Fund for Shared Insight

Feedback Practice Analysis:
Technical Supplement

May 2023

How to Navigate this Technical Supplement

This document contains six sections. The first two sections include introductory content describing our methodological approach and high-level findings. The remaining four sections provide an overview of statistical findings from our analyses of the relationships between clusters of feedback practices and specific feedback loop outcomes. While we now know that all feedback practices contribute to organizational benefits in some way, our analysis revealed specific clusters of practices are better suited to attain certain types of goals. These clusters are described in the final four sections of this document.

INTRODUCTORY CONTENT

KEY FEEDBACK PRACTICE CLUSTERS

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#1

Context and Methodology

Methodological Approach: The L4G Feedback Cycle

→ Listen4Good (L4G) partners with nonprofits to harness the power of direct feedback and make client perspectives more integral to their work. L4G was started by Fund for Shared Insight but is now an independent initiative.

→ L4G supports nonprofits in building a high-quality feedback practice that includes five key steps: (1) Designing the feedback survey, (2) collecting data, (3) interpreting the data, (4) responding to the findings, (5) and closing the loop with clients.

→ This study focuses on a subset of organizations participating in L4G in 2018 and 2019. Organizations were surveyed midway and at the end of their two-year partnership.
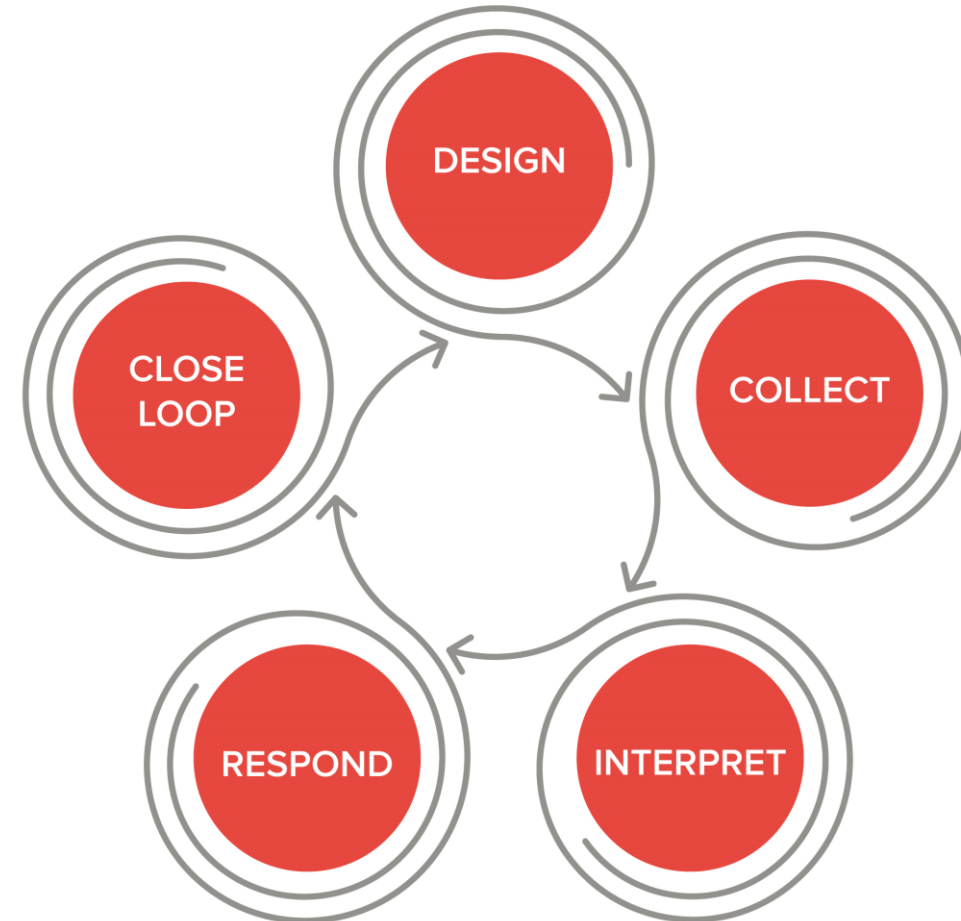
Context: Data Collection and Sample Characteristics

Data Collection Approach and Sample Characteristics

→ All organizations that partnered with L4G between 2016 and 2020 were surveyed mid-way and at the end of their two-year partnership. **Data used throughout this assessment were taken at the end of L4G partnership.**

→ A total of **167 organizations** that started their L4G partnership in 2018 and 2019 provided data for at least one of the feedback practices and feedback loop outcome items.

→ Organizations were removed from analyses if they did not provide data for both the feedback practice and the outcome items. Using this deletion method, **the sample size ranges from 119 to 167.**

Sample Size and Percentages by Org. Characteristics

Cohort	Sample Size	% of Sample
2018	44	26%
2019	123	74%

Budget	Sample Size	% of Sample
<$500K	6	3.6%
$500K-$1M	13	7.8%
$1M-$5M	78	46.7%
$5M-$10M	29	17.4%
$10M-$25M	28	16.8%
> $25M	13	7.8%

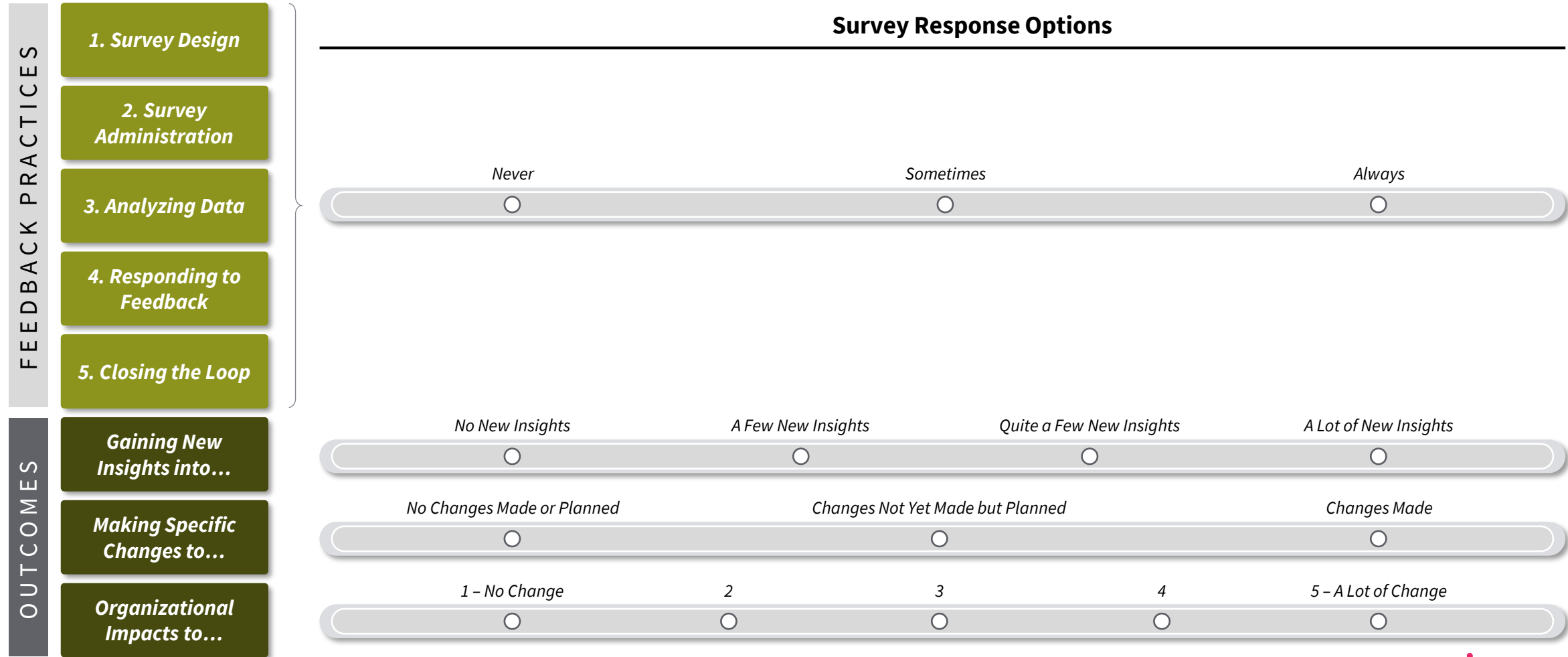| # of FTE	Sample Size	% of Sample
< 10	34	20.4%
10-20	32	19.4%
21-40	34	20.4%
41-60	14	8.4%
61-100	22	13.2%
> 100	31	18.6%

Methodological Approach: Survey Items

Organizations provided data about their use of 22 unique feedback practices across the five feedback loop steps of the L4G model. They also provided data about their experience with three feedback loop outcomes. The items for each of the constructs measured in the survey are described below.

FEEDBACK PRACTICES

1. Survey Design	Consulting Staff	Anonymity	Survey Translation	Vetting Qs with Clients		
2. Survey Administration	Training Staff	Assuring No Loss of Services	Fielding the Survey Widely	Representative Data	Providing Privacy for Data Entry	Providing Add'l Assistance	Using Different Platforms
3. Analyzing Data	Looking at Quantitative Data	Using Benchmarks	Categorizing Open-Ended Data	Segmenting Feedback Data	Consulting with Clients	
4. Responding to Feedback	Discussing Findings with All Staff	Engaging Clients in Solutions	Creating Action Plans			
5. Closing the Loop	Asking Clients How to Close Loops	One-Way Communications	Two-Way Communications			

OUTCOMES

Gaining New Insights into…	Clients' Experiences	Client Needs and Preferences	Client Interactions with Staff	Differences in Client Satisfaction	Programmatic Trouble Spots
Making Specific Changes to…	Program Offerings	Operations	Staff Interactions with Clients	New Services Offered	
Organizational Impacts to…	Decision-Making Processes	Organizational Culture	Interactions with Clients	Program Effectiveness	

Methodological Approach: Response Options

Data for each survey question about feedback practices and feedback loop outcomes were ascertained using Likert-style response scales. The scales corresponding to each survey question are shown below.

FEEDBACK PRACTICES

1. Survey Design

2. Survey Administration

3. Analyzing Data

4. Responding to Feedback

5. Closing the Loop

OUTCOMES

Gaining New Insights into...

Making Specific Changes to...

Organizational Impacts to...

Survey Response Options

Never	Sometimes	Always
○	○	○

No New Insights	A Few New Insights	Quite a Few New Insights	A Lot of New Insights
○	○	○	○

No Changes Made or Planned	Changes Not Yet Made but Planned	Changes Made
○	○	○

1 – No Change	2	3	4	5 – A Lot of Change
○	○	○	○	○

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Methodological Approach: Analysis

The Focal Analysis Question

What specific feedback practices are most related to high-quality feedback loop outcomes?

Methodological Approach

Using data from L4G organizations' 24-month survey entries...

1. We first analyzed **differences in individual outcome items** between organizations that engage in each individual feedback practice "always" versus "sometimes" or "never".

2. We then analyzed **differences in scale-level outcomes** (e.g., the average of all items related to organizational impact) between organizations that engage in each individual feedback practice "always" versus "sometimes" or "never".

3. Finally, we analyzed the relationship between the **total or sum of practices within each step that an organization engages in "always" and scale-level outcomes** (e.g., the correlation between the number of Step 1: Survey Design practices and each outcome scale).

#2

High-Level Findings

High-Level Findings from Our Analysis

Across the feedback loop model…

→ When it comes to high quality feedback practices, simply **engaging in more practices overall is related to feedback loop outcomes.** In other words, there is an additive effect where the number of feedback practices an organization engages in is positively correlated with experiencing impacts ($r = .33$), gaining insights ($r = .24$), and making changes ($r = .20$).

→ Of course, **this finding is only correlational** and cannot be interpreted to mean that engaging in these practices directly causes increases in these three outcome areas. That said, the fact that a positive, significant relationship exists at all is promising evidence for the use of high-quality feedback loop practices.

→ **In general, the majority of the significant relationships we observed were between feedback practices and organizational impacts**; slightly fewer practices were related to gaining insights; the fewest number of practices were related to making changes.

→ **Each step is important in some way** – there is at least one practice from every step that is significantly related to feedback loop outcomes.

→ Across all findings, feedback **practices appear to be unrelated to dimensions of organizational capacity** (i.e., budget size and FTE). In other words, having a larger budget or more staff does not necessarily explain why organizations are able to engage in collecting representative data.

Relationships between Feedback Steps and Outcome Scales

Feedback Practice Steps *(Sum of "always")*	Outcome Scales[1]		
	Insight *(average)*	Changes *(sum)*	Impact *(average)*
Step 1: Survey Design			
Step 2: Survey Administration		$r = .16$	$r = .28$
Step 3: Analysis/Interpretation	$r = .24$		$r = .20$
Step 4: Responding to Feedback	$r = .32$	$r = .21$	$r = .27$
Step 5: Closing the Loop		$r = .21$	
Overall Practices	$r = .24$	$r = .20$	$r = .33$

Legend: | Statistically Significant at the p < .05 level[2] | Not Statistically Significant at the p < .05 level |

[1] *The values for "r" shown here are Pearson correlation coefficients. A correlation of 0 indicates no relationship exists. Correlations between 0 and .3 are considered small, between .3 and .5 are considered moderate, and above .5 are considered large.*
[2] *Cells in this table that are color coded as green indicate that the correlation shown is statistically significant at the p < .05 level, meaning that the observed data is unlikely to be due to random chance alone.*

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Methodological Approach: Interpreting Cluster Finding Slides

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Example Cluster Findings Slide

> **Each slide leads with a statement describing the key takeaway for the cluster.**

For each of the cluster finding slides, the header provides a one-sentence statement describing the **key takeaway**(s) from the table below it.

Each of the **outcome items**, organized by construct area, are shown at the top as the columns within the table.

Significance and Effect Sizes

Feedback Practice	Insight				
	Clients' experience	Clients' needs and preference	Client interaction with staff	Reasons for satisfaction differences	Trouble spots
Practice 1					
Practice 1					
Practice 1				0.34	
Practice 1				0.51	

Each of the **practices** within a given feedback step are shown on the left as the rows within the table.

Cells are color coded to note statistical significance. Green cells mean the practice is statistically related to increases in the outcome item at the $p < .05$ level. Within each green cell, a statistical effect size is provided denoting the size of each statistically significant relationship. Definitions for the effect sizes are provided in footnotes.

Observations
→ Supporting text to describe the findings shown in the table.
→ Supporting text to describe the findings shown in the table.
→ Supporting text to describe the findings shown in the table.

More detailed findings from the table are provided in a general **observations** section at the bottom of each slide.

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#3

Cluster A: Data Collection Practices

Data collection practices are important; they relate to a variety of outcome items across insights, changes, and organizational impacts.

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Significance and Effect Sizes

Feedback Practice	Insight[1]					Changes[2]				Impact[1]			
	Clients' experience	Clients' needs and preference	Client interaction with staff	Reasons for satisfaction differences	Trouble spots	Program offerings	Operations	Staff interactions with clients	New Services	Decision-Making Processes	Culture	Interactions with clients	Program Effectiveness
Collecting representative data	0.70	0.52			0.62	0.26			0.24	0.85	1.00	0.70	0.53
Ensuring privacy								0.22					0.48
Offering various platforms											0.45	0.40	0.36

Legend: | Significantly Related to Increases | Not Significant | Significantly Related to Decreases |

Observations

→ Organizations that **collect representative data** from clients reported higher scores in nine outcome items, the largest number across all practices; these organizations reported making more changes overall and having higher average scores for both insights gained and impacts experienced. This is also the only practice with statistically large effect sizes (see footnotes for definitions of effect sizes).

→ Outside of collecting representative data, other key practices within the data collection process are **offering the survey on a variety of platforms and ensuring data privacy**. Organizations that offer the survey on multiple platforms are more likely to report impact to organizational culture, staff interactions with clients, and program effectiveness. Organizations that take measures to ensure data privacy are more likely to make changes in how staff interact with clients and experience impacts in terms of program effectiveness

[1] *Effect sizes for insights and impacts are Cohen's d statistics comparing the difference in averages between organizations engaging in this practice "always" and those engaging in it "never or sometimes." Cohen's d sizes between 0.2 - 0.5 are considered small; 0.5 - 0.8 are considered medium; and => 0.8 are considered large.*
[2] *Effect sizes for changes made are Cramer's V statistics comparing the difference in percentages of organizations who have made changes between those engaging in the practice "always" versus "never or sometimes." Cramer's V sizes between 0.07 - 0.21 are considered small; 0.21 - 0.35 are considered medium; and => 0.35 are considered large.*

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#4

Cluster B: Analysis and Sensemaking

High quality feedback is not just about collecting data; organizations need to analyze data and make sense of findings to drive insights and impact.

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Significance and Effect Sizes

Feedback Practice	Insight[1]					Changes[2]				Impact[1]			
	Clients' experience	Clients' needs and preference	Client interaction with staff	Reasons for satisfaction differences	Trouble spots	Program offerings	Operations	Staff interactions with clients	New Services	Decision-Making Processes	Culture	Interactions with clients	Program Effectiveness
Using quantitative averages				0.45	0.36								0.14
Using benchmarks		0.34	0.54	0.45	0.34					0.45	0.51		0.33
Data segmentation				0.48	0.29			.20		0.36	0.35		
Qualitative thematic coding				0.36	0.46								

Legend: Significantly Related to Increases | Not Significant | Significantly Related to Decreases

Observations

→ Several practices for analyzing and making sense of data are important for feedback loop outcomes. Namely, the practices of **using quantitative averages**, **benchmarks**, and **data segmentation** each have effects on at least three outcomes; **qualitative coding** also has effects on two outcomes.

→ **All four of these practices are related to two specific aspects of gaining insights**: learning about (a) reasons for differences in satisfaction between clients and (b) programmatic trouble spots. Using benchmarks, which has both the most and the largest effect sizes of these four practices, is also related to gaining insights into client needs/preferences and client interactions with staff.

→ **Two of these practices are also related to areas of organizational impact**. Specifically, segmenting data and using benchmarks are both related to greater impacts in decision-making processes and organizational culture, while using benchmarks is also related to impacts to program effectiveness.

[1] *Effect sizes for insights and impacts are Cohen's d statistics comparing the difference in averages between organizations engaging in this practice "always" and those engaging in it "never or sometimes." Cohen's d sizes between 0.2 - 0.5 are considered small; 0.5 - 0.8 are considered medium; and => 0.8 are considered large.*
[2] *Effect sizes for changes made are Cramer's V statistics comparing the difference in percentages of organizations who have made changes between those engaging in the practice "always" versus "never or sometimes." Cramer's V sizes between 0.07 - 0.21 are considered small; 0.21 - 0.35 are considered medium; and => 0.35 are considered large.*

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#5

Cluster C: Participatory Feedback Practices

High-quality feedback loops are participatory rather than extractive. They engage both clients and staff in the process.

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Significance and Effect Sizes

Feedback Practice	Insight[1]					Changes[2]				Impact[1]			
	Clients' experience	Clients' needs and preference	Client interaction with staff	Reasons for satisfaction differences	Trouble spots	Program offerings	Operations	Staff interactions with clients	New Services	Decision-Making Processes	Culture	Interactions with clients	Program Effectiveness
Training staff on the survey process										0.50	0.48		0.39
Vetting questions with clients										0.69	0.42	0.50	0.59
Discussing findings with staff	0.43	0.44	0.60	0.64	0.45								
Consulting clients on findings												0.39	0.49
Engaging clients for solutions				0.60	0.49		0.23	0.24		0.17		0.44	
Creating action plans with staff		0.41		0.44			0.22					0.43	0.48

Legend: Significantly Related to Increases | Not Significant | Significantly Related to Decreases

Observations

→ A number of practices revealed **the importance of inclusive, participatory approaches that engage both staff and clients in the feedback process**. Specifically, training staff on the survey process, vetting questions with clients, discussing findings with staff, consulting clients on findings, engaging clients for solutions, and creating action plans with staff are all related to different feedback loop outcomes.

→ These practices are important because they bring client voices into the survey design process and ensure staff are aware of why and how feedback is being collected. They also facilitate a meaning making process with staff and clients to ensure that findings from feedback are understood and brought into the solution-making process.

[1] Effect sizes for insights and impacts are Cohen's d statistics comparing the difference in averages between organizations engaging in this practice "always" and those engaging in it "never or sometimes." Cohen's d sizes between 0.2 - 0.5 are considered small; 0.5 - 0.8 are considered medium; and => 0.8 are considered large.
[2] Effect sizes for changes made are Cramer's V statistics comparing the difference in percentages of organizations who have made changes between those engaging in the practice "always" versus "never or sometimes." Cramer's V sizes between 0.07 - 0.21 are considered small; 0.21 - 0.35 are considered medium; and => 0.35 are considered large.

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#6

Cluster D: Closing the Loop

Closing the loop matters; it is related to gaining insights, making changes, and experiencing organizational impacts.

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Significance and Effect Sizes

Feedback Practice	Insight[1]					Changes[2]				Impact[1]			
	Clients' experience	Clients' needs and preference	Client interaction with staff	Reasons for satisfaction differences	Trouble spots	Program offerings	Operations	Staff interactions with clients	New Services	Decision-Making Processes	Culture	Interactions with clients	Program Effectiveness
Asking clients how to close the loop				0.75								0.36	
Using one-way communications								0.32		0.48	0.34		
Using two-way communications	0.36			0.39	0.38		0.24						

Legend: | Significantly Related to Increases | * Significantly Related to Increases when Comparing "never" vs. "Sometimes or Always" | Not Significant | Significantly Related to Decreases |

Observations

→ We asked organizations about the extent to which they close the loop with three practices: **asking clients how to best close the loop**, using **one-way communications** (e.g., flyers, brochures, online posts), and using **two-way communications** (e.g., focus groups, 1:1 conversations). These practices are the only case in our dataset where, due to low sample sizes, it makes sense to compare organizations engaging in these practices at least sometimes to those that never engage in these practices.

→ **When looking at the data this way, our findings suggest that all three of these practices matter in distinct ways.** For instance, the practice of asking clients how to close the loop has the largest effect on an insight outcome of any practice (i.e., insights into reasons for differences in satisfaction between clients). This practice is also related to higher scores for impacts to how staff interact with clients.

→ Likewise, looking at both one-way and two-way communications practices together to reveal if an organization closed the loop somehow, we see multiple effects across outcome areas. Namely, doing at least one of these close the loop communications practices is statistically related to higher scores for three insights outcome items, two impact outcome items, and making changes in two areas.

[1] Effect sizes for insights and impacts are Cohen's d statistics comparing the difference in averages between organizations engaging in this practice "always" and those engaging in it "never or sometimes." Cohen's d sizes between 0.2 - 0.5 are considered small; 0.5 - 0.8 are considered medium; and => 0.8 are considered large.
[2] Effect sizes for changes made are Cramer's V statistics comparing the difference in percentages of organizations who have made changes between those engaging in the practice "always" versus "never or sometimes." Cramer's V sizes between 0.07 - 0.21 are considered small; 0.21 - 0.35 are considered medium; and => 0.35 are considered large.

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