

# How to Develop World-Class Managers and Improve Employee Performance

## The Initiative

WOW! is one of the nation's leading broadband providers and serves residential, business and wholesale customers. In 2012, the Leadership Team implemented an organizational development strategy that focused on creating a "Managers as Coaches" culture. This initiative reinforced the concept of servant leadership – one of WOW!'s core values – and included a coaching course for managers. One of the learning objectives was how to deliver effective feedback. WOW!'s Leadership Team identified two critical success factors for developing feedback skills in their managers:

**ONE**  
Reframe how managers felt about giving feedback

**TWO**  
Provide the basis for managers to be purposeful in their feedback approach

Both success factors supported a core competency of WOW!'s management philosophy: Develop employees and inspire them to perform at their best.

## The Challenge

WOW!'s business model is built on a remote team infrastructure and a portfolio of products that includes highspeed internet, data, voice and cable television. WOW!'s presence in the US spreads across the mid-west, southeast and mid-Atlantic regions and includes 20 service areas. WOW!'s staff is comprised of on-site managers and supervisors, call center representatives and remote field technicians. Call centers service a large customer-base and field technicians rely heavily on in-house support, leaving little opportunity for supervisors and managers to leave their desks for long periods of time. The Leadership Team searched for programs that were time-efficient, concise and immediately-actionable.

*"Giving effective feedback is the underpinning for all leadership success...  
Repositioning feedback as information, not criticism, was crucial to disarming the  
feedback process for our managers."*

## Why iLoveFeedback®?

WOW!'s Leadership Team selected the iLoveFeedback® program as the training solution for developing feedback delivery skills in managers. The program provided managers the ability to reposition feedback as information, not criticism, and disarmed the feedback process for managers and their employees. The program's Best Practice Steps model and real-life application exercises were logical, easy to understand and easy to implement immediately. The half-day program design allowed trainers to conduct the class in a timely manner and reach all 250 managers.



## Employees Scored Managers as **“World Class”** in Delivering Feedback

### Results

After the 3-year iLoveFeedback® program rollout was completed, Patti Rowe, Vice President of Organization Development and Training, reported that the internal promotion rate was over 75%, employees scored managers as “world class” in delivering feedback and participants rated the value and effectiveness of the program as 4.8/5. Managers reported that they felt comfortable and confident in giving feedback and addressed performance issues in a timely manner. Employees reported they felt respected by their managers and received fair treatment.

### Create a Performance Culture with Feedback

To date, WOW! has trained over 500 employees and certified over 10 trainers in the program. Due to the popularity of the iLoveFeedback® program, Rowe and her Organization Development and Training department created a “Citizen Trainer” program – an election of individuals by their peers to be official trainers of iLoveFeedback®. To be selected as a Citizen Trainer by your peers is a high honor in the WOW! workplace culture. Though Rowe transitioned to another organization shortly after her successful 3-year implementation of the program, she actively trains iLoveFeedback® in her new organization and continues to create a performance culture with feedback.