

Praising others

Wie lobe ich Kollegen und Mitarbeiter effektiv und professionell auf Englisch? Business Spotlight-Autorin Anna Hochsieder präsentiert typische Beispiele

In our working lives, we tend to give and receive feedback only when there is a problem. As long as things are going well, they are often not commented on. But being praised for one's work is highly motivating, and you may find that you get better results from your team or your co-workers if you *pay* them a *compliment* every now and then.

Focus on the work Although everyone needs positive feedback, receiving praise can also be *embarrassing*. Rather than complimenting someone on their intelligence or skills, focus on what this person has done. Instead of saying »You're an excellent secretary«, be concrete and constructive:

- I'm very impressed with your work.
- I'm very pleased with how you managed to solve this problem.
- I'm seeing a *marked* improvement in your work.
- It was a good idea of yours to send them the information in advance.

Recognize effort If someone has been working especially hard, it is motivating for them to see that you recognize that fact:

- Thanks for all the extra hours you've put in recently. I really *appreciate* that.
- You've really *gone the extra mile* on this project.
- I don't know what we would have done without all the extra *effort* that you *put in*.

»Well done!« A phrase that is often used to praise someone's work is »Well done!«. This phrase is often used by teachers and can sound slightly *condescending* in a work context. (Note that the adjective »well done« is used to describe meat that has

been thoroughly cooked.) The phrase »do well« has nothing to do with »well done«. It means »be successful«, for example in business: »He's done well for himself.« »Do good«, on the other hand, means »helping people in need«: »He believes in doing good.«

Use stronger adjectives »Good« is a general word. Other adjectives are more suitable in particular situations. To praise the quality of someone's work, we often use strong adjectives:

- That was brilliant/outstanding!
- That was first-rate work.
- Your performance this year has been exceptional.
- You did an excellent/a great job.
- You did a first-class job of putting it all together.

To praise someone for a good idea, you can say:

- That's an excellent/a brilliant idea.
- That's a very interesting suggestion.

To praise the high quality of something, you can say:

- This dress looks very well made indeed.
- That's a very well-built piece of furniture.

To compliment someone on their cooking, you can say:

- This is delicious.
- That was very tasty indeed.

Phrases and idioms The following monologue contains a number of common phrases and idioms used to give praise. John's boss is complimenting him on the way he has dealt with a difficult situation:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| appreciate sth. | etw. zu schätzen wissen |
| compliment: pay sb. a ~ | jmdm. ein Kompliment machen |
| condescending | herablassend |
| embarrassing | peinlich |
| give as good as one gets | genauso austeilen (können) wie der Kontrahent |
| go places | es weit bringen |
| go the extra mile | besonderen Einsatz bringen |
| marked | deutlich |
| outdo oneself | sich selbst übertreffen |
| put in (extra hours, effort) | (Überstunden) machen, (Einsatz) bringen |
| stand one's ground | seinen Standpunkt behaupten, nicht nachgeben |

- Congratulations, John. You've *outdone yourself!* I'm really pleased with the way you managed to *stand your ground* in the face of Mr Brunner's strategy. You *gave as good as you got*. I've always said you would *go places*, and now I think it's time we talked about your future here.

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