



# “Organisations here are just not interested in this” Or are they? Negotiating ways of giving feedback to professionals in Hong Kong

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## BACKGROUND

Providing feedback to participants should be an integral aspect of workplace research.

- Doing research *for* rather than *on & with* participants [1]
- Directing research at participant needs and interests [2]
- Making research applicable to the work setting of practitioners [3]

However, most research tends to focus on academic outputs and seems to overlook “how these outputs are negotiated in situ” [4]

## QUOTES FROM PRACTITIONERS

Beginning of the project:

“Organisations here are **just not interested** in all that relational stuff.”

(ANNA, SECTION HEAD)

## OUR FOCUS

A case study of negotiating ways of making workplace research beneficial to both researchers and practitioners. Negotiating (and mediating) ways of providing feedback to practitioners against the backdrop of initial skepticism of what academics can contribute to workplace realities.

## RESEARCH SITE & DATA

A major international consulting corporation in HK.

- 6 hours of video recordings of weekly internal meetings
- Informal chats before and after video-recordings
- Follow up interviews with team members
- Consulting organisational documents

“We have a business to run.”

(ANNA, SECTION HEAD)

## NEGOTIATING WAYS OF PROVIDING FEEDBACK

### RESEARCHER STRATEGIES

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS  
RELATIONAL WORK  
BALANCE INVISIBILITY WITH PRESENCE  
GATHER CONTEXTUAL INFO  
ELICIT PREFERRED FEEDBACK  
SPECIFY FEEDBACK OPTIONS



### PROJECT PROGRESSION

INITIAL CONTACT AND MEETING  
RECORDINGS  
INFORMAL CHATS  
RECORDINGS  
FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS  
FEEDBACK SESSION

### PRACTITIONERS' ATTITUDES

OPEN YET INSOUCIANT  
|  
|  
|  
COOPERATIVE  
|  
|  
|  
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During follow-up interviews:

“I’d really like to know your insights, [...] what you thought were the important things that came up, I’m very much a believer, ... yeah, [...] you know a lot more about this area, [...] I’d love to know- yeah obviously I do want feedback.”

(ANNA, SECTION HEAD)

“I would like to know how can [...] because I didn’t attend any training about holding meeting or something. But I do want to know that how I can um um motivate my staff to to open the communication, to share more in the meeting.”

(CONNIE, SENIOR ADMINISTRATOR & MEETING CHAIR)

## VERDICT

Giving feedback is researchers’ responsibility and should be taken seriously. Researchers should put some effort into giving back something useful to those who participated in the research.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Try to bridge gap between academic and real world
- Strive towards some form of collaboration
- Don’t get data and run [5] but acknowledge researchers’ responsibility towards participants

## REFERENCES

- (1) Cameron et al., 1992; Kasper, 2000; Mullany, 2009  
 (2) Holmes & Meyerhoff, 2003: 10  
 (3) Roberts & Sarangi, 1999  
 (4) Cheng and Kong, 2009  
 (5) Mullany, 2007

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