

THE PRIORITY OF EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION

By Rick Boxx

Dr. Paul White, co-author of *Five Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace*, discovered in his research that 51 percent of managers believed they were doing a good job in striving to recognize employees for work done well. However, only 17 percent of actual employees said they felt their managers were doing a good job of recognizing their efforts.

This gap, both in perception and practice, can understandably cause discontent in the workplace and result in lower productivity and poor morale. The blame does not fall entirely on the shoulders of top executives and managers, however. Dr. White stated his studies have revealed many reasons for this difference, including:

- People tend to remember negative comments more than positive comments they hear.
- Many people do not or cannot receive praise well.

Nevertheless, this does not free managers from the responsibility – and privilege – of verbally rewarding hard-working, valued employees. We may have different ways of receiving praise and appreciation, but virtually everyone needs it from time to time.

Some time ago I heard about one leader who was informed by a subordinate that he rarely offered positive comments for work well-done, but was quick to point out work not performed to his expectations. “I would appreciate your letting me know when you think I have done something well,” the employee stated. “I have never been that kind of person,” the executive responded, “so, if you do not hear from me, just assume everything is good.”

Needless to say, the staff member did not find that an encouraging reaction from her boss. In fact, it made her feel even more unappreciated and undervalued.

The Bible has much to say about the importance of giving words of affirmation and appreciation to one another. Here are some examples:

Words that build up. We all know how stressful and demanding today’s business and professional world is today. As a result, the workplace is full of the fainthearted and discouraged. Taking a moment to give specific and sincere praise to someone who deserves it can be time well-spent. *“Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing”* (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

Words that motivate. Sometimes words of encouragement and appreciation not only lift spirits, but also motivate people to work harder and with more enthusiasm. We should not use our words to manipulate behavior, but there is nothing wrong with seeking to inspire others to higher achievement. *“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds”* (Hebrews 10:24).

Words that benefit. We often do not know what is going on in someone’s personal life. Kind words at the right time can make a great difference in many ways. *“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen”* (Ephesians 4:29).

Copyright 2015, Integrity Resource Center, Inc. Adapted with permission from “Integrity Moments with Rick Boxx,” a commentary on issues of integrity in the workplace from a Christian perspective.

CBMC INTERNATIONAL: Jim Firnstahl, President
2850 N. Swan Road, Suite 160 ▪ Tucson, Arizona 85712 ▪ U.S.A.
TEL.: 520-334-1114 ▪ E-MAIL: mmanna@cbmcint.org
Web site: www.cbmcint.org Please direct any requests or change of address to:
jmarple@cbmcint.org

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. If you are a manager, how good a job do you believe you are doing in recognizing staff members for work they have done well? How well does the person you report primarily to do in showing appreciation for your work?
2. Think of a time when someone in a position of authority offered words of encouragement or praise to you. What impact did that have on how you felt, and how you approached the work you were involved with at the time?
3. Why do you think there is such a disparity between the perception many managers have about how well they recognize good work and the way the workers perceive how much they are appreciated and valued?
4. How easy is it to distinguish sincere praise and appreciation from an attempt to flatter or manipulate by saying nice things that are not genuine?

NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:

Proverbs 10:20-21,32, 12:14, 15:4, 17:27; James 1:19, 3:5-12

MONDAY MANNA
December 29, 2014