



## The Deliberate Creative Podcast with Amy Climer

### Transcript for Episode #051: Using Feedback to Build Teams with Lee Caraher

#### July 7, 2016

**Amy Climer:** Welcome to The Deliberate Creative podcast. My name is Amy Climer and this is [Episode 51](#). It is great to be back on air. For those of you who follow me on social media, you know that after reaching 50 episodes of The Deliberate Creative podcast I decided it was time to take a little break. So I took the month of June off from podcasting and I am back at it now. It is July 7th and I am excited to kick off another series of episodes.

If you missed the memo that I was taking the month of June off, I shared that on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) and those are the best places to follow me to find out, “Hey, what is the newest news happening with the podcast.” Or if you are interested in getting more resources about innovation in teams, I highly recommend following me there. You can find me at [Twitter @amyclimer](#) or following me on [Facebook at Climer Consulting](#) or you can connect with me on [LinkedIn](#). So go to one of those three, whichever or all of them that work best for you. I also, of course, share all the latest episode updates and other resources like articles or cool things that are happening. So go check that out.

Today’s guest is Lee Caraher. Lee is a communication strategist who, somewhat by accident, became an expert in Millennials. She had an experience a few years ago which made her pause and reflect and dig into a little bit of who Millennials are and what they are all about. And in that process, she really became an expert in the topic and ended up writing a book called [Millennials & Management](#). A big piece of that book is talking about feedback and the importance of feedback and how to give feedback well. And that is what she is going to focus on today. Because effective teams know how to give and receive feedback and managers and leaders that are working with those teams share feedback with both the team and individuals. So Lee is going to provide some advice and some tips on how to give feedback well. And even if you are already good at giving feedback, I think you are going to learn something new. I definitely enjoyed the conversation, so here is Lee.



Lee, welcome to The Deliberate Creative Podcast. Thank you so much for being on the show today.

**Lee Caraher:** Thank you so much for having me, Amy. I am so excited to be with you.

**Amy Climer:** Awesome, me too. Can you start off and just tell us a little about yourself; your background and your expertise, that kind of thing?

**Lee Caraher:** Sure. My expertise is that I am a strategic communications expert and I am really good at figuring out what to say to whom to make something happen. So what I do with that is that I own my own public relations and digital marketing firm based in San Francisco and we have been around for about 14 years. Before that, I was at a large firm, an internationally held firm that was a three billion dollar firm. And before that, I was in a succession of communications jobs that were either public relations-focused or externally-focused or internally-focused or both, at agencies and at one large company, Sega of America, the video game company when Sega was a billion and a half dollar company.

**Amy Climer:** Nice. And you have recently become somewhat of an expert in Millennials, right?

**Lee Caraher:** Yes, not on purpose.

**Amy Climer:** Yeah, it is funny how that happens, right?

**Lee Caraher:** So I am a Boomer, I am in the last year of Boomers. Two years ago I published my first book which is called [Millennials & Management: The Essential Guide to Making It Work at Work](#). And it really came out of my experience of epically failing hiring and retaining Millennials in my own agency. What happened was we had hired six Millennials within basically eight weeks of each other and within three months, they were all gone.

**Amy Climer:** Wow!

**Lee Caraher:** And in my career I have had teams with 600 people, 800 people reporting to me but I never have had 100 percent failure in recruiting. And so one person could have been their fault, but six people it had to be my fault or my agency's fault or whoever. And when I researched it, first of all I found out there was a thing called Millennial, I did not know. And then second, it was so negative that I did not pay attention to any of the advice that I found because it was just so negative that we set out to do it ourselves and we wrote the book. I wrote the



[book](#) out of our experience of figuring it out so that hopefully other people can have a positive experience with inter-generational teams.

**Amy Climer:** Nice. Well, first I have to say kudos to you for really looking inward. When you have these six people all leave and you realize this is not coincidence and ask what are we doing wrong, and I think that says a lot about who you are as a leader and as a person really instead of pointing the finger elsewhere. It is like, “Huh, what is going on here?”

**Lee Caraher:** Well, first I wanted to point the finger elsewhere.

**Amy Climer:** Well, eventually you came around.

**Lee Caraher:** The first thing I said, “Oh my gosh, they are so terrible,” and then sort of sat with it for a second and I am like, “Okay, they cannot be all terrible. It had to be us too.” So I wish I could say that my absolute honest reaction was, “It must be me,” but it was not.

**Amy Climer:** You got there eventually, that is what counts.

**Lee Caraher:** I got there, yeah.

**Amy Climer:** That is awesome. I wanted to talk today, building on that expertise on communication you have and on your Millennial expertise and focus in on feedback. That is of course a big part of communication. In this podcast we focus on teams and helping teams succeed and I get questions sometimes about how do I give feedback, how do I receive feedback well. And so I want to just dig in on that a little bit if that sounds good to you.

### Three Tips to Giving Better Feedback [06:58]

#### 1. Be as specific as possible

**Lee Caraher:** Sure. I definitely talk about feedback a lot in my [book](#) because that was the first thing that we figured out. Everybody does better with better feedback, period. And what does better feedback mean? And I have done a lot of this work for myself and at my agency and the best feedback you can give is specific. If it is positive feedback or if it is constructive or negative feedback, the best feedback you can give is not, “That was great.” It is that, “You did a good job at this very specific thing,” and to be as specific as possible. And then the second piece of that is to say it in a way that you can be heard.



And the other thing about feedback is do not avoid giving feedback, and it is really particularly true for Millennials. By Millennials I mean people who are between 16 and 36 years old. A lot of the time, my own career was pretty fast-rising itself and I just sort of figured stuff out and I just kept doing stuff, but you would get feedback, “You are on the right track, or you can improve your writing.” That does not help me. Like how am I on the right track? What should I double down on? What should I not double down on? You are on the right track could mean you might get there or it could mean if you just put 10 percent more down on this one activity that you will be finished faster.

So really understanding when you hear those things that sound good but are not good, meaning they are not specific, they are not actionable. Anything you can do to stop yourself and rewind and go, “Okay, wait, wait, wait, sorry, here is what I really need you to know. Your sentence structure is fabulous, but your paragraphs are too short.” That is really specific. So number one, as specific as possible if it is positive or if it is negative, is the first thing.

## 2. Don't avoid giving feedback [09:16]

The second piece is really do not avoid giving it. And this is definitely hard, I think, harder for most Boomers and particularly Boomer women that I know, than it is for Millennials. And a lot of the time my belief is for women we do not want to be seen as hard-ass or bitchy -- excuse me, sorry -- and we just avoid it. We just say, “You are fine, you will catch up,” and then six months later you are sitting in a situation where you cannot stand it anymore and you are going to go and give some feedback that says, “You know, you do okay work, but you are late every single day,” and that person has never heard of being late and you basically let them be wrong for six months. This is very offensive to every Millennial I have ever met. It is more normal for older people. So just know that as soon as you have feedback, positive or negative, if you give it, it is easier to hear than if you wait to give it later.

**Amy Climer:** I am curious about a couple of things you said there. You specifically mentioned Millennials and that they want to get that feedback sooner. Is that unique to Millennials or do Gen Xers and Boomers also prefer that feedback sooner rather than later?

**Lee Caraher:** I think that everyone benefits from feedback earlier. I think that Millennials have grown up with automatic feedback that is relatively instantaneous. So if you think about it, most of us have a smart phone. Every Tuesday you turn your phone on and your apps are ready to be updated. Right? There is feedback coming in. And in the internet world, in the online world, there is no such thing as a perfect product anymore. A new product gets improved and



improved and improved based on feedback. Finding bugs is part of the consumer experience today, which never was a consumer experience really. It was not anticipated to be a part of the consumer experience for Boomers.

And so that mechanism, what we see in the fact that you can tweet something out that it sucks or it was great or whatever it is, that time has shortened up. And Millennials expect to give feedback fast and they expect the same thing from their older colleagues while their older colleagues may just sit on something for a little longer before they let people know they did not like it or they did like it. So I do not think that they do not need it, I think that it is just a different expectation of the time in which they grew up.

**Amy Climer:** That makes perfect sense. So the first thing you mentioned was be specific, which is important to be effective, and then the second was do not avoid giving it, and it sounds like you are about to go into a third point.

### 3. The feedback should be heard well [12:15]

**Lee Caraher:** The third point is how can you hear it? So, it is funny. I have an agency and we have 36 people here and I might do a reminder to people about, “Make sure we are always using the active voice. I have seen some passive voice sentences lately when I have been checking some stuff and just make sure we are always turning in the active voice.” Invariably, the people who are best at active voice come and talk to me and say, “Oh my gosh Lee. I am so sorry. I was just lazy; oh my gosh.” I was not talking about them.

**Amy Climer:** Right.

**Lee Caraher:** It is never the people I am talking to specifically because feedback should be shared when it is a benefit to everybody, you should share it not by calling people out. But if I say use the active voice or we are going to use the Oxford comma, because I do a lot of writing obviously, whatever it is. But in general, my experience over 20 years of leading teams has been the people that you are not talking to are the ones who hear the message fastest. So that is what I mean. The other piece could be, and this happened to my own career, it happens all the time and I have learned to say, “Are you talking to me? Oh okay, you are talking to me.”

**Amy Climer:** Right, because how will you know?

**Lee Caraher:** But that comes out of being confident and having a lot of experience with it and being wrong a lot.



**Amy Climer:** Yeah. And there is a humbleness that goes with that, of just being willing to ask.

**Lee Caraher:** Yeah, probably. I have been wrong enough, right?

**Amy Climer:** Right.

**Lee Caraher:** And I think that if you do give feedback to a whole team about that. It could be about time management, it could be about writing style, it could be about coming prepared to meetings, it could be about anything. What you really need to do is say it out loud first for everybody to hear and then you go to those specific people and say, “Ann, I was talking to you.” Or, “You need to know Ann, please remember what I said. I had you in mind when I was talking,” if it was a positive thing or a negative thing.

The other piece on that is often people like to start with the positive; you are doing a great job, and then there is a comma or a pause and people hear “but.” They hear “but” and just their mind goes into negative land. They do not even remember that you just had a positive thing to say. So what I found has been a more effective way to give the critical feedback is to eliminate that word “but” and focus on the word “and.” So start a conversation with, “Let’s review this body of work.” Here is where I thought you did a great job and here is why I thought you did a great job. “We like the color composition here,” whatever it is.

Finish that part and then go, “And, how I think you can even be more effective is...” and then go into your critical, “In this part of the presentation you really need to bring it home with a couple of images and not a lot of bullets.” Or, “Don’t be fidgeting. You want to stand tall here,” whatever it is. But if you say, “And how you can get it even better...,” instead of, “But you need to improve,” the “but you need to improve” the intention is all good, but a lot of people shut down hearing things because they are getting ready to be defensive. Instead of being I think people’s intention is to help them get better.

**Amy Climer:** Yeah. And hopefully that is the intention of feedback at any point.

**Lee Caraher:** Yes, hopefully. I think 99 percent of the time it is. One percent of the time you are going to get that jerk, just do not let the jerk get in your way.

**Amy Climer:** Right, that is a good life rule really. I think the piece you said about the word “but” is very important. It is really a powerful word and often it has power that we do not intend to give it.



**Lee Caraher:** I totally agree.

**Amy Climer:** I am sure you have heard of improv comedy and the “yes and” approach.

**Lee Caraher:** My sister is actually an improv artist in Chicago.

**Amy Climer:** Oh nice.

**Lee Caraher:** And she has come a couple of times to my office over the years to give workshops on “yes and.” Because it is a muscle memory thing. You have to practice it.

### **How to Get Better at Giving Feedback [17:01]**

**Amy Climer:** It is. And that is a good segue into how do you get better at giving feedback that is specific, where you are doing it regularly and in a way that people can hear it well?

**Lee Caraher:** One, you have to practice. You do not get good at anything without practice, even if you are naturally gifted. You just have to practice. And I think part of practicing is being vulnerable with the person you are practicing with, because you can practice and do at the same time. So you might have somebody you are working with who you want to give good and constructive feedback to. All feedback is constructive, right? And what I say to people is just tell them. Tell them that you are working on this. I am working on giving better feedback faster so that people can take what I need to tell them and go faster. And just tell them right away.

And at the end of the conversation you can say, “So how was that? Did you get what you needed from me?” Just ask for their feedback on that. I think people want to help other people succeed and if by giving feedback you are helping that person succeed, they will give it back to you. But do not try to hide the fact that you do not know how to do it, right?

**Amy Climer:** Yeah.

**Lee Caraher:** Or that it is not natural, or that you are trying something new. I am a big reader of business books and I read a lot and usually there is a couple of nuggets in every book that I really like. So I might say, “You know what, I just read this book, I really liked it and I really thought that Joe so and so had a great way of talking about feedback. I want to try it here, just so you know. And his theory is this and I am going to try that and we can see if it goes well.” So just being open about where you are in the process.



I think the other piece of that too is, particularly if it is negative, meaning you want someone to really re-work the whole thing, checking in, it takes a while. It takes a while for things to set in. So checking in later, maybe you have two days to fix something and you have given feedback on a Monday and it needs to get back to you on a Thursday morning. Well, check in at the end of the day on Tuesday and it is, "I know yesterday was a tough conversation, you really do have a lot to work with here. What questions do you have?" So that you can make sure that they heard you. Because often you get a lot of people nodding their heads, "Uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh, got it," and then they go away and they are like, "What the heck just happened?"

And particularly if you are working with introverts, and in my agency more than half of our agency is introverts which is very unusual in my kind of business, we have found that we need to loop back, we have to give people time to sit with information, and then we loop back again and we see whether or not the feedback was heard the way we intended it. And as a team we have gotten better over time with it.

**Amy Climer:** Yeah, that makes a lot of sense. I could think of an example that is coming to mind where there is somebody I worked with, a supervisor essentially. I would meet with him and he would give me feedback and in the moment I was like, "Okay, this is really helpful." And then I would leave and I would be sitting down to work and I am like, "What did he say?" In the moment I was like, "Oh yeah, I totally get it," and then later I did not. And so yeah, being able to loop back and check in, super helpful. And hopefully if you are giving the feedback, you are trying to develop that person, right?

**Lee Caraher:** Exactly. And I think that is a piece of it too, particularly for Millennials who empirically want a lot of feedback, they ask for feedback but they want it to be positive. So helping people hear the constructive here is how you need to improve message, where they may be a shock to them, particularly recent graduates it might be a shock to them that they are getting how I can improve feedback, looping back a lot. And over time, and particularly if you are new to a team or new to a person, style is so important and my nuance might be you are hitting people over the head and vice versa. So you got to get used to the different personalities involved.

**Amy Climer:** And how do you think you develop that, that nuance or that style? How do you do that in a way that is effective for the person listening?

**Lee Caraher:** For me, it is really about who you are talking with and understanding who those people are and how they are motivated. In my agency everybody does the MBTI, the Myers-



Briggs test, we also do Tom Rath's StrengthsFinder, and also the DISC assessment so that team members understand who they are working with all the time. And I guess a good example of that would be that introvert/extrovert thing that I said earlier.

### How to Improve Brainstorming Results When Working with Introverts [22:25]

So in my agency we were having problems having brainstorm. Our brainstorm results were really we were not very happy with and we were trying to figure it out, we did all this, tried this kind of brainstorm, tried the sticky brainstorm, tried this brainstorm, that kind of stuff. And nothing changed. Episodes might have changed but the net result was not hugely differently. At the same time that was happening, we were having everybody do the MBTI and StrengthsFinder test and when I looked at all the results, I found out that over half of us were introverts. Well, I am an ENFP, I am the only one in this agency that is an ENFP. Everything we do in this agency was built around me. I mean, it was my company, I just built the process around what worked for me, blah, blah, blah. Well, ENFPs you can just drop us into brainstorm without any preparation.

**Amy Climer:** Oh yeah, so happy.

**Lee Caraher:** Just drop me in, I could not be happier to talk about like how about this idea? Well, if half your team is introverts and if some of them are I's, oh my goodness! They need at least 24 hours to sit with a topic before they are ready to ideate. And it is not that they do not have great ideas, it is just that is how they work. So after we found that out, I was like oh my gosh. I need a V8 moment lightbulb on the head. We have a new process now which is if you are going to have a brainstorm, you must prepare everybody at least 24 hours ahead of time and you have to give them all this information. I never read it. I still don't read it.

**Amy Climer:** Because you want to be dropped in there.

**Lee Caraher:** I still go and drop in and I am still -- well, maybe I would be more effective if I had not been, but I am still super effective in those brainstorm, but now the introverts in my team are so much more participatory. Oh my gosh, they come with so many ideas but extroverts cannot get a word in edge wise. So that has really changed our process. It is understanding who you are working with so then that person can understand who you are.

Another example would be, so I am an ENFP, there is somebody on my team who is an ESTJ, almost exact opposite of me. Well, when conflict hits, he and I have totally opposite ways of



dealing with it. So if it is a crisis situation like we are dealing with a client who has a crisis, he would deal with it one way, I would deal with it another. And depending on the situation, I would either call the ball for me or for him and I will just say, "You take the ball. However you want to run it is fine." Or I will say, "I am taking this ball, do it my way."

In a crisis situation we have to have a command and control, a message where it says who is in control. And for the boss to understand what assets do you have on the team, for this person who is an ESTJ, I am an ENFP, he is better suited for several different situations than I am. And so we just have this agreement in this kind of situation, Lee is in control. In this kind of situation, he is in control. Just understanding who you have on team is super helpful so that you can actually communicate with and that person can hear you. If we are only communicating the way we can be heard, we are missing 15 different types.

**Amy Climer:** Absolutely. And if we are only giving feedback the way we want to receive it, that can be a challenge.

**Lee Caraher:** Exactly. The golden rule does not really work there except to say the golden rule and respect works. Respect me like I want you to be respected and part of that respect is understand that person and how that person hears things and how that person processes things and then help them get to the same conclusion.

**Amy Climer:** Have you heard the platinum rule?

**Lee Caraher:** No, what is that? I cannot wait.

**Amy Climer:** The golden rule to treat others how you want to be treated, and the platinum rule is treat others how they want to be treated.

**Lee Caraher:** Exactly. Platinum all the way.

### **How You Can Get More Feedback [26:47]**

**Amy Climer:** Yeah, exactly. So we were talking about how people need to receive feedback in different ways and they need to receive it in general, especially perhaps Millennials. What advice do you have if someone wants to get some feedback and they are not getting it? How could they go about getting more feedback?

**Lee Caraher:** When they want more feedback but they are not getting it?



**Amy Climer:** Right, or maybe it is so general and not specific enough.

**Lee Caraher:** There are lots of Millennials I have interviewed and talked with who feel they are not getting enough feedback, in terms of the frequency with which they get feedback. And this becomes definitely a problem in some places where Boomers are like, “Why do they keep asking for feedback? I told them they were doing fine. How come they are back already in my face?” For Millennials who feel like they are not getting feedback and they may feel they are badgering somebody, what I suggest is to do a work back idea from when something is due. So you want feedback on something you are working on, it obviously has some sort of deadline. So from the deadline, what is the halfway point and from the halfway point, what is the half way point? So the quarter point, the halfway point and then the end point. So start, a quarter, half, end.

**Amy Climer:** I like that.

**Lee Caraher:** And tell the person you are working with, “I would like 15 minutes to check in with you at the quarter point.” And then from there then you come with, “Here is the whole plan, here is my plan to get to the end, here is where I am right now. Do you see any problems?” Instead of just asking how is this, ask very specific questions which are, “Here is my goal. My goal is to have a full draft to you by Thursday at noon,” whatever, “and like you said, we need to have 15 sources,” or whatever it is. “Here is where I am on that process, here is what I have gotten done, here are what I think could be some challenges for me towards finishing. Do you have any suggestion what you have seen?”

Don’t just ask for a lot of feedback like the minute after you have gotten the assignment, dig in, set up a time at the quarter mark and then go back in with very specific questions. The question is not how does this look? That is not the question. The question is, my goal is still this time, here is where I am, here is where it has been a little challenging, here are some interesting things that I found along the way. So you can get substance and feedback that helps you complete. And then set up another time at the halfway mark where you would have resolved whatever questions you asked and with the answers that you were given. And then only set up a time between the halfway point and the end point if you are in trouble or if something comes up that would totally change the way you would approach something.

But if you drive the review process and you drive the questions with very specific questions and not the blanket questions, then whoever you are working with could be a Millennial, could be an Xer, could be a Boomer, whoever, is really going to appreciate the fact that you are so



structured about it and the fact that you are being very specific about it and that you are allowing them to contribute in a way that they can actually contribute.

And the reverse is true. If you are a Boomer and if someone is nagging you for feedback all the time and you are just like, “Oh my God, just go do the work,” then you set up a schedule that says I will talk to you in one day or I will talk to you next week and by this next week I would expect this to have happened. You should be here, here, here and be very specific. Not allowing the constant interruption is really important, at the time forcing feedback is super important as well.

**Amy Climer:** It is interesting you mentioned earlier that when you are giving feedback you should be specific and here you are saying when you are asking for feedback you should be specific about what you are asking for. And if you ask for general feedback, you will probably get general feedback, which is not going to be as helpful.

**Lee Caraher:** Yeah. So a question might be instead of how does it look it could be, the assignment, if you recall, was to create a two-page document that, whatever, in a bubble because your boss probably has other things on their plate than your work.

**Amy Climer:** Perhaps.

**Lee Caraher:** So go back and say my assignment was this, here is my goal, here is where I am, here there has been a struggle, what do you think about this approach, as opposed to how do you think this is going? And they are like, “What the heck did I assign him to? I can not remember. Okay, let me think about it for a second.”

**Amy Climer:** Absolutely, or which project that you have are we talking about.

**Lee Caraher:** Yeah. Whoever you are talking with, frame up the conversation always with context.

**Amy Climer:** I love that. To me I am thinking about this and it seems that both asking for feedback and giving it you need to practice because if you are going to that meeting, you want to think through, okay how do I want to approach this and not just show up and wing it. Because chances are if you do you are going to say, “Hey, what do you think?” Versus getting more detailed and specific, until you get really good at it and then it just becomes second nature.



**Lee Caraher:** Exactly. I think it does become second nature. Once you get ready practice, practice, practice, “yes” and just comes out of your mouth instead of “but, no.” Another good example of that is in the research for -- well, it was not for my book, but it was for figuring out how to work better with Millennials -- appreciation is super important. And the first part of appreciation is please and thank you. And there are a lot of studies that have demonstrated that appreciated teams, teams that feel that they are appreciated outperform those that don't by a factor of three to one. Well, that is huge. They waste less time, more productive drops right to the bottom line. Well, I grew up with a father who was a cardiac surgeon and please and thank you were implied because no one says please in the operating room, as he would remind me over and over and over again.

**Amy Climer:** Oh my gosh, how funny.

**Lee Caraher:** If you were in an operating room and had to say please and thank you all the time, you would never get done, particularly when he was doing it 30 years ago. So learning how to say please and thank you naturally was a challenge for me, and I am a really nice person. It was hard for me to say please this and thank you that and please this and thank you that and I felt like people knew I was a fraud. I felt that people knew like, “oh my gosh, she just read another book and here she is trying something.” And I felt really like a tool. I mean, ugh, you are going to see right through me.

But I am telling you that by the end of the week it was just flowing off my tongue much better and by the end of the month I was not having as many conversations about getting things done. And then when you roll it back to the whole company, we are definitely more productive every week. And how I know that is because we track our time and our non-billable time has gone down.

**Amy Climer:** Wow!

**Lee Caraher:** And I did not think about it that way until I went back and said, “I wonder how that worked.” And I went in and we are having less conflict, we are having less people stew around things because they feel like people do not appreciate them. Anyway, so these things matter. All these things matter and practice, even if it makes you feel like a tool, just practice it.

**Amy Climer:** And I love that example because for one yeah, when you do start something it is kind of awkward. I mean, even thinking about the first time you drove a car, the other adult next to you was like, “Oh my gosh, this is horrible.” But now it is like whatever, you can drive a car



and talk on the phone and listen to the radio and you are so good at it. We are always awkward when we start something new and I think sometimes as adults we forget that because we do not get into that learning mode as much.

**Lee Caraher:** Right. You only have to remember every time you start a project it is new.

**Amy Climer:** Yeah, exactly.

**Lee Caraher:** Your team might be new. Every single time you might put together teams that are different from the last project team you did. Maybe half the team is the same and half new teams. Well, you need to take a moment, and by a moment I mean like more than a moment, to really make sure everyone knows who everybody is, what their strengths are, what their roles are, who you can count on for what, who needs to be counted on for what. Because even if the macro team has been together for years, the micro team for a project may not have. And everything is new again, even if it is familiar.

**Amy Climer:** Yeah. Sometimes just go slow to go fast.

**Lee Caraher:** Mh-hmm.

**Amy Climer:** Wow, we have talked about a lot. To me, the three main things you mentioned as far as feedback were be specific, do not avoid giving it but everyone benefits when you give it sooner, and thinking about how you can hear it or you deliver it in a way other people can hear it.

**Lee Caraher:** Yeah.

### **The Weekly Challenge [36:19]**

**Amy Climer:** People who are listening, Lee if you can give them a challenge this week, what would be a weekly challenge for them so that they can start incorporating some of the things you have talked about into their work and with their teams?

**Lee Caraher:** I think I would give you the challenge to stop yourself every time you are about to say “but” and automatically put “and.” So just go through your day you are going to find out you said “but” 1,000 times today. If you hear yourself saying “but,” just stop yourself and say “and.” And just practice every single time; but/and, but/and, so that you start hearing it, it starts



sounding and feeling different in your mouth and that will be your interrupter to stopping yourself being heard.

**Amy Climer:** I feel like you can even invite some colleagues or spouse or even your kids, let me know when you hear me say the word “but” and they can...

**Lee Caraher:** Or, what if you put a lot of quarters in your pocket and announce it, “Every time I say but, I am going to give you a quarter.”

**Amy Climer:** Right, there you go. Especially kids, they will love it.

**Lee Caraher:** They will love it. Or in the office every “but” is a drink or something.

**Amy Climer:** Yeah, whatever it is, some funny thing instead of...

**Lee Caraher:** Or a buck or 20, whatever it is. Because then you would actually quantify. And I think often with these leadership things that are so squishy, they are soft, they are hard to measure, but there are things we can do to improve our soft skills that are actually measurable. So any way you can find to measure something you want to improve, I am in full accordance with. So if you give a dollar away and just tell everybody, “Every time I say “but,” catch me, I give you a buck.”

**Amy Climer:** Yeah, there we go.

**Lee Caraher:** Soon you give away \$100 and all of a sudden it is like wow!

**Amy Climer:** And if you think about it, \$100 it is totally worth. It if that is going to make a huge difference in your team and with your projects, totally worth it.

**Lee Caraher:** Definitely, yup.

**Amy Climer:** Very cool. Lee, how can folks get in touch with you and how can they get your [book](#) if they want to learn more about that?

**Lee Caraher:** The best way to find me is on my website, it is [www.leecaraher.com](http://www.leecaraher.com) and I have my email and you can click through to [Amazon](#) for my book from there. On Twitter I am @LeeCaraher and on Facebook I am Lee Caraher1. I blog heavily on this topic of feedback a lot and in my [book](#), there are several chapters dedicated to it as well.



**Amy Climer:** Awesome. And I will put a link to all those in the shownotes so that people can find that easily.

**Lee Caraher:** Thank you.

**Amy Climer:** Yeah, and thank you so much for being on the podcast, Lee. I really appreciate your insights and your stories. It was excellent.

**Lee Caraher:** Thank you so much. It has been really fun to share with you.

**Amy Climer:** That was some great stuff from Lee Caraher. Lee, thank you so much for being on the podcast and sharing. She had some great insights about giving feedback and doing it effectively. And basically telling someone that they did a nice job is not considered feedback. That does not work. Hopefully you can take those three tips that she shared and apply them in the work that you do and see if you can implement that weekly challenge this week. It is one of those things that it is not complicated, it is simple but it might be a little harder than you think. And see, I just said the word “but” and I should not have. I should have said, “And that might be a little harder than you think.” It is so engrained in us. So I am going to work on that challenge this week as well and try to avoid using the word “but” and focus more on the word “and”. And I think I already did that to some degree, however clearly not enough. So I am looking forward to focusing on that.

If you have any questions that you would like to be answered on the podcast, send me an email and you can follow me on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) or [LinkedIn](#) and you will hear all the latest updates on the podcast and you will get updates of the newest episodes. Of course you can also subscribe on [iTunes](#) and that is a great way where they automatically are downloaded to you phone. But the cool thing about iTunes is that if you get behind and you are not up to date, they stop downloading so your phone does not get full of all these episodes that you have not listened to yet. I think that is pretty cool feature that iTunes has. And I am also on [Stitcher](#) for those of you who are Android users.

Anyway, I hope this episode was helpful. I hope that you are working hard to help your teams be more innovative and more creative. And as I said, if there is anything I can do to help, let me know. You can find resources and more information about this podcast, about Lee and about the work that I do at [www.climerconsulting.com/051](http://www.climerconsulting.com/051). So head on over there, you will find links to Lee’s [book](#), to her [website](#), all the details you need. You all, have a wonderful week and I will see you next time. Bye.