# Effective Ways to Give Praise

When people are praised effectively, behaviors, attitudes, ideas, and even lives can be changed. Sometimes saying the right words, at the right time, and conveying the right message can lead to a world of positive changes. Here are a few ways you can make a positive difference within your circles just by giving effective praise.

1. The more thoroughly you know and understand the person you’re praising, the more likely you are to give the kind of praise that is literally, life-changing for the recipient and possible even for others that they encounter.

1. To be effective, praise must be highly meaningful to the individual who receives it. In other words, it must motivate the person to continue doing the things that prompted in the praise.

1. It’s important that praise is given in a timely manner. The more immediately you give the praise, the more likely the person is to remember what was done in order to receive the accolade.

1. To hit the motivation mark, it’s important that your praise is specific to enable the recipient to reproduce the success by following the same or a similar process.

1. Individuals tend to prefer one type of praise over another. For instance, one person may glow in the public limelight while another would rather be praised in a more private manner that doesn’t bring “too much attention.”

1. Before praising someone, make sure there is a certain level of trust between you. In order to be most effective, the recipient should believe you and take you at your word. If the person really thinks you are exaggerating, the praise won’t be as effective, as if they trusted your judgement more. Note the trust issue.

1. When being specific about the change or outcome, be sure you begin it with an “I” statement, similar to an affirmation, in order to provide proof that the praise is accurate and well earned.

1. Identify what type of recognition each individual would prefer - public or private, tangible items or intangible privileges / activities.

1. Many people don’t feel “deserving” of praise unless they have worked to receive it. That is why presenting your people with something that challenges them helps encourage everyone to work a little harder.

1. Look at your calendar to help you plan several times throughout the year when you can schedule “recognition” events. Be sure to include a public event and a small group event to meet a variety of individual needs.

1. Keep your praise format fresh and new. Make note of new ideas that help keep your strategies and tactics from getting stale. Ask for suggestions from your people and your peers.

1. Recognize and praise the project heroes or heroines who were instrumental to the project’s overall success.

1. Recognize and praise the people who consistently go out of their way to help others.

1. Recognize and praise the detail people who catch the little mistakes before you’re all embarrassed.

1. Keep a running list of the people you work with, as well as their praise preferences. In addition, make a note of past praise phrases you’ve used and the rewards you’ve given them.
2. Praise and recognize behaviors or processes you would like to see more often. Once others hear why someone was praised, they may try harder in that area.

1. Encourage your people to praise and encourage each other (Peer to Peer Praise.) This is especially helpful to people who tend to shrink from public recognition.

1. Unexpected forms of appreciation and praise usually hold more meaning for the recipient than a scheduled or public format. It also feels a bit more personal and deserved.

1. Peer recognition can often mean more to the recipient than that of the company’s president. Create a peer recognition day where everyone gets to learn the top thing peers appreciate about him/her. (This is anonymous.)

1. The obvious is not always the best thing to praise. Occasionally, praise things like tenacity, determination, resilience, etc. These qualities that everyone could and should work on frequently.