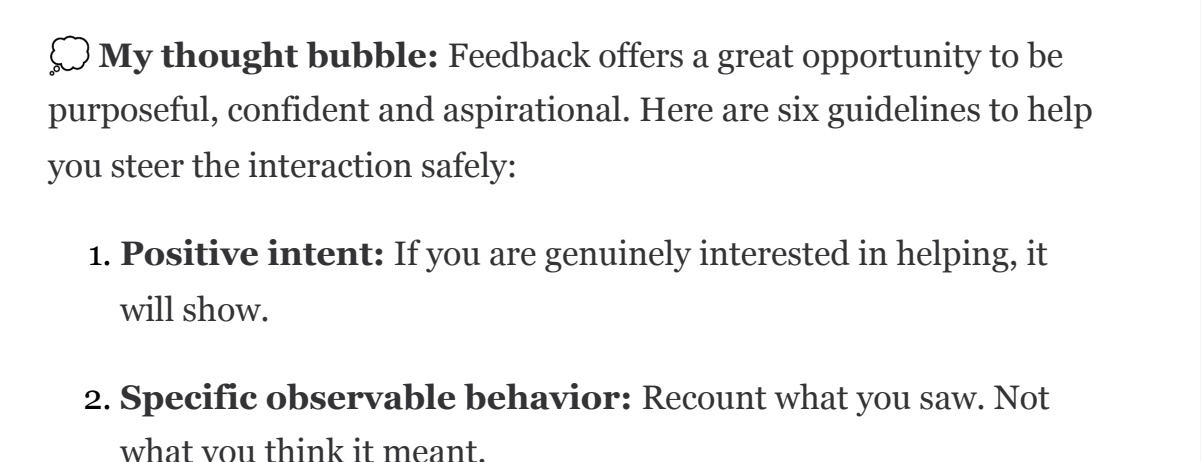
- How its rollout of gen AI will affect the workforce;
- How to manage expectations across a workforce who (quite reasonably) perceive a threat to the longevity of their role; and
- How to deploy it in every aspect of talent management and employee empowerment.

🎯 **My POV:** HR needs to stake its claim quickly and confidently before key decision rights and resources are doled out to others with sharper elbows but less cultural commitment and institutional understanding.

- Deferring now may relegate HR to the status of an order-taker implementing others’ plans.

**The bottom line:** This is happening now. Act.

## 2. Is feedback cancelled?



😞 **Companies are souring on ‘feedback’** to avoid inducing anxiety and defensiveness in their workers, per [WSJ](#). They are relabeling the practice to accentuate the positive, e.g., ‘feedforward’ and ‘performance development.’

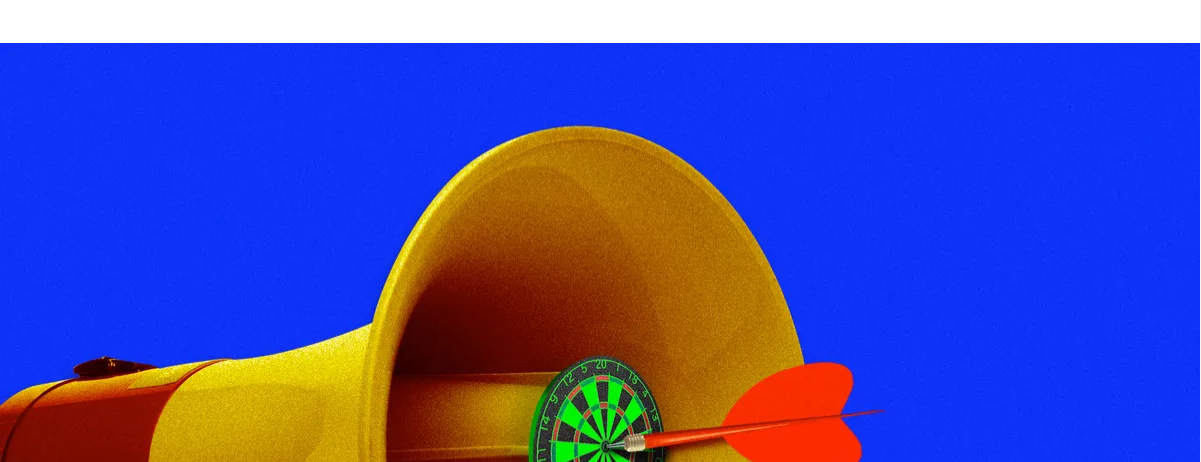
- **Why it matters:** After three years of remote/hybrid work and a stressed middle management corps, senior leader clients tell me they’re walking on eggshells.

**Yes, but:** when leaders aren’t providing their direct reports with quality feedback, organizational results and individual professional development suffer.

🗨️ **My thought bubble:** Feedback offers a great opportunity to be purposeful, confident and aspirational. Here are six guidelines to help you steer the interaction safely:

1. **Positive intent:** If you are genuinely interested in helping, it will show.
  2. **Specific observable behavior:** Recount what you saw. Not what you think it meant.
  3. **Evaluation of the action** and not the person: this is your chance to objectify the behavior.
  4. **Recency:** A useful feedback opportunity can have a shelf-life; not more than several days.
  5. **No speculation as to motives:** Resist offering an, “I understand how you feel.” Recognize that it’s more likely you don’t.
  6. **Succinct remarks:** Keep it pithy. Precision is key. Less is more.
- 👉 **Go deeper:** My [interview](#), “*Giving Feedback; How To Be Honest Without Being Hurtful*.”

## 3. The empowering question for introverted leaders



**Introverted leaders** who seek validation for their inward style sometimes miss out on the opportunity to be profoundly outwardly effective.

- **Why it matters:** This can limit their impact and lead to frustration.

📖 **The topic of introversion** garners mass market appeal. Search Amazon books and it returns over 10,000 results.

- My own “[The #1 Mistake Introverted VPs Make in Meetings](#)” is the most viewed video on our website.

**Big picture:** Introverts’ many gifts, skills, aptitudes and talents often get overlooked in an extroverted corporate culture.

- **They want to be seen** and acknowledged without contorting themselves into extroverts. Reasonable, no?

💡 **The empowering question** for introverts is: “What should I focus on to be the best leader?”

🎯 **The goal is to “be knowable.”** It’s one of the fundamentals: we follow people we admire.

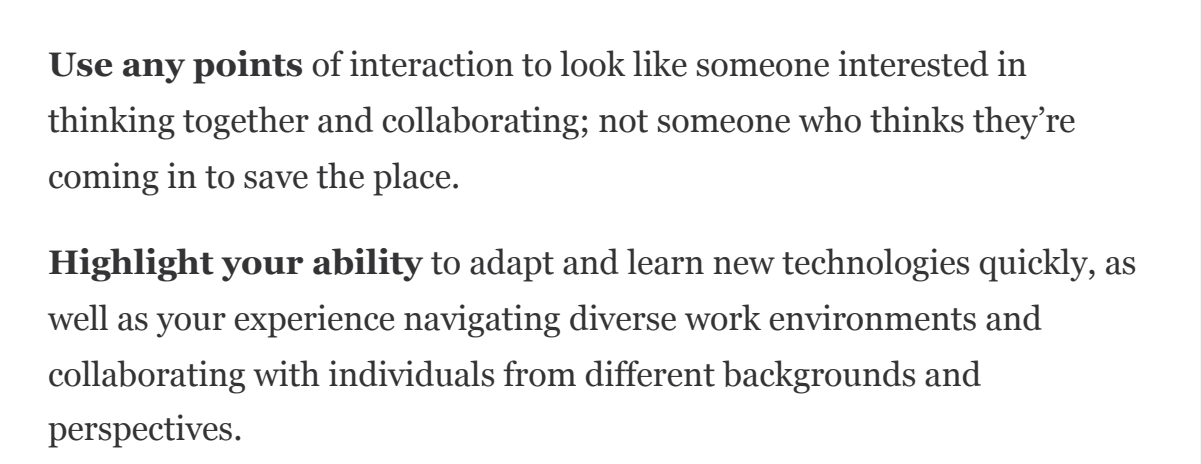
- That stems from their values, actions and words.
- We can’t know those things until they are made visible to us.

**What introverts can do:** Talk about what is important to you and why. Explain your decisions before, during and after you make them.

- **Share your thinking.** Follow statements with supporting reasoning. “This is important because ...”

👉 **Go deeper:** My take on how hard work alone no longer differentiates a senior leader, [here](#).

## 4. October pro tip: Start with the upshot



🗨️ **What they’re saying:** my CEO clients tell me that they have talented SVPs who “don’t show well.” They meander, over-contextualize and dwell on minutiae.

- **Despite their accomplishments** and subject matter expertise, they can’t compel others’ curiosity and attention.

⚠️ **Why this matters:** Sound familiar? This might be why your boss isn’t playing you in front of important audiences, e.g., board, industry, media.

- **You can’t build** your profile in the dark.

**The big picture:** To be CXO material, you have to frame and present your thoughts with authority and sound like a leader.

- **If not,** you come off like a junior up-and-comer, even though you’ve been at this for 25 years.
- **Or worse,** you may seem to lack competence, intelligence or confidence.

**The bottom line:** Top leaders get things done by influencing others. Shaping opinion and mobilizing groups, departments and divisions.

🗨️ **Follow these guidelines** to sound clear, concise and confident:

1. Have a clear purpose.
2. Speak at a strategic level.
3. Have an inspiring tone.
4. Use a “net-it-out” structure.

! **Start with the upshot:** State your conclusion first. Bottom line it. Then, support it.

- Present the essence and stop speaking.

👉 **Go deeper:** My webinar including executive influence discussion, [here](#).

## 5. Career Corner: reentering the job market when you’re older



👛 **Older job seekers** reentering the market share their anxieties with me about their prospects. Whether after a layoff, time off, or just changing jobs, they’re concerned with how to compete against their younger counterparts.

- **Why it matters:** It’s [well established](#) that age discrimination is a reality in the workplace. Wanting to put your best foot forward becomes even more important as you advance in your career.

📊 **By the numbers:** 44% of US retirees or former retirees have returned or are considering returning to work, per [F&G](#).

🗨️ **My POV** on how to position yourself: The trick is to balance two *seemingly* contradictory goals:

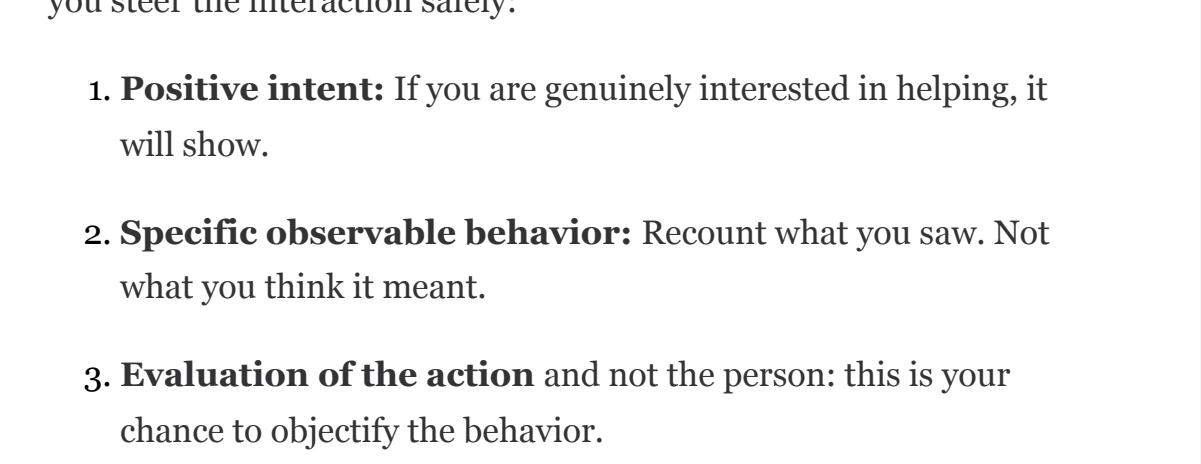
1. Projecting confidence, professionalism and executive presence; while
2. Dispelling ageist assumptions that you might be a know-it-all, overly confident in your own outdated thinking.

**Treat interviews as an opportunity** to demonstrate genuine curiosity in the hiring company’s strategy and aspirations. Your resume will convey your expertise and experience.

**Use any points** of interaction to look like someone interested in thinking together and collaborating; not someone who thinks they’re coming in to save the place.

**Highlight your ability** to adapt and learn new technologies quickly, as well as your experience navigating diverse work environments and collaborating with individuals from different backgrounds and perspectives.

## 6. 👉 Go deeper



**Ephraim Schachter** is an award-winning C-Suite coach, advisor and speaker who has been helping senior organizational leaders across industries and academia with high-integrity, high effectiveness leadership practices and talent optimization for over two decades.

- **Invite** Ephraim to [speak](#) at your next event.
- **Bring in** Ephraim to [work with](#) your organization’s key leaders.
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**Contact us** [here](#). Let’s start our conversation.

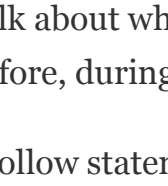
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💡 **Parting wisdom:** “*You don’t make progress by standing on the sidelines whimpering and complaining. You make progress by implementing ideas.*” Shirley Chisholm

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