

TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

School of Business and Governance

Farhan Sadique Tarafder

**FEEDBACK CULTURE IN TECH COMPANIES: PROBLEMS,  
NEEDS AND ITS EFFECTS ON EMPLOYEES' GROWTH AND  
BRANDING**

Bachelor's thesis

Programme: International Business Administration, Specialisation: Marketing

Supervisor: Mari-Klara Stein, PhD

Tallinn 2023

I hereby declare that I have compiled the thesis/paper independently and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors have been properly referenced and the same paper has not been previously presented for grading.

The document length is 10,979 words from the introduction to the end of conclusion.

Farhan Sadique Tarafder.....

(signature, date)

Student code: 183976TVTB

Student email address: farhansadique2@gmail.com

Supervisor: Mari-Klara Stein.....

The paper conforms to requirements in force

.....

(signature, date)

Chairman of the Defence Committee:

Permitted to the defence

.....

(name, signature, date)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>1. LITERATURE REVIEW</b> .....	<b>8</b>
1.1. Feedback culture in tech companies.....	8
1.2. Psychological safety perspective.....	10
1.3. Connection between psychological safety and brand recognition.....	12
1.4. Summary Table.....	14
<b>2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY</b> .....	<b>16</b>
2.1. Research Design.....	16
2.1.1. Collection of data.....	17
2.1.2. Analysis of data.....	21
2.3. Limitations.....	23
<b>3. RESULTS</b> .....	<b>24</b>
3.1. Quantitative Revelations: Statistical Analysis and Findings.....	24
3.2. Unveiling Insights: Qualitative Findings and Analysis.....	28
3.3. Discussion of findings.....	34
<b>4. DISCUSSION</b> .....	<b>36</b>
4.1. Theoretical implications.....	36
4.2. Practical implications.....	38
4.3. Implications of feedback culture on branding: practical and theoretical perspectives.....	40
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b> .....	<b>43</b>
<b>LIST OF REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>44</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	<b>49</b>
Appendix 1. Preliminary survey.....	49
Appendix 2. Survey questions.....	50
Appendix 3. Summary of survey (quantitative).....	51
Appendix 4. Summary of survey (qualitative).....	55
Appendix 5. Non-exclusive licence.....	63

# ABSTRACT

The way that feedback is given, accepted, and absorbed into the workplace is known as the feedback culture. This thesis provides a thorough analysis of the feedback culture in tech companies, highlighting its demands, issues and its effects on staff development and brand recognition. The research utilises a mixed-methods approach by administering a survey that focuses on both the qualitative and quantitative side of things to collect data from tech companies of varying sizes. The findings reveal that many tech companies struggle with issues related to feedback culture, such as the relevance of feedback, lack of clarity, and bias in feedback. On the other hand, employees express the need for more constructive and valid feedback, opportunities for skill development, and recognition for their contributions. Furthermore, the study highlights the significant effects of feedback culture on employees' growth and branding. Employees who receive regular and constructive feedback demonstrate higher levels of job satisfaction, engagement, and performance. Additionally, feedback culture impacts employees' perception of the company's brand, as it influences their sense of belonging, loyalty, and advocacy. Based on the findings, this thesis recommends strategies for improving feedback culture in tech companies, including establishing clear feedback guidelines, providing training for managers and employees, and leveraging technology to streamline feedback processes. These recommendations can contribute to fostering a positive feedback culture that enhances employees' growth and branding in tech companies, ultimately leading to improved organisational performance and competitiveness in the industry.

**Keywords:** feedback culture, tech companies, staff development, brand recognition, job satisfaction, engagement, performance, perception, belonging, loyalty, advocacy, training, technology, positive feedback culture, organisational performance, industry competitiveness.

# INTRODUCTION

In recent years, feedback has become an essential tool for driving employee development and improving workplace culture. It allows individuals to assess their performance, identify areas for improvement, and make necessary adjustments. Feedback culture, defined as the way in which feedback is given, received, and incorporated into the work environment, is a critical aspect of organisational dynamics, particularly in the fast-paced and competitive tech industry where innovation and continuous learning are critical to staying ahead in a highly competitive market (Ashford, 2016; Edmondson, 2019; London & Smither, 2019). In tech companies, where innovation and agility are key, effective feedback processes play a crucial role in shaping employees' performance, growth, and perception of the brand within the organisation (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Tesser, 2018). The feedback culture is heavily influenced by the psychological safety an organisation inspires within the workplace. However, despite the acknowledged importance of feedback, many tech companies encounter challenges in establishing a healthy feedback culture. Issues such as inconsistent feedback, lack of clarity, and bias in feedback processes can hinder the effectiveness of feedback, leading to negative impacts on employees' growth and the overall branding of the company (Morrison, 2014; Grant & Molinsky, 2017).

Consequently, there is a pressing need to investigate the problems and needs associated with feedback culture in tech companies and understand how it affects employees' growth and the company's brand image. Studying the feedback culture of tech companies is vital for several reasons. Firstly, the work environments of technology companies are recognized for being dynamic and inventive, where feedback is a critical component for enhancing performance and advancing development. A robust feedback culture can foster greater employee engagement, motivation, and commitment, ultimately resulting in improved business outcomes. However, tech companies are also known for their competitive and sometimes cut-throat cultures, where feedback can be harsh and critical. The circumstance above is likely to be an unhealthy work environment that may compromise employees' mental health and overall well-being while also harming their performance and productivity.

An excellent example of a tech company that has successfully implemented a strong feedback culture is Google, which conducts regular feedback sessions called "perf" reviews. Implementing an influential feedback culture has played a significant role in hiring and retaining highly skilled employees within Google. This approach allows individuals to receive helpful comments on their job performance and engage in meaningful conversations about their professional aspirations with their managers. On the other hand, Uber's inadequate feedback culture has received negative attention for fostering a detrimental work environment, resulting in high employee turnover and a highly publicised scandal. The study of feedback culture in tech companies can provide insight into best practices for creating a positive feedback culture that benefits employees and businesses.

This research aims to examine the challenges, needs, and effects of feedback on employees' growth and branding through a mixed-methods approach that gathers data from tech companies of different sizes and industries. By understanding the complexities of a feedback culture, this study seeks to assist tech companies in developing effective feedback strategies and promoting a culture of continuous improvement and employee development. Moreover, this research will contribute to advancing knowledge and practices related to feedback culture in the tech industry. This contribution will add to the existing literature on feedback, which has primarily focused on its individual and organisational outcomes in various contexts (London & Smither, 2019; Ashford & DeRue, 2020). The research findings are expected to enhance the comprehension of feedback culture in the tech sector and offer actionable suggestions for cultivating a positive feedback culture that bolsters employee growth and improves the branding of tech companies.

To achieve these aims, the following questions have been formulated as guidelines for the research:

1. What are the common problems and challenges and areas of improvement associated with feedback culture in tech companies?
2. How does feedback culture in tech companies impact employees' perception of the company's branding, reputation, and attractiveness as an employer?

The research problem is the need to investigate the problems and needs associated with feedback culture in the fast-paced and competitive tech industry where innovation and continuous learning are critical. This study seeks to understand the challenges and opportunities associated with feedback culture and provide practical implications for fostering a positive feedback culture that promotes employees' growth and enhances the branding of tech companies.

# 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

## 1.1. Feedback culture in tech companies

The concept of feedback is not unfamiliar. However, its definition and interpretations have changed over the years. According to Ashford (2016), feedback is "the process of providing information about an employee's performance and how it can be improved." Feedback is a crucial tool for encouraging employee development and improving the general standard of the working environment. In addition, feedback fosters individual and organisational development by allowing individuals to evaluate their work, identify areas that need improvement, and undertake corrective measures.

Adopting a feedback culture is an indispensable element of organisational operations within the technology industry, especially in a fast-paced and fiercely competitive environment where innovation and ongoing learning are essential to maintaining a competitive edge. London and Smither (2019) define feedback culture as "the way in which feedback is given, received, and incorporated into the work environment." The feedback culture is heavily influenced by the psychological safety an organisation inspires within the workplace. Cultivating a psychologically safe space within an organisational setting has been shown to facilitate a sense of ease and confidence in employees when exchanging feedback, ultimately culminating in establishing a conducive feedback culture that emphasises nurturing professional progress. However, establishing a healthy feedback culture in tech companies is not always straightforward. Issues such as inconsistent feedback, lack of clarity, and bias in feedback processes can hinder the effectiveness of feedback, leading to negative impacts on employees' growth and the overall branding of the company. Morrison (2014) notes that feedback can sometimes be perceived as negative, leading to resistance and reluctance among employees to engage with the process. This can lead to organisations missing out on potential opportunities for growth and development. To address these challenges, various models and frameworks have been proposed to improve feedback culture in tech companies. For example, Hattie and Timperley's (2007) Feedback Model proposes that effective feedback should be timely, specific, and goal-oriented, among other criteria. Similarly, Tesser's (2018) Feedback Framework highlights the importance of creating a psychologically safe

environment to foster a positive feedback culture. As tech companies thrive in a fast-paced, innovative, and collaborative environment, effective feedback exchange has been recognized as a critical factor in driving employees' growth and enhancing the overall branding of these companies. This literature review aims to explore the problems and needs associated with feedback culture in tech companies and its effects on employees' growth and branding, drawing upon relevant literature in the field.

Tech companies face quite a few challenges in developing a healthy feedback culture. Firstly, the fast-paced and competitive nature of the tech industry often leads to a lack of time and resources for feedback exchange (Jokisaari, 2017). Moreover, a significant number of individuals working in the technology industry experience continuous stress to fulfil demanding project timelines, leaving little room for feedback conversations which can result in a culture where feedback is infrequent, delayed, or neglected, hindering employees' opportunities for growth and improvement (Groysberg *et al.*, 2018).

Secondly, tech companies often have a hierarchical structure focusing on technical expertise, where feedback may flow from managers to employees in a top-down manner (Cao *et al.*, 2018). This top-down feedback approach can create power dynamics that inhibit open and honest feedback exchange. Employees may feel reluctant to provide feedback to their managers or question their expertise (Edmondson, 2019). As a result, important feedback may be withheld, leading to a lack of clarity, accountability, and development opportunities for employees.

Thirdly, many tech companies' geographically dispersed and remote nature can pose challenges to feedback culture. With teams spread across different locations and time zones, feedback exchange can become more complex, relying heavily on digital communication tools, which may lack the nuances of face-to-face interactions (Sobol *et al.*, 2020). This can result in miscommunication, misunderstandings, and reduced effectiveness of feedback, impacting employees' growth and development. In order to foster a positive feedback culture, tech companies need to address specific needs that arise in their unique context. Firstly, tech employees need timely and regular feedback to support their growth and development. Research has shown that frequent feedback is associated with increased employee motivation, engagement, and performance (Murphy & Cleveland, 2018). Therefore, tech companies need to prioritise creating opportunities for regular and constructive feedback exchange, despite

the fast-paced nature of their work environment. Tech companies also need to promote a culture of psychological safety, where employees feel comfortable to give and receive feedback without fear of negative consequences (Edmondson, 2018). This involves creating a supportive environment that encourages open and honest feedback exchange, where employees are not penalised for speaking up or sharing their opinions (Detert & Edmondson, 2019). Tech companies can establish feedback mechanisms that foster psychological safety, such as anonymous feedback channels or regular feedback training programs. Furthermore, tech companies need to promote an inclusive and diverse feedback culture. Research has shown that teams composed of individuals from diverse backgrounds exhibit higher levels of innovation and perform better, and feedback is a critical element in supporting diversity and inclusion (Kearney & Gebert, 2019). Tech companies need to ensure that feedback is given and received fairly and unbiasedly, considering individual differences and perspectives. This can be achieved through training programs that raise awareness of biases and provide tools for giving and receiving inclusive feedback.

## **1.2. Psychological safety perspective**

One important aspect of feedback culture that has gained prominence is psychological safety. In this climate, employees feel safe to express their ideas, opinions, and concerns without fear of negative consequences (Edmondson, 1999). Psychological safety is critical in fostering a positive feedback culture in tech companies. Research has shown that when employees feel psychologically safe, they are more likely to communicate openly and honestly, share feedback, and engage in learning behaviours (Edmondson, 2019; Mayer *et al.*, 2019). On the other hand, when psychological safety is lacking, employees may hesitate to speak up, provide feedback, or take risks, fearing negative repercussions such as retaliation, criticism, or rejection (Detert & Edmondson, 2011).

Another important aspect of psychological safety is that it is closely linked to feedback-seeking behaviours, where employees actively seek feedback to improve their performance and enhance their growth (Ashford, 2016; Kluger & Nir, 2010). In a psychologically safe environment, employees are more likely to seek feedback from their

peers, supervisors, and other sources, as they perceive it as a valuable opportunity for learning and development (London & Smither, 2019). Conversely, in an environment where psychological safety is lacking, employees may be reluctant to seek feedback, fearing that it may lead to negative consequences or damage their reputation (Morrison, 2014).

Furthermore, psychological safety is critical for feedback receivers to process and utilise feedback for their growth and development effectively. When employees feel psychologically safe, they are more likely to receive feedback with an open mind, view it as constructive rather than threatening, and engage in self-reflection and action planning (Edmondson, 1999; Kluger & Nir, 2010). In contrast, in an environment with low psychological safety, feedback receivers may become defensive, dismissive, or resistant to feedback, hindering their ability to learn from feedback and make meaningful improvements (Ashford, 2016).

Tech companies can create a psychologically safe feedback culture by promoting open communication, trust, and respect among employees (Edmondson, 2019). Leaders and managers play a significant part in fostering psychological safety by setting the tone, modelling open and receptive behaviour towards feedback, and creating a supportive environment where employees feel encouraged to express their opinions and concerns (Detert & Edmondson, 2011). Organisations can also provide training and resources to employees and managers to develop feedback skills, enhance self-awareness, and recognize and address biases in feedback processes (Mayer *et al.*, 2019).

### **1.3. Connection between psychological safety and brand recognition**

The literature on the connection between psychological safety and employee growth and branding in the context of feedback culture in tech companies is abundant and provides valuable insights into this topic. Tech companies' psychological safety and feedback culture significantly affect employees' growth and branding. Research has demonstrated that psychological safety is vital in promoting positive feedback cultures that support employees' learning, motivation, and performance improvement (Ashford, 2016; Edmondson, 1999). Studies have shown that when employees feel safe to share feedback, seek feedback, and receive feedback openly, they are more likely to engage in learning behaviours such as self-reflection and experimentation (Kluger & Nir, 2010). Multiple studies have emphasised the positive impact of psychological safety on employee growth. For example, when employees feel psychologically safe, they are more likely to engage in learning behaviours, such as seeking feedback, reflecting on their performance, and experimenting with new approaches (Edmondson, 1999; Edmondson, 2018). In addition, psychological safety creates a work environment where employees feel comfortable taking risks, sharing innovative ideas, and engaging in open discussions, leading to a culture of continuous learning and improvement (Detert & Edmondson, 2011). This, in turn, fosters employee growth and development as they feel empowered to take on new challenges, explore new opportunities, and develop new skills.

Furthermore, studies have also shown that psychological safety is closely linked to employee engagement. When employees feel psychologically safe, they are more likely to be engaged in their work, collaborate with their peers, and contribute their ideas and perspectives (Edmondson, 1999; Detert & Edmondson, 2011). Psychological safety creates a positive work environment where employees feel valued, heard, and respected, which enhances their sense of belonging and dedication towards the organisation. Consequently, this results in improved employee involvement and commitment, associated with improved performance, productivity, and organisational outcomes, including branding. Moreover, psychological safety has also been found to impact employee branding significantly. Organisations prioritising psychological safety are perceived as inclusive, diverse, and supportive by their employees and external stakeholders (Edmondson, 2018). Such organisations are often seen

as progressive, innovative, and forward-thinking, which can enhance their brand image in the market. Employees who feel psychologically safe are likelier to actively participate, feel driven, and be dedicated to their job., leading to higher job satisfaction and well-being (Edmondson, 2018). Developing a positive workplace culture can significantly enhance an organisation's reputation as a desirable employer within the competitive technology industry. When employees feel emotionally and mentally supported, they are inclined to share favourable feedback about the company, both internally and externally, which contributes to improving its brand image. They are more likely to recommend their organisation to others and become advocates for the organisation's values and culture. This positive word-of-mouth marketing can enhance the organisation's brand image as an employer of choice, increasing interest from potential candidates and stakeholders.

The literature suggests a strong connection between psychological safety and employee growth and branding in the context of feedback culture in tech companies. Psychological safety promotes a culture of continuous learning and improvement, fosters employee growth and development, and enhances an organisation's brand image as an inclusive and innovative employer. In summary, the literature indicates that psychological safety is a crucial factor influencing employee growth and branding in the context of feedback culture in tech companies. Further research in this area can provide additional insights and practical implications for organisations seeking to create a psychologically safe environment that promotes employee growth and enhances branding in the competitive tech industry.

## 1.4. Summary Table

Table 1. Summary of Problems, Needs, and Solutions for Feedback Culture

Challenges	Needs	Possible solutions
Lack of time and resources for feedback exchange due to fast-paced and competitive nature of the tech industry	Timely and regular feedback for employee growth and development	Prioritise creating opportunities for regular and constructive feedback exchange despite the fast-paced nature of work environment
Hierarchical structure with top-down feedback approach inhibiting open and honest feedback exchange	Culture of psychological safety where employees feel comfortable to give and receive feedback without fear of negative consequences	Establish feedback mechanisms that foster psychological safety, such as anonymous feedback channels or regular feedback training programs
Geographically dispersed and remote nature of tech companies leading to challenges in effective feedback exchange	Inclusive and diverse feedback culture	Ensure feedback is given and received in a fair and unbiased manner, taking into consideration individual differences and perspectives through training programs that raise awareness of biases
Psychological safety is lacking, leading to fear of negative consequences, reluctance to seek feedback, and defensive feedback processing	Promotion of psychological safety	Foster open communication, trust, and respect among employees; leaders and managers modelling open and receptive behaviour towards feedback; providing training and resources to develop employees' feedback-seeking and feedback-receiving skills

Source: (Farhan, 2023), author's summarisation based on literature review

This table summarises the challenges, needs, and possible solutions for creating a positive feedback culture in tech companies. The challenges include the fast-paced and competitive nature of the tech industry, hierarchical structures with a top-down feedback approach and psychological safety issues. By summarising these challenges, needs, and possible solutions, the table provides a comprehensive overview of the issues that tech companies face in creating a positive feedback culture and offers practical strategies for addressing them.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1. Research Design**

To understand the complex and multifaceted topic of feedback culture in tech companies, a mixed-methods approach that combines structured and open-ended questions in surveys as a data collection method is recommended (Saunders *et al.*, 2019).

Firstly, structured (quantitative) questions provide a systematic and standardised approach to gathering data in a measurable and statistically analysable format. This approach allows for collecting numerical data, which can be analysed using statistical techniques to identify patterns, trends, and relationships among variables related to feedback culture in tech companies (Smith, 2018). For instance, structured questions can collect data on employees' perceptions of the frequency and quality of feedback they receive, the channels through which feedback is provided, and the impact of feedback on their performance and job satisfaction (Smith, 2018). These quantitative data can aid in generating statistically significant discoveries, identifying broader patterns and complete knowledge of the topic under study.

Secondly, open-ended (qualitative) questions provide an opportunity for participants to express their perspectives, experiences, and opinions in their own words, allowing for a more in-depth and nuanced understanding of the phenomenon under investigation (Saunders *et al.*, 2019). Open-ended questions can elicit rich and contextual information about the problems and needs related to feedback culture in tech companies and the effects of feedback on employees' growth and branding. For example, open-ended questions can be used to collect qualitative data on employees' perceptions of barriers to effective feedback, their preferences for feedback delivery, and the impact of feedback on their professional development and career advancement (Johnson, 2019). These qualitative data can provide insights into employees' subjective experiences and illuminate the underlying reasons and mechanisms that drive the observed quantitative findings.

The combination of structured and open-ended questions enhances the validity, reliability, and comprehensiveness of the research findings, contributing to a rigorous and robust investigation of the topic (Saunders *et al.*, 2019). Furthermore, using a mixed-methods approach, the author can capture both quantitative and qualitative data. This approach is particularly beneficial in having a broad understanding of feedback culture in tech companies, resulting in more meaningful recommendations and conclusions for future studies.

### **2.1.1. Collection of data**

The author adopted a mixed-methods approach. The process includes gathering and examining both quantitative and qualitative data to understand the feedback culture in the tech industry. The data was collected by an extensive survey containing structured and open-ended questions. The survey was designed to measure the feedback culture within the organisation, including aspects such as frequency, quality, and effectiveness of feedback. The survey was administered online using a structured questionnaire, and data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

The author has carefully formulated several structured and open-ended questions to gather comprehensive data on various aspects of feedback culture in the tech company from multiple perspectives, including employees' perceptions, experiences, and opinions. The questions cover different dimensions of a feedback culture, such as frequency of feedback, satisfaction with feedback, comfort level in providing and seeking feedback, alignment of feedback with professional goals, recognition of efforts and contributions, the impact of feedback culture on company reputation and branding, challenges associated with feedback culture, leadership's role in promoting or discouraging feedback culture, comparison of feedback culture with industry standards, and additional feedback or comments.

The multiple-choice questions, such as "How long have you been in the company?" and "How frequently do you receive feedback from your managers or colleagues regarding your work performance in your company?" provide structured data that can be easily quantified and analysed to identify patterns and trends. These questions provide insights into the frequency of feedback and duration of employees' tenure, which helps in understanding the relationship between feedback culture and employees' length of employment.

Likert scale questions, such as "How satisfied are you with the frequency of feedback you receive in your company?" and "How important is the feedback culture in your company in shaping your perception of the company as an attractive employer?" allow for measurement of employees' perceptions and attitudes towards feedback culture on a continuum, providing more nuanced data for analysis. These questions can help gauge employees' satisfaction, perception of the importance of feedback culture, and its impact on their perception of the company as an employer and its effect on the company's reputation.

The open-ended questions, such as "What are the common problems or challenges associated with the feedback culture in your company that you have observed or experienced?" and "Can you share any specific examples of how feedback culture has positively or negatively influenced your performance, motivation, or recognition of the brand?", allow for qualitative data collection, providing rich and detailed information on employees' experiences, observations, and opinions about feedback culture in the tech company. These questions can capture employees' unique perspectives, experiences, and insights, which may not be captured through closed-ended questions.

Combining structured and open-ended questions in a survey allows for a comprehensive data collection approach. Structured questions, such as multiple-choice or Likert scale questions, will provide quantitative data that can be analysed using statistical methods. These questions can provide useful insights into the prevalence and frequency of problems related to feedback culture in tech companies and the needs and perceptions of employees. On the other hand, open-ended questions allow participants to express their opinions, experiences, and suggestions in their own words, providing qualitative data that captures nuances and details that may not be captured by structured questions alone. This approach enables a more holistic understanding of the research topic and enhances the validity and reliability of the findings.

Overall, the selected questions aim to provide an all-inclusive understanding of feedback culture in the tech company from multiple angles, combining quantitative and qualitative data to generate insights, identify patterns and trends, and draw robust conclusions that can inform recommendations and actions for improving feedback culture in the organisation.

The author defined the target population as a particular professional group actively employed at tech companies operating in various industries. In this study, the term 'tech companies' is used by the author to refer to businesses that operate in the technology industry. These are companies that are involved in developing, manufacturing, selling, and providing services related to technology products such as software, hardware, electronics, and internet-based services. Tech companies are characterised by their fast-paced, innovative, and collaborative work environments. They often require highly skilled and knowledgeable employees with expertise in computer science, engineering, and information technology. These companies rely on cutting-edge technology to deliver their products and services and constantly seek new and better ways to innovate and improve.

The author reached out to individuals fitting the earlier description through various mediums, such as phone calls and social media platforms. Of the 34 contacted, 14 gave consent and participated in the survey. Additional information is available in the appendices.

Table 2. Participant's profiles

Participant	Company	Industry	Role	Duration of employment
Participant 1	CYBERS	Cyber security	Security Analyst	1 to 3 years
Participant 2	Wise	Financial technology	Due Diligence Agent	1 to 3 years
Participant 3	Swappie	IT & Software	Trading Operations Specialist	1 to 3 years
Participant 4	Area9 Lyceum	IT & Software	Implementation Manager	1 to 3 years

Participant	Company	Industry	Role	Duration of employment
Participant 5	Avantor	Biopharma technologies	Supervisor - Inventory Services	Less than 6 months
Participant 6	Wise	Financial technology	Due Diligence Agent	6 months to 1 year
Participant 7	Veriff	Global identity verification service	Documents Operations Specialist	3 to 5 years
Participant 8	SwissBorg	Cryptocurrency and blockchain technologies	KYC/AML Specialist	1 to 3 years
Participant 9	Betsson Group	Software services for online gambling products	QA Engineer	6 months to 1 year
Participant 10	Breakwater Technology	IT & Software	Service Support Specialist	Less than 6 months
Participant 11	Swappie	IT & Software	Senior Production Specialist	1 to 3 years
Participant 12	Microsoft	IT & Software	Business Program Manager	6 months to 1 year
Participant 13	Genius Sports	Software services for online gambling products	Data Analyst	6 months to 1 year
Participant 14	Monese	Financial technology	Customer Support Specialist	6 months to 1 year

Source: (Farhan, 2023)

The table provides information on participants in different tech-related industries, including cyber security, financial technology, IT and software, biopharma technologies, and online gambling products. The participants have different roles, such as security analyst, due diligence agent, trading operations specialist, implementation manager, supervisor,

KYC/AML specialist, QA engineer, service support specialist, senior production specialist, business program manager, data analyst, and customer support specialist. The duration of their employment ranges from less than six months to 5 years.

### **2.1.2. Analysis of data**

The data analysis part of the research involves analysing quantitative and qualitative data collected through surveys to gain insights into the feedback culture in the tech industry.

The quantitative data collected from surveys have been analysed using descriptive statistics. In addition, descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, and measures of central tendency, have been used to summarise and describe the characteristics of the data. This provides an overview of the feedback culture in the tech industry, including the frequency of feedback, types of feedback, and perceived effectiveness of feedback. This also evaluates the brand's perception through the culture of feedback and psychological safety it promotes. These statistical analyses have helped identify any significant associations or trends in the data and provide quantitative evidence to support the research findings.

The analysis of qualitative data collected through surveys has been analysed using thematic analysis, content analysis, or other qualitative analysis techniques (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The thematic analysis involves identifying recurring themes related to feedback culture in the tech industry based on qualitative data collected from surveys. For example, themes such as "lack of regular feedback," "emphasis on constructive feedback," "feedback as a performance evaluation tool," "feedback as a driver of employee growth," and "feedback as a means of improving the brand perception" from an employee's point of view." These themes shed light on the prevalent feedback practices and beliefs in the tech industry and provide insights into the impact of feedback culture on employee contentment and discontentment. Content analysis involves analysing open-ended survey responses to identify patterns related to employee contentment in the tech industry. For instance, content analysis reveals common keywords or phrases used by employees to describe their level of contentment, such as "satisfaction with feedback," "recognition of contributions," "opportunities for learning and

growth," and "positive work environment." By analysing the content of employee responses, the author has gained insights into the factors contributing to employee contentment concerning feedback culture. Furthermore, by examining this qualitative data, the author has gained insights into how feedback culture influences employees' perception of the brand and their willingness to endorse the company's values and goals.

The responses have been transcribed into a format that can be easily analysed. The findings have been interpreted and synthesised across categories to identify patterns and trends, and the results are reported using narrative descriptions and supporting quotes. This method ensures a rigorous and systematic qualitative data analysis to generate meaningful insights and contribute to the research objectives. The conclusive step in the data analysis process involves interpreting and synthesising the quantitative and qualitative findings to draw conclusions and make recommendations. The quantitative and qualitative data analysis findings have been integrated to provide a holistic understanding of the feedback culture in the tech industry. The interpretations are based on the patterns and themes that surfaced from the data analysis and are supported by relevant literature and theoretical frameworks. The synthesised findings have been used to address the research questions and to provide insights into the problems, needs, and effects of feedback culture on employees' growth and branding in tech companies.

The collection and analysis of the information obtained from the survey followed the below-listed procedure:

1. Administering surveys
2. Reviewing survey responses to identify and correct any errors, inconsistencies, or gaps in the data
3. Creating visual representations, such as charts or graphs, to summarise and present the survey data
4. Interpreting the survey findings and drawing conclusions based on the analysed data
5. Presenting the results of the survey data analysis in a clear and organised manner, often using tables, charts, or narratives, to communicate the findings effectively

## 2.3. Limitations

The author acknowledges that the data collection method may have some limitations. Surveys often rely on a sample of participants, which may not fully represent the entire population of interest, leading to sampling bias (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014; Groves *et al.*, 2004). Using structured questions, such as multiple-choice or Likert scale questions, for survey data collection also has some limitations. Both the qualitative and quantitative data have been collected from the same 14 participants in this research and rely only on descriptive statistics for analysis due to the sample size. The small sample size also limits the study's statistical power, making it difficult to detect significant differences or relationships between variables. Because the same participants are providing both qualitative and quantitative data, there is a risk of response bias or social desirability bias, where participants may provide responses that they believe are expected of them or that align with their previous answers. Surveys primarily rely on self-report data, which can be subject to social desirability bias, memory recall biases, and other response biases, leading to inaccurate or incomplete responses (Tourangeau, Rips, & Rasinski, 2000; Fowler, 2013). Structured questions may not capture the full range of responses or nuances in participants' perspectives or experiences, potentially limiting the depth and richness of the data obtained (Bryman, 2016; Creswell, 2013). Statistical methods used for analysing quantitative data may not always capture the complexity and context-specific nature of qualitative data, posing challenges in the analysis process (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012; Morse, 2015). Most of the survey participants are employed at various tech companies in Estonia. This limitation can impact the generalizability and external validity of the findings, as the results may only apply to the specific country or population studied, and may not be easily generalised to other contexts or countries. The candidates may be reluctant to discuss their displeasure with their existing employment or relationship with their coworkers, issues with the working environment, a lack of prospects for advancement, or discontent with their salary; interviewees may not have given correct information answers reflecting their true feelings while answering to the survey.

## 3. RESULTS

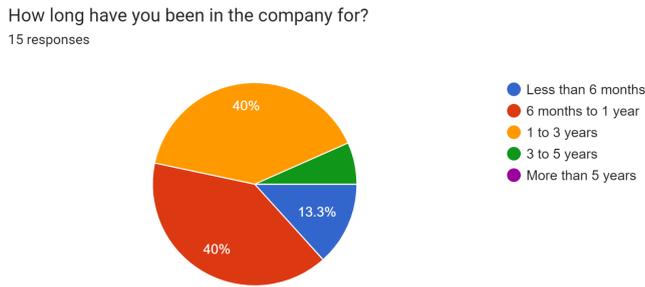
In this chapter, the author will provide a detailed overview of the research findings and systematically review the research subjects individually. This chapter aims to introduce and explain the research results in a comprehensive and organised manner, allowing readers to understand the outcomes and implications of the study. The chapter will start by summarising the main research findings, highlighting the key outcomes that emerged from the data analysis. Then, the author will provide a detailed demonstration of the results, which involves presenting the findings in the form of charts, graphs, and other visual representations that help illustrate the outcomes of the study. The author will also provide textual descriptions of the results, explaining the significance of the findings and their implications for the research issue.

### 3.1. Quantitative Revelations: Statistical Analysis and Findings

Based on the quantitative analysis of the feedback data provided by various employees from different companies and positions, several key findings can be highlighted:

**Duration of employment:** The data shows that 60% of the respondents have been in the company for more than 6 months. This can indicate that they have already familiarised themselves with the feedback process and culture of the company and are using the instruments available to receive and give feedback. It can also be inferred that the participants have had adequate amounts of time to experience the feedback culture firsthand and can provide valuable insights based on their experience.

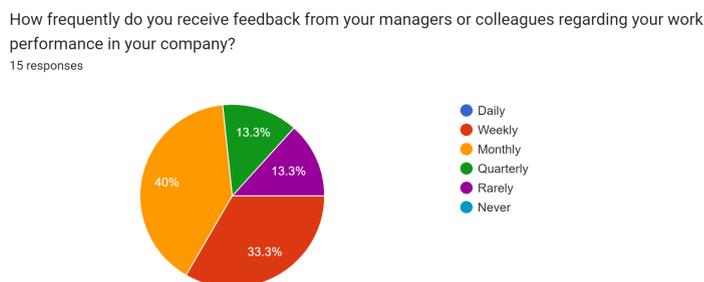
Figure 1. Duration of employment



Source: (Farhan, 2023), author's survey

**Frequency of feedback:** The data shows that the frequency of feedback varies among the respondents' companies, with some receiving feedback on a monthly basis, while others receive it weekly or even rarely.

Figure 2. Frequency of feedback



Source: (Farhan, 2023), author's survey

**Satisfaction with the frequency of feedback:** On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is "Very Unlikely" and 5 is "Very Likely," the respondents rate their satisfaction with the frequency of feedback they receive in their companies. The average satisfaction score is 4, indicating that, on average, respondents are satisfied with the frequency of feedback they receive.

**Effectiveness of feedback culture:** The respondents rate the feedback culture's effectiveness in supporting their companies' professional growth and development. The average effectiveness score is 4, indicating that, on average, respondents believe that the feedback culture in their companies effectively supports their professional growth and development.

**Comfort level in providing feedback:** The respondents rate how comfortable they feel in providing feedback to their peers or superiors in their companies. One-fifth of the participants reported that they feel they need more confidence in providing feedback, which is also supported by the qualitative findings that there is considerable hesitancy in providing negative feedback.

**Alignment of feedback with professional goals:** The respondents rate how well they feel the feedback they receive in their companies aligns with their professional goals and objectives. The average alignment score is 4, indicating that, on average, respondents feel that the feedback they receive aligns well with their professional goals and objectives.

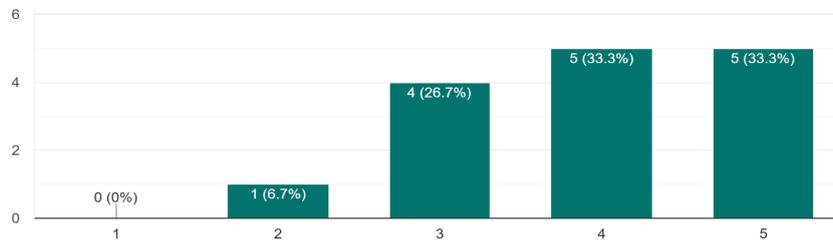
**Confidence in seeking feedback:** The respondents rate their confidence in seeking feedback from their colleagues or company managers. The average confidence score is 4, indicating that, on average, respondents feel confident in seeking feedback from their colleagues or managers.

**Recognition of efforts through feedback:** The respondents rate how well they feel their company recognizes and acknowledges their efforts and contributions through feedback. The average recognition score is 4, indicating that, on average, respondents feel that their company recognizes and acknowledges their efforts and contributions through feedback.

**Importance of feedback culture:** The respondents rate how influential it is in shaping their perception of their company as an attractive employer. The average importance score is 4, indicating that, on average, respondents consider the feedback culture to be influential in shaping their perception of their company as an attractive employer.

Figure 3. Importance of feedback in shaping the perception of the company's image

How important is the feedback culture in your company in shaping your perception of the company as an attractive employer?  
15 responses



Source: (Farhan, 2023), author's survey

**Enhancement of the company's reputation through feedback culture:** The respondents rate how much they feel that a positive feedback culture enhances the company's reputation as an employer of choice. The average enhancement score is 4, indicating that, on average, respondents feel that a positive feedback culture enhances their company's reputation as an employer of choice in the industry.

**Importance of feedback culture in attracting and retaining top talent:** The respondents rate how vital a strong feedback culture is in their company in attracting and retaining top talent. The average importance score is 4, indicating that, on average, respondents consider a strong feedback culture to be important in attracting and retaining top talent.

**Likelihood of sharing positive feedback about the company's culture:** The respondents rate how likely they are to share positive feedback about their company's culture with others, including on social media or in industry forums. The average likelihood score is 4, indicating that, on average, respondents are likely to share positive feedback about their company's culture with others.

**Likelihood of recommending their company as an employer based on feedback culture:** The respondents rate how likely they are to endorse their company as an employer to others based on their experience with the feedback culture in the company. The average likelihood

score is 4, indicating that, on average, respondents are likely to recommend their company as an employer to others based.

### 3.2. Unveiling Insights: Qualitative Findings and Analysis

Table 3. Satisfaction and Challenges Reported by Participants

Aspect of feedback culture	Employee contentment	Employee discontentment
Frequency of feedback (regularity)	Feedback provided on a regular basis	Chance of being repetitive
Timeliness of feedback	Feedback provided in a timely manner	Timely feedback can be generic
Effectiveness of feedback culture	Positive perception of feedback culture as supportive of professional growth and development	Biassed responses to feedback and resistance to change
Comfort in providing feedback	Feeling comfortable in providing positive feedback to peers or superiors	Hesitance in sharing negative feedback with peers
Alignment of feedback with professional goals	Feedback aligns well with professional goals and objectives	Lack of accountability in feedback
Confidence in seeking feedback	Feeling confident in seeking feedback from colleagues or managers	Fear that some feedback might backfire
Recognition and acknowledgement through feedback	Efforts and contributions recognized and acknowledged through feedback	Lack of relevance of feedback

Aspect of feedback culture	Employee contentment	Employee discontentment
Importance of feedback culture in company perception	Positive feedback culture shapes perception of the company as an attractive employer	Lack of external promotion of feedback culture on social media or in industry forums
Importance of feedback culture in attracting and retaining talent	Positive feedback culture is important in attracting and retaining top talent	Effects of feedback culture may not affect the reputation of the company directly to external stakeholders
Perception of the brand based on feedback culture	Feedback culture within the company reflects the overall culture of transparency and psychological safety	It can have a negative affect if feedback is not acknowledged
Likelihood of recommending company as an employer	High likelihood of recommending company based on feedback culture as these insights are available internally to employees	Feedback culture may not be a crucial part shaping the reputation and brand image of a company

Source: (Farhan, 2023), author's summarisation based on findings

Most of the participants in the survey reported receiving feedback from their managers or colleagues on a monthly or weekly basis, indicating that feedback is provided regularly in their companies, so the frequency of the feedback is regularly maintained in these tech companies. It was also indicated that the timeliness of the feedback plays a crucial role in improving performance and enhancing the effectiveness of the learning process. In addition, participants generally rated the effectiveness of the feedback culture in their companies as positive. This indicates that employees perceive the feedback culture in their companies as supportive of their professional growth and development.

*“When I first started working independently in the company, I made some mistakes as a newbie for which I got feedback from my colleague. Till now I haven't made the same mistake again as I always remember to check that specific procedure due to the feedback I got.”*

*“Before adopting a new tech stack my manager has provided feedback on my strong areas*

*and how I can fit into the new upcoming changes. This has helped me to work on areas where I need to gain expertise to get along with the new changes.”*

The study finds that the relevance and timeliness of feedback are critical in early-stage employee development. The feedback also has to be relevant and per the baseline expectations. The alignment of feedback with professional goals was another area addressed in this study. Participants reported that the feedback they receive in their companies aligns well with their professional goals and objectives. Mainly it helps them see the big picture and set goals for themselves. Participants reported that leadership in their companies promotes a feedback culture among employees but highlighted instances where lack of accountability and recognition negatively impacted the overall feedback ecosystem. This suggests that leadership can impact the overall effectiveness of the feedback ecosystem and employees' perception of the feedback culture.

*“Quarterly personal meetings with my team lead help me to identify where I am doing good and where I should focus more.”*

*“Yeah, I remember the positive influence that I had on my performance. It was around the time when my manager needed to get back to me after my probation and as for the feedback, whatever he told me motivated me to keep working for the company's best benefits. His constructive feedback encouraged me to work on my personal development.”*

This indicates that employees perceive the feedback they receive as relevant and helpful in achieving their career aspirations. One of the most critical aspects of psychological safety that the author was keen on getting some insights from was the proactiveness in seeking feedback from peers or managers. Participants generally reported feeling confident in seeking feedback from their colleagues or company managers.

*“My company is very friendly. Everyone is valued and taken seriously. If I have a great plan or improvement process I can talk to management at any convenient time”*

Participants generally reported feeling confident in seeking feedback from their colleagues or company managers. Participants reported that the feedback culture in their companies is essential in shaping their perception of the company as an attractive employer. The

acceptance of a brand in the industry is critical in the competitive landscape of tech companies. The author tried to explore whether there is a valid connection between the feedback culture and the underlying psychological safety it promotes with the recognition of the brand image itself. The research findings so far support this connection.

*“The feedback resembles employee satisfaction, thus reflecting the reputation/branding of the company. If the internal reflection is good, the stakeholders receive the right message and can plan on further implementation. As a result of which, there is a coherent relationship both internally and externally.”*

This shows that a positive feedback culture is seen as an essential component of how workers perceive their company. Nevertheless, it is also good to note that this component's visibility was reported to be limited to only employees. Along the line, participants rated the importance of a strong feedback culture in their companies in attracting and retaining top talent as high.

Moving on, it was pointed out that the underlying psychological safety has a dominance over the perception of the brand.

*“I don't have enough knowledge about the effects of the feedback culture on the reputation of the company externally so I can not comment on that. But as an employee, the current feedback culture is leading to a lack of engagement and motivation among employees. If employees feel that their feedback is not valued or acted upon, it is normal that they may become disengaged and less motivated to contribute to the company's success. This can ultimately have a negative impact on the company's reputation as an employer.”*

*“It's important, especially for employees retention”*

*“Employee engagement can be increased through feedback, which can lead to innovation and continuous improvement. Companies that value feedback are perceived to be transparent and open, which can boost their reputation and branding.”*

The statement implies that when individuals feel psychologically safe within an organisation, they are more likely to perceive the brand associated with that organisation in a positive light.

Psychological safety creates an atmosphere where employees feel free to openly share their viewpoints, ideas, and concerns without fear of criticism or punishment. This fosters a culture of trust, collaboration, and innovation, which can positively impact the perception of the brand by employees, customers, and other stakeholders. The statement also suggests a substantial and overriding influence over marketing efforts, product quality, or brand image. It may be secondary to the impact of psychological safety on how the brand is perceived.

*“It helps to retain our employees and also make us a very popular place to work in the overall industry.”*

This indicates that employees believe a positive feedback culture is instrumental in attracting and retaining high-performing employees. This also circles back to the acknowledgement of feedback and the practical implications aspect of it. However, when it comes to expressing contentment externally, the participants reported a low likelihood of sharing positive feedback about their company's culture on social media or in industry forums, indicating that they are less willing to promote their company's positive feedback culture externally.

*“I am not exactly sure how to correlate feedback culture and branding or reputation of the company. Personally I do not disclose about our feedback culture over social media platforms or in any forms externally. However, I do think it is a healthy practice to foster mutual respect, team bonding and individual motivation internally. So, in that case, it impacts how comfortable/inspiring a workplace feels, and it may affect the reputation of the company among employees.”*

Participants generally reported a high likelihood of recommending their company as an employer to others based on their experience with the feedback culture, suggesting that a positive feedback culture positively impacts employee advocacy and word-of-mouth referrals.

*“In the long run, feedback always helps a company grow. There are several aspects which may not be visible to employers but only employees. So, feedback always helps to improve the reputation and branding in one way or another.”*

To focus on areas of improvement, participants reported some common problems or challenges associated with the feedback culture in their companies, including but not limited to lack of clarity in expected feedback, resistance to change based on feedback, biased responses to feedback, and lack of accountability.

*“Well, regarding the problems or challenges I would say that because most of the feedback, for the sake of benefits, are in a unanimous way. However, this fails to understand the overall feedback(positive or negative) while they themselves are giving the feedback so as a result they have to wait for the final poll of the result that the HR is himself/herself sharing at the end of the quarter. Aside from that, feedback creates some unwanted or possible divisions, discriminations, biases and judgmental attitudes amongst employees or colleagues.”*

*“Some common problems that are associated with the feedback culture in my company include the lack of clarity in the type of expected feedback, resistance to change in reflection to the provided feedback , biased responses to provide feedback and the lack of accountability.”*

*“Some colleagues tends to provide very generic feedback which does not add any value”*

This argues that the frequency of the feedback may not always correlate with the effectiveness of the feedback. Participants generally reported feeling comfortable providing feedback to their colleagues or superiors in their companies. However, it was also pointed out that from time to time, employees feel hesitant about sharing negative feedback with their peers.

*“It is hard to complete long feedback forms with a chance of being repetitive. Also, I tend not to share negative feedback about my colleagues, so filling those questions about negative issues is a real struggle for me. Also, overdoing it frequently feels like a waste of time and resources.”*

*“People are hesitant to open up if it doesn't concern them. In most cases, there is a sense of fear that feedback might backfire.”*

*“Feedback is one of the core values of the company. Usually I don’t face any difficulties with feedback, sometimes it might get a bit uncomfortable to give strict feedback.”*

This suggests the possibility of a lack of psychological safety as the employees do not feel safe engaging in healthy conflicts, which can be a significant dysfunction of high-performing teams. The relevance or connection to a particular issue also significantly affects the content of the feedback.

### **3.3. Discussion of findings**

The discoveries from both the qualitative and quantitative analyses reveal several critical insights about the feedback culture in the companies surveyed. Overall, feedback is provided regularly in these companies, with the majority of participants reporting receiving feedback on a monthly or weekly basis. The frequency of feedback is generally perceived positively by employees, with the majority expressing satisfaction with the frequency of feedback they receive. Furthermore, participants rated the effectiveness of the feedback culture in their companies as positive, indicating that employees perceive the feedback culture as supportive of their professional growth and development. However, it was also indicated that an overly regular feedback cycle could harm the effectiveness of the feedback as it can become very repetitive, which can seldom lead to more generic feedback that may not be actionable. Employees reported feeling uncomfortable providing strict negative feedback to their peers or superiors, suggesting that a culture of open communication currently does not exist in these companies and needs to be addressed. Employees also expressed confidence in seeking feedback proactively to improve their performance. Recognition and acknowledgement through feedback were also highlighted. Participants reported that their efforts and contributions are recognized and acknowledged through feedback, indicating that employees feel valued and appreciated for their work. The findings also reveal that the feedback culture in these companies is considered necessary in shaping employees' perception of their companies as attractive employers. Participants rated the importance of a strong feedback culture in attracting and retaining top talent as high, indicating that a positive feedback culture is perceived as instrumental in attracting and retaining high-performing employees.

Additionally, participants reported a high likelihood of sharing positive feedback about their company's culture on social media or in industry forums, suggesting that employees are willing to promote their company's positive feedback culture externally. Participants furthermore reported a high likelihood of recommending their company as an employer to others based on their experience with the feedback culture, indicating that a positive feedback culture positively impacts employee advocacy and word-of-mouth referrals.

However, some challenges were also identified, including the need for clarity in expected feedback, resistance to change based on feedback, biased responses to feedback, and lack of accountability. These challenges highlight areas where companies can improve their feedback culture to enhance their effectiveness further. The quantitative analysis further supports the findings from the qualitative analysis, with employees generally expressing satisfaction with the frequency of feedback and confidence in seeking feedback. However, there are also areas for improvement, such as addressing discomfort or hesitancy in providing feedback. Leadership's role in promoting a feedback culture was also highlighted, with participants reporting that leadership in their companies generally promotes a feedback culture among employees. However, there were also instances where a lack of accountability and recognition negatively impacted the overall feedback ecosystem, suggesting that leadership can play a critical role in the effectiveness of the feedback culture.

## 4. DISCUSSION

### 4.1. Theoretical implications

The qualitative and quantitative findings discussed above have several theoretical implications for understanding organisational feedback culture.

Firstly, the findings highlight the importance of regular feedback in organisations. Employees reported receiving feedback monthly or weekly, indicating that feedback is provided regularly in their companies. This aligns with research suggesting that frequent feedback can increase job satisfaction, motivation, and performance (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996; London & Smither, 1999). It also suggests that organisations should prioritise establishing a culture of regular feedback to promote employee engagement and development (Denison, 1990).

Secondly, the findings emphasise the significance of a positive feedback culture in organisations. Participants generally rated the effectiveness of the feedback culture in their companies as positive, with most giving a high rating. This supports the notion that a supportive feedback culture can enhance employee performance, engagement, and retention (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998). Furthermore, employees reported feeling comfortable in providing feedback and confidence in seeking feedback, indicating that a positive feedback culture encourages open communication and promotes a learning-oriented environment (Ashford *et al.*, 2003; Edmondson, 1999).

Thirdly, the findings highlight the alignment of feedback with professional goals and objectives. Employees reported that the feedback they receive in their companies aligns well with their professional aspirations. This suggests that feedback should not only focus on past performance but also be forward-looking, providing guidance and support for employees' career development (Kluger & DeNisi, 1996; London & Beatty, 1993). Organisations should ensure that feedback is relevant and meaningful to employees' professional goals to promote their motivation and commitment (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Furthermore, the findings emphasise the importance of recognition and acknowledgement through feedback in organisations. Participants reported that their efforts and contributions are recognised and acknowledged through feedback, indicating that feedback serves as a form of social recognition that can impact employees' self-esteem and motivation (Ilies *et al.*, 2009; Praise *et al.*, 2018). Therefore, organisations should incorporate recognition and acknowledgement as essential components of their feedback culture to promote employee engagement and loyalty (Eisenbeiss *et al.*, 2001). Moreover, the findings highlight the significance of leadership in shaping the feedback culture in organisations. Participants reported that leadership in their companies promotes a feedback culture among employees. This aligns with research that suggests that leaders play a crucial role in establishing and maintaining a positive feedback culture by setting expectations, modelling feedback behaviours, and providing resources and support (Dorfman *et al.*, 2002; Riggio *et al.*, 2003). However, the findings also highlight instances where a lack of accountability and recognition from leadership negatively impacted the feedback culture. This emphasises the need for leaders to not only promote feedback but also actively participate in and reinforce the feedback culture to ensure its effectiveness (Kram *et al.*, 2018).

Lastly, the findings point out some challenges associated with organisational feedback culture, such as lack of clarity in expected feedback, resistance to change based on feedback, biased responses to feedback, and lack of accountability. These challenges highlight the complexities and nuances of feedback processes in organisations and the need for organisations to address them proactively (Edmondson, 2003; London & Wohlers, 1991). Further research could explore strategies and interventions to overcome these challenges and enhance the overall effectiveness of feedback culture in organisations.

## 4.2. Practical implications

The findings discussed above have several practical implications for organisations aiming to cultivate a positive feedback culture in their workplace.

Organisations should prioritise and continue establishing a culture of regular feedback, where feedback is provided consistently and frequently. This can be achieved by setting up formal feedback mechanisms, such as regular performance reviews or feedback sessions, and encouraging informal feedback exchanges among employees and between employees and managers. As reported in the findings, providing feedback on a monthly or weekly basis can help promote a continuous improvement mindset and foster a feedback-rich environment. However, it is also important to note that the frequency of feedback can have an adverse effect on the effectiveness of the feedback. If the schedule becomes unnecessarily 'regular', employees can develop a tendency to formulate scripts to provide generic feedback rather than practical. Organisations should create a positive feedback culture that promotes open communication, trust, and psychological safety to counter this. This can be achieved through leadership modelling feedback behaviours, providing resources and training on effective feedback techniques, and recognising and reinforcing desired feedback behaviours. Encouraging employees to give and receive feedback in a constructive and supportive manner can help create a culture where feedback is seen as a developmental opportunity rather than criticism. Organisations should ensure that feedback provided to employees aligns with their professional goals and aspirations. This can be achieved by establishing clear baseline expectations and linking feedback to performance objectives, career development plans, and individual goals. This helps employees see the relevance and value of feedback in their career growth and development and increases their motivation to seek and utilise feedback for improvement. Organisations should incorporate recognition and acknowledgement as an integral part of their feedback culture. Recognising and acknowledging employees' efforts and contributions through feedback can boost their morale, motivation, and engagement. This can be done by providing specific and timely feedback highlighting employees' strengths, achievements, and impact on the organisation and acknowledging their contributions in team meetings, company-wide communications, or formal recognition programs. Organisations should invest in developing leadership skills related to feedback. Leaders should be trained on how to provide effective feedback, receive and respond to feedback, and create a

supportive feedback culture in their teams. Leaders should also be held accountable for their feedback behaviours and encouraged to actively participate in the feedback process to set the tone for the rest of the organisation. Organisations should proactively address challenges associated with feedback, such as lack of clarity in expected feedback, resistance to change based on feedback, biased responses to feedback, and lack of accountability. This can be done by providing training and support to employees on how to give and receive feedback effectively, creating a safe space for employees to provide feedback without fear of repercussions, and implementing mechanisms to ensure that feedback is fair, unbiased, and actionable.

By establishing a culture of regular feedback, fostering a positive feedback culture, aligning feedback with professional goals, incorporating recognition and acknowledgement, developing leadership skills for feedback, and addressing feedback-related challenges, organisations can create an atmosphere where feedback is seen as a valuable tool for employee development, performance improvement, and organisational success along with the enhancement of the brand value and the attractiveness as an employer. The findings from the study highlight the significance of incorporating feedback as a key component of company branding. The practical implications discussed above emphasise the need for organisations to establish a positive feedback culture that aligns with their brand values and promotes employee growth and development. By integrating regular feedback mechanisms, fostering open communication, recognising and acknowledging employee contributions, and developing leadership skills for feedback, organisations can create a brand image that values continuous improvement, employee engagement, and trust. This can also help organisations create a strong employer brand, attracting and retaining top talent who seek an environment that values feedback and invests in employee development. In addition, it is pertinent to note that a positive feedback culture benefits the employees and impacts the overall organisational performance. Engaged and motivated employees who receive constructive feedback are more likely to demonstrate higher job satisfaction and commitment levels, leading to improved performance and productivity. This, in turn, can positively influence the company's brand reputation in the industry and among potential customers. In today's competitive business landscape, where company branding is crucial in attracting and retaining talent and customers, organisations must consider the importance of a positive feedback culture. Building a feedback-rich environment can create a strong and positive brand image that

aligns with the organisation's values and goals, ultimately leading to improved organisational outcomes and success.

### **4.3. Implications of feedback culture on branding: practical and theoretical perspectives**

Several theoretical perspectives support the implications of feedback culture on employee branding. In addition, these perspectives provide a conceptual framework for understanding how feedback culture can impact employee branding.

Social exchange theory suggests that relationships between individuals are based on a social exchange process where individuals engage in a reciprocal exchange of resources and rewards. In the context of a feedback culture, employees who receive timely, constructive, and relevant feedback perceive it as a valuable resource provided by the organisation. This favourable exchange of feedback can enhance the psychological contract between employees and the organisation, leading to increased engagement, loyalty, and commitment, which in turn can contribute to a positive employee branding. (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Self-Determination theory emphasises the importance of intrinsic motivation, autonomy, and relatedness in driving human behaviour. When employees receive supportive feedback, empowering and encouraging autonomy in decision-making and problem-solving, it can enhance their sense of autonomy and competence, increasing intrinsic motivation and engagement. This can contribute to a positive employee branding as employees perceive the organisation as valuing their input and recognising their skills and abilities (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Similarly, Social Identity Theory suggests that individuals derive their sense of identity and self-esteem from affiliation with specific groups. Within the framework of a feedback culture, when employees receive feedback aligned with the organisation's values and brand, it can reinforce their sense of identification with the organisation, leading to a stronger sense of organisational identity and belonging. This can enhance their commitment and loyalty to the organisation, leading to a positive employee branding as employees identify themselves with the organisation's values and brand (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Ashforth & Mael, 1989). Organisational Culture Theory emphasises the role of

organisational culture in shaping employee behaviours and attitudes. A feedback-rich culture that promotes open, honest, and constructive feedback can create a normative expectation among employees that feedback is a valued and expected behaviour. This can foster a positive feedback culture where employees feel comfortable giving and receiving feedback, leading to increased feedback effectiveness and employee branding (Cameron & Quinn, 2006; Schein, 2010). Social Learning Theory suggests that individuals learn through observing and imitating others. Within the structure of feedback culture, when employees observe their leaders and colleagues providing and receiving feedback in a constructive and supportive manner, it can serve as a model for their own feedback behaviours. Leaders who consistently provide feedback that is respectful, timely, and focused on development can influence the feedback behaviours of their team members, leading to a feedback-rich culture and positive employee branding (Bandura, 1977; Bipp, 2018).

The findings discussed in the previous sections have several practical implications for organisations aiming to enhance their employee branding through an effective feedback culture as well. Employee branding refers to the process of creating and maintaining a positive image of the organisation among its employees, which in turn can contribute to increased employee engagement, loyalty, and advocacy. Organisations should ensure that feedback is aligned with their organisational values and brand. This can be achieved by incorporating the organisation's mission, vision, and values into the feedback process and using feedback as an opportunity to reinforce the desired behaviours, attitudes, and performance that align with the organisation's brand. For example, if an organisation values innovation, feedback can focus on encouraging employees to develop new ideas and solutions and recognising and rewarding innovative efforts. This helps employees see how their feedback aligns with the organisation's values and brand and reinforces a sense of organisational identity and belonging. Organisations should also strive to build a feedback-rich culture where feedback is consistently, frequently provided and seen as a normal part of the organisational culture.

Leaders should model feedback behaviours by providing regular and constructive feedback to their team members and encouraging open and honest feedback from employees at all levels. Creating a feedback-rich culture helps employees develop a growth mindset, where feedback is seen as an opportunity for learning and improvement rather than criticism or blame. Organisations should also invest in providing employees feedback, training and resources at all levels. This can include training programs on effective feedback techniques, such as

giving and receiving feedback and providing feedback in a constructive and supportive manner. Organisations can provide employees with tools, resources, and guidelines to effectively deliver and receive feedback, such as feedback templates, performance metrics, and best practices. By equipping employees with the skills and resources to provide and receive feedback effectively, organisations can foster a feedback culture built on trust, respect, and professionalism. Organisations should recognise and acknowledge employees' efforts in providing and receiving feedback. This can be achieved through various means, such as acknowledging feedback efforts in team meetings, company-wide communications, or through formal recognition programs. Recognising and acknowledging feedback efforts motivates employees to continue engaging in feedback behaviours and reinforces a positive feedback culture where feedback is valued and appreciated. Organisations should proactively address challenges and barriers associated with feedback culture, such as lack of clarity in expected feedback, resistance to change based on feedback, biased responses to feedback, and lack of accountability. This can be achieved through regular communication, training, and support to address these challenges. Organisations can create an inclusive and supportive feedback culture that promotes employee branding by addressing challenges and barriers.

Organisations should integrate feedback into their performance management and development processes. Feedback should be seen as something other than a one-time event but rather as an ongoing process integrated into performance reviews, goal setting, and career development plans. Organisations can establish regular feedback cycles, where employees receive feedback on their performance, progress towards goals, and development areas. Then, they can use that feedback to set new goals, identify development opportunities, and track progress over time by incorporating feedback into performance management and development. To enhance employee branding through feedback culture, organisations should ensure that feedback is aligned with their values and brand, build a feedback-rich culture, provide feedback training and resources, recognise and acknowledge feedback efforts, and proactively address challenges and barriers associated with feedback culture. Incorporating feedback into performance management and development processes can also enhance employee branding.

## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the findings from both the qualitative and quantitative analyses indicate that the feedback culture in the companies surveyed is generally perceived positively by employees. Employees receive feedback regularly and perceive the feedback they receive as aligned with their professional goals. A positive feedback culture is essential in attracting and retaining top talent and shaping employees' perception of their companies as attractive employers. However, there are also challenges that companies need to address to enhance their feedback culture further, and leadership plays a crucial role in promoting an effective feedback ecosystem. Overall, the findings suggest that a strong feedback culture positively impacts employees' satisfaction, engagement, and advocacy towards their companies. The findings from the study highlight the importance of cultivating a positive feedback culture in organisations to enhance brand recognition. The discourse above provides valuable points for businesses seeking to improve their work environment by prioritising feedback and leveraging it for employee development and success. By establishing regular feedback mechanisms, fostering a positive feedback culture, aligning feedback with professional goals, incorporating recognition and acknowledgement, developing leadership skills for feedback, and addressing challenges associated with feedback, organisations can create a feedback-rich environment that promotes continuous improvement, open communication, and trust among employees. Such a culture can enhance employee engagement, motivation, and performance, improving organisational outcomes and boosting brand recognition.

# LIST OF REFERENCES

- Ashforth, B. E., & Mael, F. (1989). Social identity theory and the organization. *Academy of Management Review*, 14(1), 20-39.
- Ashford, S. J. (2016). Feedback as a strategy for personal and organizational development. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 3, 201-227.
- Ashford, S. J. (2016). Feedback in organizations. In K. S. Cameron & G. M. Spreitzer (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Positive Organizational Scholarship* (pp. 384-396). Oxford University Press.
- Ashford, S. J. (2016). Proactivity during organizational entry: The role of desire for control. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 92, 186-195.
- Ashford, S. J. (2016). "Positive organizational psychology." *Handbook of Psychology*, Second Edition, 2: 679-702.
- Ashford, S. J., Cummings, L. L., & Fuchs, S. (2003). The influence of feedback-seeking behavior on adaptation to work stress. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, 8(3), 242–248.
- Ashford, S. J., & DeRue, D. S. (2020). Developing leaders for the gig economy. *Organizational Dynamics*, 49(3), 100700.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Social learning theory. *Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall*.
- Bipp, T. (2018). Behavioral effects of feedback interventions: A meta-analysis. *Psychological bulletin*, 144(12), 1294-1320.
- Blau, P. M. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. Transaction Publishers.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods* (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Cameron, K. S., & Quinn, R. E. (2006). *Diagnosing and changing organizational culture: Based on the competing values framework*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Cao, J., Hopp, W. J., & Zhao, X. (2018). How to give and receive feedback effectively in software development teams. *Journal of Systems and Software*, 138, 175-186.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.

- Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. S. (2005). Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of Management*, 31(6), 874-900.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. Springer US.
- Denison, D. R. (1990). *Corporate culture and organizational effectiveness*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Detert, J. R., & Edmondson, A. C. (2011). Implicit voice theories: Taken-for-granted rules of self-censorship at work. *Academy of Management Journal*, 54(3), 461-488.
- Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). *Internet, phone, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: the tailored design method*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Dorfman, P. W., Javidan, M., Hanges, P. J., Dastmalchian, A., & House, R. J. (2012). GLOBE: A twenty year journey into the intriguing world of culture and leadership. *Journal of World Business*, 47(4), 504–518.
- Edmondson, A. C. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(2), 350-383.
- Edmondson, A. C. (2003). Speaking up in the operating room: How team leaders promote learning in interdisciplinary action teams. *Journal of Management Studies*, 40(6), 1419–1452.
- Edmondson, A. C. (2018). *The fearless organization: Creating psychological safety in the workplace for learning, innovation, and growth*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Edmondson, A. C. (2019). Managing the risk of learning: Psychological safety in work teams. In J. T. Spence, J. M. Darley, & D. J. Foss (Eds.), *Routledge companion to organizational behavior* (pp. 91-104). Routledge.
- Edmondson, A. C. (2019). *The fearless organization: Creating psychological safety in the workplace for learning, innovation, and growth*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Eisenbeiss, S. A., Knippenberg, D. V., & Boerner, S. (2001). Transformational leadership and team collaboration: Integrating the roles of direction giving and empowering leadership. *Leadership Quarterly*, 12(4), 451-483.
- Fowler, F. J. Jr. (2013). *Survey research methods* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Grant, A. M., & Molinsky, A. (2017). *Feedback that works*. Harvard Business Review, 95(1), 92-99.
- Groves, R. M., Fowler, F. J. Jr., Couper, M. P., Lepkowski, J. M., Singer, E., & Tourangeau, R. (2004). *Survey methodology*. John Wiley & Sons.

- Groysberg, B., Lee, J., Price, J., & Cheng, J. Y. J. (2018). *The leader's guide to corporate culture: How to manage the eight critical elements of organizational life*. Harvard Business Review Press.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M., & Namey, E. E. (2012). *Applied thematic analysis*. Sage Publications.
- Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1), 81-112.
- Ilies, R., Morgeson, F. P., & Nahrgang, J. D. (2009). Authentic leadership and eudaemonic well-being: Understanding leader–follower outcomes. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 20(3), 387–414.
- Johnson, S. L. (2019). Exploring employee perceptions of feedback in the workplace: A qualitative study. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 34(1), 69-81.
- Jokisaari, M. (2017). The challenges of giving feedback in the software industry. *Proceedings of the 2017 IEEE/ACM 10th International Workshop on Cooperative and Human Aspects of Software Engineering (CHASE)*, 120-123.
- Kearney, E., & Gebert, D. (2019). The impact of diversity climate on task and relationship conflict in work groups: Integrating social identity and social dominance perspectives. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 92(1), 54-80.
- Kluger, A. N., & DeNisi, A. (1996). The effects of feedback interventions on performance: A historical review, a meta-analysis, and a preliminary feedback intervention theory. *Psychological Bulletin*, 119(2), 254-284.
- Kluger, A. N., & Nir, D. (2010). The feedforward interview. *Human Resource Management Review*, 20(3), 235-246.
- Kram, K. E., Higgins, M. C., & Resick, C. J. (2018). Creating a feedback culture: Key challenges and future directions. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 5(1), 477–500.
- London, M., & Beatty, R. W. (1993). Making feedback work. *Journal of Management Development*, 12(4), 9–16.
- London, M., & Smither, J. W. (1999). Feedback orientation, feedback culture, and the longitudinal performance management process. *Human Resource Management Review*, 9(2), 125–152.
- London, M., & Smither, J. W. (2019). Feedback orientation theory: Explaining the role of feedback in learning, development, and evaluation. *In Handbook of research on feedback* (pp. 34-54). Edward Elgar Publishing.

- London, M., & Smither, J. W. (2019). Feedback orientation and the feedback environment: An exploratory analysis. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 92(2), 361-383.
- Mayer, D. M., Nishii, L. H., Schneider, B., & Goldstein, H. W. (2019). The role of leader mindfulness in fostering employee well-being: A multilevel examination. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 104(6), 830-845.
- Morrison, E. W. (2014). Employee voice behavior: Integration and directions for future research. *The Academy of Management Annals*, 8(1), 1-71, 319-392.
- Morrison, E. W. (2014). Employee voice and silence. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 1(1), 173-197.
- Morse, J. M. (2015). Critical analysis of strategies for determining rigor in qualitative inquiry. *Qualitative Health Research*, 25(9), 1212-1222.
- Murphy, K. R., & Cleveland, J. N. (2018). *Understanding performance appraisal: Social, organizational, and goal-based perspectives*. Sage Publications.
- Praise, B. L., Park, S., & Bradley, B. H. (2018). I see you: Leader humility and social recognition at work. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 103(4), 394-412.
- Riggio, R. E., Riggio, R. E., & Salinas, C. (2003). *Listening and empathy in multicultural communication*. Praeger.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations: Classic definitions and new directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25(1), 54-67.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research Methods for Business Students* (8th ed.). Pearson Education Limited.
- Schein, E. H. (2010). *Organizational culture and leadership* (Vol. 2). John Wiley & Sons.
- Smith, A. (2018). The role of feedback culture in tech companies. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 29(3), 501-522.
- Sobol, M. G., Benbunan-Fich, R., & Whitaker, R. M. (2020). Effects of computer-mediated communication richness and interactivity on learning outcomes in a technology-supported learning environment. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 36(3), 335-345.
- Stajkovic, A. D., & Luthans, F. (1998). Social cognitive theory and self-efficacy: Going beyond traditional motivational and behavioral approaches. *Organizational Dynamics*, 26(4), 62-74.
- Steiner, & D. P. Skarlicki (Eds.), *Emerging perspectives on workplace justice: Research in social issues in management* (pp. 89-106). Information Age Publishing.

- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1986). The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. *Psychology of intergroup relations*, 7, 24-58.
- Tesser, A. (2018). Feedback framework: A tool for cultivating a culture of feedback. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 54(1), 76-94.
- Tourangeau, R., Rips, L. J., & Rasinski, K. (2000). *The psychology of survey response*. Cambridge University Press.

# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1. Preliminary survey

My name is Farhan and I am the surveyor for the research "A Study of Feedback Culture in Tech Companies: Problems, Needs and Its Effects on Employees' Growth and Branding".

Before you begin, I would like to mention that this survey will be conducted in accordance with ethical guidelines and standards of research. Your participation is voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw from the survey at any time without any consequences. Your responses will be kept confidential and will only be needed for the purpose of this research study. If you have any questions or concerns during the survey, please feel free to let me know, and I will do my best to address them.

The purpose of this survey is to gain a deeper understanding of feedback culture in tech companies, including the challenges, needs, and effects on employees' growth and branding. I am interested in hearing your thoughts, ideas, and observations. Your input will contribute to the body of knowledge on this topic and may have the potential to inform best practices in tech companies.

Once again, thank you in advance for your participation in this survey. Your time and contributions are greatly appreciated.

## Appendix 2. Survey questions

1. Your Name, Company and Position
2. How long have you been in the company for? (multiple choice question ; options: Less than 6 months, 6 months to 1 year, 1 to 3 years, 3 to 5 years, More than 5 years)
3. How frequently do you receive feedback from your managers or colleagues regarding your work performance in your company? (multiple choice question ; options: Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly, Rarely, Never)
4. How satisfied are you with the frequency of feedback you receive in your company? (Likert scale question, 1 to 5)
5. How would you rate the effectiveness of the feedback culture in your company in supporting your professional growth and development? (Likert scale question, 1 to 5)
6. How comfortable do you feel in providing feedback to your peers or superiors in your company? (Likert scale question, 1 to 5)
7. How well do you feel the feedback you receive in your company aligns with your professional goals and objectives? (Likert scale question, 1 to 5)
8. How confident do you feel in seeking feedback from your colleagues or managers in your company? (Likert scale question, 1 to 5)
9. How well do you feel your company recognizes and acknowledges your efforts and contributions through feedback? (Likert scale question, 1 to 5)
10. How important is the feedback culture in your company in shaping your perception of the company as an attractive employer? (Likert scale question, 1 to 5)
11. To what extent do you feel that a positive feedback culture in your company enhances the company's reputation as an employer of choice in the industry? (Likert scale question, 1 to 5)
12. How important is a strong feedback culture in your company in attracting and retaining top talent? (Likert scale question, 1 to 5)
13. How likely are you to share positive feedback about your company's culture with others, including on social media or in industry forums? (Likert scale question, 1 to 5)
14. How likely are you to recommend your company as an employer to others based on your experience with the feedback culture in the company? (Likert scale question, 1 to 5)

15. What are the common problems or challenges associated with the feedback culture in your company that you have observed or experienced even? (Open ended question)
16. Can you share any specific examples of how feedback culture has positively or negatively influenced your performance, motivation, or recognition of the brand? (Open ended question)
17. How does the leadership in your company promote or discourage a feedback culture among employees? How does this impact the overall feedback ecosystem? (Open ended question)
18. How do you think the feedback culture in your tech company compares to industry standards or best practices? (Open ended question)
19. What are the effects of feedback culture on the branding or reputation of your company, both internally among employees and externally among stakeholders? (Open ended question)
20. Is there anything else you'd like to mention that we did not cover with this survey? (Open ended question)

### **Appendix 3. Summary of survey (quantitative)**

1. How long have you been in the company for?
  - a. Less than 6 months: 2 respondents
  - b. 6 months to 1 year: 6 respondents
  - c. 1 to 3 years: 6 respondents
  - d. 3 to 5 years: 1 respondent
  
2. How frequently do you receive feedback from your managers or colleagues regarding your work performance in your company?
  - a. Daily: 0 respondents
  - b. Weekly: 5 respondents
  - c. Monthly: 6 respondents
  - d. Quarterly: 2 respondents
  - e. Rarely: 2 respondents

- f. Never: 0 respondents
3. How satisfied are you with the frequency of feedback you receive in your company?
- a. Very satisfied (5): 6 respondents
  - b. Satisfied (4): 7 respondents
  - c. Neutral (3): 2 respondents
  - d. Dissatisfied (2): 0 respondent
  - e. Very dissatisfied (1): 0 respondent
4. How would you rate the effectiveness of the feedback culture in your company in supporting your professional growth and development?
- a. Very effective (5): 4 respondents
  - b. Effective (4): 8 respondents
  - c. Neutral (3): 2 respondents
  - d. Ineffective (2): 1 respondent
  - e. Very ineffective (1): 0 respondents
5. How comfortable do you feel in providing feedback to your peers or superiors in your company?
- a. Very comfortable (5): 4 respondents
  - b. Comfortable (4): 8 respondents
  - c. Neutral (3): 2 respondents
  - d. Uncomfortable (2): 1 respondent
  - e. Very uncomfortable (1): 0 respondent
6. How well do you feel the feedback you receive in your company aligns with your professional goals and objectives?
- a. Very well (5): 2 respondents
  - b. Well (4): 9 respondents
  - c. Neutral (3): 3 respondent
  - d. Poorly (2): 1 respondents
  - e. Very poorly (1): 0 respondents

7. How confident do you feel in seeking feedback from your colleagues or managers in your company?
  - a. Very confident (5): 6 respondents
  - b. Confident (4): 5 respondents
  - c. Neutral (3): 3 respondent
  - d. Not confident (2): 1 respondents
  - e. Very not confident (1): 0 respondents
  
8. How well do you feel your company recognizes and acknowledges your efforts and contributions through feedback?
  - a. Very well (5): 3 respondents
  - b. Well (4): 6 respondents
  - c. Neutral (3): 6 respondent
  - d. Poorly (2): 0 respondent
  - e. Very poorly (1): 0 respondents
  
9. How important is the feedback culture in your company in shaping your perception of the company as an attractive employer?
  - a. Very important (5): 5 respondents
  - b. Important (4): 5 respondents
  - c. Neutral (3): 4 respondent
  - d. Unimportant (2): 1 respondent
  - e. Very unimportant (1): 0 respondents
  
10. To what extent do you feel that a positive feedback culture in your company enhances the company's reputation as an employer of choice in the industry?
  - a. Very high extent (5): 4 respondents
  - b. High extent (4): 9 respondents
  - c. Moderate extent (3): 2 respondent
  - d. Low extent (2): 0 respondents
  - e. Very low extent (1): 0 respondents
  
11. How important is a strong feedback culture in your company in attracting and retaining top talent?

- a. Very important (5): 5 respondents
- b. Important (4): 6 respondents
- c. Neutral (3): 4 respondents
- d. Unimportant (2): 0 respondents
- e. Not at all important (1): 0 respondents

12. How likely are you to share positive feedback about your company's culture with others, including on social media or in industry forums?

- a. Very likely (5): 7 respondents
- b. Likely (4): 5 respondents
- c. Neutral (3): 0 respondents
- d. Unlikely (2): 1 respondents
- e. Very unlikely (1): 6 respondents

13. How likely are you to recommend your company as an employer to others based on your experience with the feedback culture in the company?

- a. Very likely (5): 5 respondents
- b. Likely (4): 7 respondents
- c. Neutral (3): 3 respondents
- d. Unlikely (2): 0 respondents
- e. Very unlikely (1): 0 respondents

## Appendix 4. Summary of survey (qualitative)

1. What are the common problems or challenges associated with the feedback culture in your company that you have observed or experienced even? (Open ended question)
2. Can you share any specific examples of how feedback culture has positively or negatively influenced your performance, motivation, or recognition of the brand? (Open ended question)
3. How does the leadership in your company promote or discourage a feedback culture among employees? How does this impact the overall feedback ecosystem? (Open ended question)
4. How do you think the feedback culture in your tech company compares to industry standards or best practices? (Open ended question)
5. What are the effects of feedback culture on the branding or reputation of your company, both internally among employees and externally among stakeholders? (Open ended question)
6. Is there anything else you'd like to mention that we did not cover with this survey? (Open ended question)

### Participant 1, Security Analyst, CYBERS

1. "I didn't find any problems associated with the Feedback culture. My company is very friendly. Everyone is valued and taken seriously. If I have a great plan or improvement process I can talk to management at any convenient time."
2. "It doesn't impact much."
3. "I am not familiar with the industry standards."
4. "I am not sure how to answer this question. Branding and reputations in my company are not entirely dependent on feedback culture."

5. "Nope. Thank you"

Participant 2, Wise, Due diligence agent

1. "Feedback is one of the core values of the company. Usually, I don't face any difficulties with feedback, sometimes it might get a bit uncomfortable to give strict feedback."
2. "When I first started working independently in the company, I made some mistakes as a newbie for which I got feedback from my colleague. Till now I haven't made the same mistake again as I always remember to check that specific procedure due to the feedback I got."
3. "As I mentioned, feedback is one of the core values of Wise and it's considered one of the job responsibilities of the employees."
4. "I think it's better than most of the companies in the tech industries as far as I know. Most of the companies do not promote feedback as well as Wise and aren't this appreciative or honest in their feedbacks as Wise's feedback culture is."
5. "Wise's reputation is very good both internally and externally."
6. "Nothing I can think of at the moment."

Participant 3, Swappie, Trading Ops Specialist

1. "Some common problems that are associated with the feedback culture in my company include the lack of clarity in the type of expected feedback, resistance to change in reflection to the provided feedback, biased responses to provided feedback, and the lack of accountability."
2. "There have been a few instances where I've observed that feedback was provided to my colleagues in regards to their performance, but several factors which contributed to the low performance were not taken into account as much as they should have been. While this incident has not had any influence on my performance, it definitely had a negative impact on the image of the feedback system and my motivation."
3. "The leadership in my company always encourages feedback. However, in several cases, the lack of accountability and the lack of recognition has an overall negative impact on the feedback culture. This causes the employees to be reluctant in providing

feedback. This can lead to a lack of engagement and motivation among employees, which can ultimately impact the company's overall performance."

4. "I think that the structure of giving and receiving feedback in my company meets the industry standards. However, there is room for improvement on how the feedback is dealt with."
5. "I don't have enough knowledge about the effects of the feedback culture on the reputation of the company externally so I cannot comment on that. But as an employee, the current feedback culture is leading to a lack of engagement and motivation among employees. If employees feel that their feedback is not valued or acted upon, it is normal that they may become disengaged and less motivated to contribute to the company's success. This can ultimately have a negative impact on the company's reputation as an employer."
6. "Not at the moment. Thanks!"

#### Participant 4, Area9 Lyceum, Implementation Manager

1. "None"
2. "None"
3. "None"
4. "It helps to improve our system faster than other companies."
5. "None"

#### Participant 5, Avantor, Supervisor-Inventory Services

1. "Because of diversity it is important the way of giving feedback. Specifically direct and indirect feedback. Some culture receive direct feedback in a positive way whereas other may take it personal."
2. "Dutch people like to give direct feedback where Asian people like indirect feedback. It may sometimes create conflict."
3. "Good"
4. "Readiness of employees is important. By giving training about company culture is important."
5. "Its important, especially for employees retention"
6. "N/A"

Participant 6, Wise, DD agent

1. "So far non"
2. "No negative influence so far but it helps me to locate my weaknesses and to work on to recover them."
3. "Leadership is the most important part I believe to promote feedback culture."
4. "In both cases, the feedback helps to identify what can be improved."
5. "It reflects the overall transparency of the company for both employees and stakeholders."
6. "Nothing else."

Participant 7, Veriff, Documents Operations Specialist

1. "Not all people are happy to receive negative feedback regarding work."
2. "It helped me in framing OKRs that were more aligned with the company goals."
3. "It's good, there are open mic sessions where people can voice their suggestions."
4. "Some of them were adopted from top tech industries in Silicon Valley."
5. "It creates a strong brand image."
6. "NA"

Participant 8, SwissBorg, KYC/AML Specialist

1. n/a
2. "Recognition from your line manager always help you to feel more empowered"
3. "The leaders make sure that our voice is heard, the company itself has a very flat structure, which makes the feedback culture more open and inclusive"
4. "We are a very laid back bunch of people with zero micro management, which makes the feedback culture a very acceptable one"
5. "It helps to retain our employees and also make us a very popular place to work in the overall industry"

Participant 9, Betsson Group, QA Engineer

1. "Some colleagues tend to provide very generic feedback which does not add any value"
2. "Before adopting new tech stack my manager has provided feedback on my strong areas and how I can fit in to the new upcoming changes. This has helped me to work on areas where I need to gain expertise to get along with the new changes."
3. "Leadership in your company strongly promote feedback culture. It has introduced the culture of Peer knowledge sharing in the company as a result of this a significant increase in employee engagement and retention is observed in the company."
4. "Feedback culture in a continuous process in our company, we try out different methods of providing feedback which fits to our company so that it motivates employees"
5. "Improved internal communication and increased engagement and motivation among the employees"

Participant 10, Company: Breakwater Technology, Position: Service Support Specialist

1. "Well, regarding the problems or challenges I would say that because most of the feedbacks, for the sake of benefits, are in an unanimous way. However, this fails to understand the overall feedback (positive or negative) while they themselves are giving the feedbacks so as a result they have to wait for the final poll of the result of the HR is himself/herself sharing at the end of the quarter. Aside from that, feedbacks create some unwanted or possible divisions, discriminations, biases and judgmental attitudes amongst employees or colleagues."
2. "Yeah I remember about a positive influence that I had on my performance. It was around the time when my manager needed to get back to me after my probation and as for the feedback, whatever he told me motivated me to keep working for the company's best benefits. His constructive feedbacks encouraged me to work on my personal development."
3. "The leadership in my company usually promotes the feedback culture among employees. I think this is achieved through the repeated one-on-one meetings with my

manager which allows us to provide feedback on our teams, ourselves and the company in general on a regular basis."

4. "Given it's standard maintenance of privacy and the regularity of the procedures, I think it is very much in line with the industrial best practices."
5. "The feedbacks resemble employee satisfaction, thus reflecting the reputation/branding of the company. If the internal reflection is good, the stakeholders receive the right message and can plan on further implementation. As a result of which, there is a coherent relationship both internally and externally."
6. "Not really"

#### Participant 11, Swappie, Senior Production Specialist

1. "All my group members' performance and feedback are given together. This should be individual and personal."
2. "Quarterly personal meeting with my team lead helps me to identify where I am doing good and where I should focus more."
3. "My leaders encourage open communication and create an environment where employees feel comfortable sharing feedback."
4. "My company's feedback system can be upgraded and made more standard."
5. "Employee engagement can be increased through feedback, which can lead to innovation and continuous improvement."
6. "Companies that value feedback are perceived to be transparent and open, which can boost their reputation and branding."

Participant 12, Microsoft, Business Program Manager

1. "It is hard to complete long feedback forms with a chance of being repetitive. Also, I tend not to share negative feedback about my colleagues, so filling those questions about negative issues are a real struggle for me. Also, overdoing it frequently feels like a waste of time and resources."
2. "Filling up feedback forms has not impacted my performance, motivation or recognition of the brand. Rather, compliments or comments shared during team lunches motivated me a lot."
3. "The leadership promotes it strongly, even the yearly promotional or increment slightly depends on it. So, it is important to receive good feedback from colleagues for better career growth."
4. "I think it is above average to industry standards as it has become shorter and more precise recently."
5. "I am not exactly sure how to correlate feedback culture and branding or reputation of the company. Personally, I do not disclose about our feedback culture over social media platforms or in any forms externally. However, I do think it is a healthy practice to foster mutual respect, team bonding, and individual motivation internally. So, in that case, it impacts how comfortable/inspiring a workplace feels, and it may affect the reputation of the company among employees."

Participant 13, Genius Sports, Data Analyst

1. "People are hesitant to open up if it doesn't concern them. In most cases, there is a sense of fear that feedback might backfire."
2. "We have a biweekly F2F meeting with managers regarding all aspects of our job. That has helped me a lot to open up and to address their expectations and my limitations."
3. "Overall, our company does value the well-being of employees and the company itself promotes an environment such that every voice is heard. Open communication helps to solve minute problems which may trigger something bigger in the longer run."

4. "Feedback culture is a continuous process in our company. We try out different methods of providing feedback which fits our company so that it motivates employees."
5. "In the longer run, feedback always helps a company grow. There are several aspects which may not be visible to the employer but only the employee. So, feedback always helps to improve the reputation and branding by one way or another."

Participant 14 - Monese - Cs"

1. "In general, I found that feedback is very nice in Estonia. But this doesn't motivate me. I found feedback is only provided or the duration of the feedback gets longer when someone did something wrong."
2. "Management practice directly affects employees turnover. It is suggested that when employees feel satisfied with the style of their supervisor, they tend to be more motivated and tend not to intend to quit the organisation. Feedback doesn't affect my performance, only how I perceive everything around me."
3. "I don't think they have a deep study into who am I and what kind of person I am"
4. "In my opportunity it's semi standard. Where they could still go through the idea of providing and receiving feedback. Management should be more efficient on giving a structured feedback as it better impacts the employees overall behaviour, motivation, and performance."
5. "The primary reason employee believes they were not acknowledged. As employees engagement is an affirmed strategy used to diminish worker stir, increment efficiency, remain cutthroat and secure authoritative development and endurance."
6. "N/a"

## Appendix 5. Non-exclusive licence

A non-exclusive licence for reproduction and publication of a graduation thesis<sup>1</sup>

I, Farhan Sadique Tarafder

1. Grant Tallinn University of Technology free licence (non-exclusive licence) for my thesis

A STUDY OF FEEDBACK CULTURE IN TECH COMPANIES: PROBLEMS, NEEDS AND ITS EFFECTS ON EMPLOYEES' GROWTH AND BRANDING

Supervised by Mari-Klara Stein, PhD

1.1 to be reproduced for the purposes of preservation and electronic publication of the graduation thesis, incl. to be entered in the digital collection of the library of Tallinn University of Technology until expiry of the term of copyright;

1.2 to be published via the web of Tallinn University of Technology, incl. to be entered in the digital collection of the library of Tallinn University of Technology until expiry of the term of copyright.

2. I am aware that the author also retains the rights specified in clause 1 of the non-exclusive Licence.

3. I confirm that granting the non-exclusive licence does not infringe other persons' intellectual property rights, the rights arising from the Personal Data Protection Act or rights arising from other legislation.

17/04/2023

---

<sup>1</sup> *The non-exclusive licence is not valid during the validity of access restriction indicated in the student's application for restriction on access to the graduation thesis that has been signed by the school's dean, except in case of the university's right to reproduce the thesis for preservation purposes only. If a graduation thesis is based on the joint creative activity of two or more persons and the co-author(s) has/have not granted, by the set deadline, the student defending his/her graduation thesis consent to reproduce and publish the graduation thesis in compliance with clauses 1.1 and 1.2 of the non-exclusive licence, the non-exclusive licence shall not be valid for the period.*