

Ten things to say that make people feel good

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If you’re trying to move up a leadership ladder, you will be challenged to motivate people to contribute at high levels. Typically, there is a direct relationship between how well your people perform and how high you go as a leader. And how well they perform is often related to how good they feel about themselves and their jobs.

Jeffrey J. Fox, a chief executive officer (CEO) consultant, would tell CEOs to practice and remember to say the following ten things sincerely:

1) *“Please.”* If skipping this word when giving orders, it can turn people off over time. Sure there will be times of urgency or emergency when politeness is unnecessary, but generally, attitudes are better when leaders are polite.

2) *“Thank you.”* A good leader should have cause to say “thank you” twenty or more times a day. Skipping this phrase can make a leader appear to be ungrateful.

3) *“You remember John Doe in our production department.”* Statements like this one are appreciated by your people when you mention their name to another leader, executive, or distinguished guest. (And the big bosses

in the organization like to be reinforced with the sound of people’s names.)

4) *“That was a first-class job you did.”* People like compliments when they are sincere and valid. If they’re not, people will view you as fake and out of touch, and it could dampen morale, especially when compliments are given to undeserving people.

5) *“I appreciate your effort.”* This phrase is very important. Regardless of the outcome, if you know your people gave it their best, they need to know you appreciate it. Even when failure occurs, people who know they’re appreciated will keep their heads up and keep at it. Always appreciate the great efforts.

6) *“I hear nothing but good words about you.”* This phrase sheds supervisors and coworkers in a good light. People like to know that they are being bragged about. But prior to using this phrase, be sure your feedback system is proactive and reliable.

7) *“I’m glad you are on the team.”* This makes people feel valuable. Knowing their presence is welcomed is a great feeling for any team member. It can jump start high morale and motivation.

8) *“I need your help.”* This gives people a sense of purpose and

importance. When they know that you, the leader, can’t make it without them, they realize how vital their roles are within your company or organization.

9) *“You certainly earned and deserve this.”* Everyone needs validation. People need to know they deserve any reward, promotion, or other opportunity you gave them. It reinforces their continued efforts.

10) *“Congratulations.”* Always find time to congratulate people. Whether it’s a promotion, an anniversary, a graduation, a victory, or even if it’s an elevated status in another capacity or place like a volunteer organization, congratulations should be in order for anyone who reaches an important milestone, goal, or accomplishment.

Saying legitimate things that make people feel good will go a long way in the development of organizational excellence. There will come a time when you will need some people to bend over backwards for you when they really don’t have to. Whether they do it or not can often be the determining factor between success and failure. And how good they feel may dictate whether they go above and beyond for you at that critical moment.

~ The End ~