

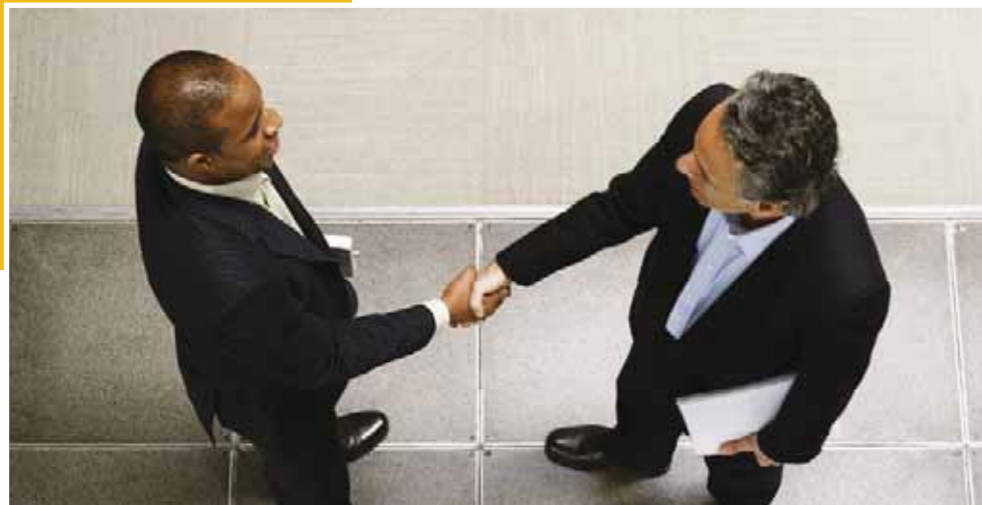


By: Jurek Leon

When you praise me I feel angry

The best way to motivate people is to catch them doing things right and praise them for it.

This isn't something that comes easily to a lot of managers. Even those who do praise regularly need some guidance on how to do it effectively. For example, I often caution business owners and managers attending presentations not to stride back into work and say, "I just want you all to know I think you're doing a fabulous job."



you say 'thanks' it shows me that you haven't a clue what I've done today and you haven't taken the time to find out!"

As this example clearly illustrates, praise is much more effective when it is specific.

Ideally, give the praise as soon as possible after the event. And if you are saying thank you to someone face-to-face, do ensure that you make eye contact with the person. It has far more meaning that way.

Let me finish with a health warning: As a manager, praising people can leave you feeling deflated.

Certainly in the countries where I do most of my work – the UK, Australia and New Zealand – managers often tell me that

when they praise people their positive comments don't seem to be welcomed. Often ladies give the impression that they are embarrassed by the public thanks and males grunt, avoid eye contact and pretend they haven't heard.

The manager is deflated by this response, thinks 'what's the point' and is put off offering further praise because of the ungrateful reaction. Meantime, the staff member who initially reacted poorly to the compliment goes around the rest of the day feeling 10 feet tall. And the first thing they say when they get home that night is, "Do you know what my boss said to me today..."

Many people in our western society have not learnt to accept praise well. That doesn't mean that they don't enjoy and appreciate a genuine compliment. On the contrary, they crave recognition and appreciation. So, please keep looking for opportunities to compliment your team members, peers, suppliers, in fact anyone you come into contact with.

The staff will soon work out that their manager has just been on a course or at a conference, and they'll say to one another, "This won't last. Give it two days/hours/minutes and things will be back to normal!"

Even the most intelligent of people can get praising wrong. Let me illustrate this by sharing an example from my colleague, Jan Collins. She was running a leadership program for nursing supervisors and managers at a hospital. The importance of praise in creating an effective team and a positive workplace was discussed.

That's when a nurse turned to her boss and said, "One thing that really gets on my nerves is the way you say 'Thanks' at the end of every shift.

Her boss turned to her with a look of absolute disbelief on her face and stammered, "But, but I'm letting you know how much I appreciate the work you're doing here."

"No you're not," countered the nurse. "If you said 'I noticed what a great job you did with...today', then I'd know you really did appreciate the work I do. But when

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