

***Don't fix the blame.
Fix the problem!***



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THE CHALLENGE: PRAISING AND CORRECTING



These two opposing action choices are vital motivational tools. Doing each of these interactions well can mean the difference in developing a positive collaborative group mindset.

Powerfully Praising: SPIN

One of the most powerful tools a group has for building trust is the opportunity of “catching them doing something well” and reinforcing that action with *praise*.

Specific praise is the only praise worth receiving. General praising like “nice job” is never received as sincerely as specific praising like “nice job moving that fence yesterday.” It is good to look for specific praiseworthy actions, praise them, and note them for future reference.

Public praising has more authority than private praising. Rewarding the actions you want in front of others, reinforces the goals and standards to which the team is dedicated.

Individualized praising is more effective. When you identify by name the praiseworthy team member or members, you demonstrate your understanding of their contributions. “Nice job, guys!” is not nearly as effective as “Bill and George, you each did a great job building that staircase!”

Now is always the best time to praise. Letting it pass will cause the emotion of the moment to fade. Praising as it happens and reinforcing that praise in writing later makes the moment last.

Because the goal of praise should be to enhance the team members' self-esteem, not to control their behavior, consider ending each praising with a question to help the recipient internalize the moment: “*You did a great job building that tree house. How did that feel?*” Or “*What was the best part of that experience for you?*” Encourage response.

Correcting Correctly: REPAIR

Approach a correcting situation with an open mind and look for resolution, not blame. The goal is to correct the situation, learn from it and maintain the trust relationship. Attitude plays a big part in this process. When correction is indicated, use the following steps to *repair* the situation.

Review the goals and objectives related to the project with the team member. Explore what each think worked and didn't.

Explain the situation as you each saw it—what happened, when, and how it happened. No judgment, just facts.

Place the events and actions in perspective. Be as objective as you each can. “This is what it looked like to me...”

Agree to a common understanding, effectively explaining your agreed-upon position. Use “I feel... hurt, angry, confused, let down, etc.”

Invite closure. “I think we have worked our way through this and we need a way to move on. How do you feel?”

Reestablish your relationship through an activity. Pick something as important as the messed-up opportunity to let them prove their capability to themselves, you, and the group. Select a course of action that will heal all of this.

A CHECKLIST FOR PRAISING AND CORRECTING



Powerfully Praising: SPIN

- S**pecific praise is the only praise worth receiving.
- P**ublic praising is the powerful choice.
- I**ndividualized comments are most effective.
- N**ow is always the best time to praise.

Finally, provide an internalizing question to enhance the team member's self esteem.

Be careful. Praise is a very powerful control tool. Praise withheld can be as damaging as a poor reprimand. Use these tools wisely.

Correcting: REPAIR

- R**evue the goals and objectives—realized and not.
- E**xplain the situation as each saw it.
- P**lace the events and actions in perspective.
- A**gree to a common understanding.
- I**nvoke closure to put the incident behind you.
- R**eestablish your relationship

