

7 tips for giving positive feedback

By Lyndsay Swinton

But just saying 'thanks', 'well done', or 'great job' are throwaway insincerities that can do more damage than good, so here are 7 tips for doing it well...

1. No Time Like Now

Feedback goes stale when left unsaid too long, so give positive feedback as close to the event as possible.

2. In Public and In Private

Praise in public, criticise in private, that's the rule. But before you go singing a person's praises from the roof-tops, think about what they would prefer. Public praise of an extremely shy person may cause an emotional response that overshadows your good intentions. Do what's right for the person.

3. Practice Makes Perfect

It's easy to overlook good work or extra effort, so make it a habit to praise regularly. Consider setting up a formal reward and recognition scheme that everyone understands and can use.

4. Does the Reward Fit?

Keep the balloons and streamers for special occasions. Going over the top with rewards can be mis-interpreted as "buying" favours. Judge the amount of effort and reward appropriately.

5. No Favourites!

Avoid creating "favourites" by doing quick mental tallies of whom you've praised recently.

6. Be Clear and Mean It

The best positive feedback is sincere and specific. Tell the person exactly why you are praising them;

"Tony, that extra analysis was really appreciated by the project team and allowed them to make a decision immediately".

Tony now knows exactly what to do next time to get praise.

7. Catch People Doing Things Right

The more you catch people doing things right, the more right things they will do!
Encourage positive actions by letting people know when they do things well. Start today, and in only three weeks time, giving positive feedback will be a life-long habit.

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