

Use the Praise Planning Form to help you become more proactive in your praise. Over time, you may find that you create a habit of praise that comes more naturally and instinctively, without the need for filling out a form first. That's fine. In the meantime, let this form guide your thinking and planning.

Who... I need to praise

This part is simple. Just write down the name of the person you want to praise.

What... they did

The Key: Be very specific here.

*You did a great job on that presentation – it was clear, concise, and full of the right information.
Great report – you had all the information that I needed, and it was easy to read and understand.
Good job handling that customer – you solved the problems; stayed positive; and went the extra mile.
Good research on that marketing issue – I have all the information I need to make a good decision.
Nice memo – it's just what I would have said, except it was better, kinder, gentler, and more positive!
I loved the way you handled that phone call – you were positive, understanding, and professional.*

Why... it was important

Here's where you need to link their behavior with the values it illustrates – either your values or the organization's.

*The presentation – It was the epitome of excellence – exactly what we keep talking about around here.
The report – It saved me valuable time, and helped me do my job better – that's great teamwork.
The customer – That's exactly what we want, in top-notch customer service.
The research – That's the help I need, to make the kind of decisions that keep the profits growing.
The memo – You're helping me look good, and I need all the help I can get!
The phone call – That's what our "people come first" value looks like in a simple thing like a phone call.*

How... it impacted me, the team, and the organization

The *Center for Creative Leadership* teaches executives how to use a simple form called the "SBI." The initials stand for *Situation, Behavior, and Impact*. The SBI gives leaders a simple way to offer feedback to their teams. And the form guides them in that process: *Situation – This is where and when I observed your behavior. Behavior – This is what I saw you do. Impact – This is how your behavior affected me.* Most managers and executives end up using the form for *critiquing* their team members, but the form is just as useful for *praising* them! Keep the simple "SBI" formula in mind, as you "catch your people doing the right thing" and include this important element of praise: how it affected you *personally and emotionally*.

*The presentation – It made me proud to have you on our team.
The report – I really felt a great sense of support and encouragement.
The customer – That's what gives this company such a great reputation out there in the community.
The research – You're going to help this whole organization show better profits this quarter.
The memo – I was really moved by your ability to communicate such a positive spirit.
The phone call – I was walking on air, because you are giving our whole team a great reputation.*

The Personal Trainer is a resource for growing leaders produced by Dr. Jim Dyke, the Founder and Director of **Corporate Leadership Initiatives, Inc.**—an organization dedicated to equipping men and women with skills and principles pertinent to the role and life of a transformational leader of the 21st century. This is a specially-designed tool for personal reflection and discussion that will help you and your team apply the ideas and principles presented in the matching edition of the newsletter **Leadership Tracks**. Log on to **www.CLionline.com** to discover more ways **Corporate Leadership Initiatives, Inc.** can bring its resources and expertise to your organization and help your people become better leaders and better followers. Copyright 2019 James R. Dyke — all rights reserved.

Where and When...

I am going to give praise and reward good behavior

Here's where a little creative thinking is in order. Just saying "thanks" in person is pretty powerful by itself, but anything you can do beyond that will multiply its effects exponentially. But think about the person you are thanking. What kind of approach really speaks to them? Some people love basking in the public eye, while others are shy about this and would feel uncomfortable. Words on paper in the form of a brief handwritten note often have a powerful effect (one manager I know just wrote the words "You Rock!" on a large Post-It® note and attached it to a document he was praising. That note stayed up on the wall in his assistant's cubicle for the next nine months!) And yes, a pat on the back can also be a powerful accompaniment to verbal praise, *where it is appropriate*. Keep the following broad categories in mind...

- Verbal
- Written
- Gift
- Award
- Cash
- Time off / Trips / Vacation
- Personal and/or Public Recognition

If you'd like some more creative ideas, read *1501 Ways to Reward Employees*, by Bob Nelson (New York, Workman Publishing, 2012, ISBN: 978-0-7611-6878-2).

The presentation – (1) *personal and verbal*; (2) *public thanks at the next department meeting*.

The report – (1) *personal and verbal*; (2) *personal e-mail*; (3) *public thanks when I present it*.

The customer – (1) *personal and verbal*; (2) *recommendation for Gold Service Award*.

The research – (1) *personal and verbal*; (2) *first-class lunch at The Regal*.

The memo – (1) *personal and verbal*; (2) *handwritten note of thanks*.

The phone call – (1) *personal and verbal*; (2) *back-door compliment to her supervisor*.

One more important word...

Here's a powerful variation of this tool: think about praising people in the organization *who are not on your team*. It's an incredible way to spread your influence beyond your own team, department, or division. And down the road a bit, it just might help you recruit good people for task force efforts; inter-departmental groups; and expansion of your own team. Hey, why limit the effects of praise to just your own people? Spread the wealth, baby!

Praise Planning Form

Who... I need to praise

Tony

What... they did

...did a great job chairing the task force meeting yesterday!
Kept it on track and on time; got everyone to participate; directed the brainstorming session skillfully; and provided thorough minutes (including follow-up assignments for next session.)

Why... it was important

The meeting was a perfect example of our commitment to excellence and our values of "team performance" and "positive work environment."

How... it impacted me, the team, and the organization

Tony made us all look good in front of the Division V.P. !!!
And we are well on our way to solving the distribution problems we've been assigned to tackle. This will be good for profitability as well as customer-service company-wide.

Where and When... I am going to give praise and rewards

1. Personal and verbal.
2. Public kudos at the next division meeting.
3. Lunch on me at Le Grande's next week.
4. Something special for the whole task force when our project is finished— maybe a celebration or field trip? Talk to Andy about more ideas.

Praise Planning Form

Who... I need to praise

What... they did

Why... it was important

How... it impacted me, the team, and the organization

Where and When... I am going to give praise and rewards