

*She Said/She Said Podcast With Laura Cox Kaplan*

*Episode 244*

*Title: Ever Have Trouble Hearing Constructive Or Negative Feedback? A Skills Inventory Can Help!  
Quick Tip/Career Toolkit Episode!*

## **MUSIC / SHOW OPEN**

Laura Cox Kaplan ([00:06](#)):

Building influence is something anyone can learn. It's an investment you can make in yourself and it can hold the keys to achieving your dreams and having the life and impact you want to have. I'm Laura Cox Kaplan. I've learned a lot over three decades about building and sustaining influence and how using it and using it effectively can make a big, big difference in your life and career. Here on She Said/She Said Podcast, we're digging into the different dimensions that help us build and sustain influence. If you thought being an influencer was just for social media, think again. Whether you're starting a business, raising money for a cause, negotiating a promotion, running your household, or trying to connect with those who don't share your views, understanding and using the different dimensions of influence will increase your chances of success. Whatever your goals may be, listening to She Said, she Said Podcast is a smart, efficient investment you can make in you. I'm really glad you're here and I'm excited. We're on this journey together.

Laura Cox Kaplan:

Hey friend! Ever have trouble hearing constructive or negative feedback? Or maybe you've received feedback that really stung, and weren't sure how to respond?

You already know that feedback can be an important element of understanding your performance. Even with self reflection -- which is so important, it can only take us so far. Understanding what others see, and understanding what that means, is an important part of learning to manage ourselves. We need input from others. Sometimes that process can be painful.

That can be especially true if you struggle with perfectionism, or if you have a tendency to overpersonalize the feedback you are getting. Which also can be a sign of perfectionism rearing it's unhelpful head.

I've certainly received my own fair share of constructive feedback, and sometimes -- maybe more often than I like to admit -- have had some trouble hearing it.

**HOW I'M GOING TO HELP YOU SOLVE THIS:**

So this week, in what is a quick hit micro life hack episode (clearly we need a better name ), but I'm going to share one of my favorite tips for helping you get more value out of feedback by helping you arm yourself with one of my favorite tools. This tool will help you go into the feedback conversation more prepared - both emotionally and armed with some data.

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I have often found this little life hack is highly underrated. Which is why I wanted to share it with you this week.

The key is to develop a skills checklist, or sometimes called a skills inventory list.

In this episode I'll share why doing this can boost your confidence, and can help you create a positive narrative that can help you better articulate your value. That's helpful not just when you are getting feedback, but also when you are going into any kind of a presentation or preparing to pitch yourself, including at networking events.

So what is a skills or personal inventory checklist? And how's the best way to go about creating one?

The First step is to brainstorm your skills, abilities and competencies. Write down whatever comes to mind. I like to pull my bio and resume and use that as a starting point, but then fill in much more granular things that aren't reflected there. That might include things like: audio editing, digital branding, use of social media platforms, maybe negotiating skills. The goal is to be as comprehensive as possible.

I also go back through my calendar for the past year or past several months to remind myself of things like speaking events, podcasts I've hosted or guested on, collaborations i've done with other organizations, my thought leadership, things like that that are quantifiable. X number of speeches, x number of podcasts etc.... Yours will be unique to you and what you've been doing.

Next, categorize all your skills into different groups. You might have three to five buckets: maybe start with technical skills, interpersonal skills, and leadership skills. You'll want to create categories that make sense for you and your goals.

Next, prioritize the skills based on how important they are to your personal or professional goals. This is especially important for helping you see any potential gaps -- what are some areas that might be missing but that are important for you to develop. The inverse of that is also true. It may also illuminate some areas that maybe you don't highlight and showcase but that are particularly unique to you and your brand...and your story

I find it helpful to create an A,B,C prioritized model. Essentially looks at the skills you've included under each bucket and rate them A, B, or C based on how important they are to you or for any opportunities you might be thinking about. This works similar to what you might have learned to do if you've used the Franklin Covey system at some point. You can use 1,2,3 or color coding, frankly whatever works for you.

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Specificity also matters here -- rather than listing “excellent writing skills,” maybe instead be more precise and list “great at translating complex esoteric subject matter into understandable prose,” or you might say “excellent storytelling skills,” “great at corporate brochure writing,” great at instagram caption writing, etc....

You will also want to include a bucket for soft skills which I would probably put in the bucket with leadership skills, but again this is your list so it needs to make sense for you. Think about things like -- your listening skills, your collaboration skills, your team working skills, adaptability, emotional intelligence, problem solving skills, etc...

FINALLY, be sure to update this list regularly -- ideally when you are reviewing your annual goals every quarter. But, and I think this is really important, keep this list somewhere where you can glance at it easily. Keeping it front and center can be a great way of reminding yourself of all the progress you’ve made and are continuing to make.

That’s basically it. Super easy!

Let’s talk for a second about what makes this simple tool that you create for yourself so valuable.

First, as it relates to preparing you for feedback -- the skills inventory or skills checklist is a great first step for creating a baseline for the conversation. This is what you’ll use to craft your narrative and story and value proposition before you go into the feedback session. It’s a great way of preparing and of levelsetting the particular skills and value that you are bringing to the table, that you want to be sure to remember and to emphasize.

The same is true for helping you prepare for an interview or pitch, or some other occasion when you want to give yourself a little confidence boost, but also want to remind yourself of key skills and attributes to be sure to emphasize.

Another important dimension of the skills inventory list -- and this might seem a tad counterintuitive since I talked about the skills inventory list in the context of making constructive feedback a bit easier to navigate --but, it’s helpful to get outside feedback from your trusted mentors or tribe on what you’ve included on your inventory list. Get their help to identify things that might be missing -- either things you’ve done or know how to do and haven’t included ... Or things that are missing that you might need to learn to round out your skills and to make sure you have what you need to land that next opportunity.

This is an especially valuable exercise for you if you are in the midst of a career pivot or trying to figure out what might be next.

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So, whether you are preparing for difficult feedback, getting ready to tackle a new career challenge, or just need a confidence boost, give this tip a try and let me know how it works for you. Or if you already do something similar and have suggestions for how I can improve my list, I'd love to hear.

Friend, thanks for joining me today for this quick tip episode. I'd love to know what you thought of this topic and the format and as I'm thinking of creating several more of these quick tip episodes. So, send me your thoughts and suggestions on additional topics. I'd love to hear.

In the meantime, you take care and I'll talk to you again next week.

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