

# LEADERSHIP TR@CKS

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## The Powerful Pull of Praise

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Judith Bardwick put it this way, *"In the end, leadership is not intellectual or cognitive. Leadership is emotional."* Can that really be true? Think about the great leaders you have known – and remember how good it felt to work with them... how good it felt to just be *around* them.

### We Follow Leaders Who Make Us Feel Good

Mary Kay Ash (of cosmetic fame) preached this simple principle of good management: *Everyone has an invisible sign hanging from their neck that says: Make Me Feel Important!* When a leader makes us feel important, we are attracted to them like a powerful magnet. It is a "pull" of positive leadership that far out-powers any "push" of authority, threat, or demand.

### Praise Is A Definite "Feel Good"

When it comes to making us feel good, praise and affirmation are at the top of the list. Modern research suggests that human beings need a ratio of 9 to 1 (praises to criticisms) in order to be at their best. So... What's your score as a leader so far? How are your people doing on the "diet" of praise that you are feeding them? If they are like most, they are probably starving to death.

*Why is that?*

### We All Hate Whiners

Nobody likes to be around a "complainer." So why is

"management by exception" the prevailing approach? Don't blame busy schedules or demanding workloads—a *word of praise takes only a moment of time*. It just requires a little awareness and some thoughtful, good timing. It's doing what Ken Blanchard recommends when he tells leaders to "catch your people doing something right."

### Ya Gotta Say it

Don't make the mistake of thinking "my team knows what I think about their work." #1 – They don't *really* know unless you *tell* them. #2 – When it comes to praise, you can't ever tell them too much or too often. (If you'd like some help with this, check out the great resource in this issue of *The Personal Trainer*.)

### The Glory Garden Principle

And be sure to take praise to the next level. How? Apply this principle: *You can only plant glory in someone else's garden.*

The most compelling thing you can do as a leader is to "plant glory" in the gardens of your team members. In other words, don't just tell *them* what a good job they're doing...*tell everyone!* Make it public. Make it verbal (at meetings and over lunches). Make it in *writing* (e-mails, memos, and company publications). Just do it!

### What Goes Around Comes Around

You will discover a great by-product – people will praise *you* more! It's inevitable. When you keep bragging on your team, it affects the way other people perceive your leadership. They naturally credit *you* for the excellence of the team you lead. And here's another great benefit – you'll find it easier to hire good people, because they will want to work with you! That's right – the practice of praise creates what Peter Senge calls a "virtuous cycle" ... an environment that actually multiplies quality work and quality workers. What a concept – you build people up, and they return the favor.

Amen, brothers and sisters – pass it on!

**Leadership Tracks** is a resource for growing leaders edited 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. For more information, you can log on to the website at: [www.CLInonline.com](http://www.CLInonline.com) and connect with additional practical and creative resources, including **The Personal Trainer**—a specially-designed tool for personal reflection and discussion that will help you and your team apply the ideas and principles presented in this newsletter. Copyright 2019—all rights reserved.