

7 Tips for A Leader to Praise Team Members Well

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Good leaders are appreciative of the people they lead. I must admit, I'm not naturally wired for this. Truth is, I can be guilty of expecting too much from people. I don't always feel the need to acknowledge "normal" work people do – especially when they are being paid to do it.

All of us enjoy hearing we did a good job. Some people are even fueled by it. So, I've learned that offering praise is a necessary part of a leader's responsibility. We should all do it whether we are wired to or not.

Here are 7 tips for a leader to praise their team:

1. **Be specific**

Tell the person in specific rather than general terms what he or she did well. Make sure they know where they are excelling.

2. **Be honest**

Make it genuine. False praise is easily recognized and seldom appreciated.

3. **Be intentional**

Some of us have to discipline this into our leadership. That's okay. It's worth it. Don't assume the person receives enough praise. (I try to observe and intentionally praise at least 2 or 3 people per week among staff and volunteers.)

4. **Be timely**

People shouldn't have to wait long after a job is done well to receive praise for it.

5. **Be creative**

Find unique ways to offer praise. Send a handwritten note. Give an extra day off. Recognize them in front of others. And, of course, don't forget the personal, face-to-face approach.

6. **Be unique**

Don't say the same thing everyone else is saying or the same thing to every person. Find the thing or aspect to praise that no one else has noted.

7. **Be helpful**

Offer praise which helps the person recognize strengths and encourages them in that area.

It does take intentionality to be an appreciative leader. Our staff would probably tell you I have much work to do. I would have to agree with them. But I do recognize the value and keep striving to improve.