Feedback is helpful for improving many areas of both personal and professional behavior. It is necessary because no one is able to access the effects of her or his own behavior on others, and because this behavior often has a much stronger effect than the content of our words (Argyle 2002, 125). Unstructured forms of feedback are often produced from the point of view and attitudes of the person giving the feedback. Therefore, the critique tends to have the perspective of the feedback-giver as the center of focus: “I would have done that completely differently.” This form leaves much to be desired with respect to a culture of feedback.

Structured secondary feedback and feedback partnerships can and should be a natural part of professional work. Particularly within the framework of a culture of feedback they can improve the quality of professional work in those areas of work subject to this process and can increase the general expectation that structured secondary feedback is a positive, intensive and partner-orientated way of learning. With this method it is not only possible to improve individual performance, but also satisfaction with one’s own work. The suggested form given below can be used in a wide variety of circumstances, for example, when a reverend’s mentor or teacher visits. It can be used in a feedback partnership, or equally when only one person is interested in feedback without wanting it to become a two-way relationship.

Respect for the Feedback Partner

Structured secondary feedback and feedback partnerships do not only refer to aspects of behavior seen as external. It is important that particular care is taken with the trainee or partner to ensure that no offense is accidentally taken. It is therefore necessary to ensure that there is a basic level of acceptance of each as an individual between the feedback
partners. Following the basic rules of feedback giving is also helpful in these situations (cf. Grell 1974, 181–186 and Thiele 2005, 35–47).

**Definitions and Limitations**

*Structured secondary feedback means a systematic form of feedback given by another person. Initially this takes place in a non-evaluative form using a descriptive style.* Structured secondary feedback is different from primary feedback, i.e. from feedback that the agents are able to derive themselves from the verbal and non-verbal reactions of the listeners, the congregation or the students; for example, content-orientated answers to questions, sitting in a concentrated posture or yawning etc. Structured secondary feedback can also be differentiated from unstructured forms of secondary feedback which are very common; for example, statements from colleagues and members of the congregation at the church door, or comments from students all of which are given to the agent by a second person.

Feedback partnerships are designed to advance collegial working relationships with the aim of improving the individual’s professional ability. They serve as an agreement between two people in order to give each other feedback in a previously determined form. One-sided feedback situations, for example in training situations and feedback partnerships, are not the same as supervision. In supervised situations the clarification of motivation is much more intensive than in feedback situations. Structured secondary feedback and feedback partnerships depend heavily on observed and describable behavior. This should be also theologially appreciated, because behavioral aspects are often more important in the reception of the spoken word than the actual content, and also because the behavioral aspects of the agent can effect their own motivation. One can learn from the external arena inwards and from the internal arena outwards. Feedback can be productively combined with supervision or elements of supervision.

**Stages of Structured Secondary Feedback**

I assume that in the social work of the church there is not one form of professional behavior required for everybody irrespective of the situation they are in (e.g. the time of day, the location or the number