

Thanks to



Gretchen Rubin
CONTRIBUTOR

*Creator of The Happiness
Project*

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**7 TIPS FOR
GIVING EFFECTIVE
PRAISE.**

Gold-star junkie that I am, I was once grumbling to my mother about the fact that some extraordinarily praiseworthy effort on my part had gone unremarked. My mother wisely responded, "Most people probably don't get the appreciation they deserve." That's right, I realized -- for instance, my mother! Whom I certainly don't give enough praise for everything she does for me.

This got me thinking about the importance of praise, and how to praise effectively. The right words of praise can be so encouraging, but bland, empty praise is meaningless.

- **Be specific.** Vague praise doesn't make much of an impression.
- **Find a way to praise sincerely and realistically.** It's a rare situation where you can't identify *something* that you honestly find praiseworthy.

- **Never offer praise and ask for a favor in the same conversation.** It makes the praise seem like a set-up.
- **Look for something less obvious to praise** – a more obscure accomplishment or quality that a person hasn't heard praised many times before.

5. Don't hesitate to praise people who get a lot of praise already. I've noticed that even people who get constant praise – or perhaps especially people who get constant praise – crave praise. Is this because praiseworthy people are often insecure? Or does getting praise lead to a need for more praise? I'm not sure, but it seems often to be the case.

- **Praise people behind their backs.** The praised person usually hears about the praise, and behind-the-back praise seems more sincere than face-to-face praise.
- **Beware when a person asks for your honest opinion.** This is often a clue that they're seeking reassurance, not candor.

Praise is gratifying to the person getting praised, of course, but it also boosts the happiness of the praiser -- at least I've found that true of myself. Because the way we feel is very much influenced by the way we act, by acting in a way that shows appreciation, discernment, and thoughtfulness, we make ourselves feel more appreciative, discerning, and thoughtful. And that boosts happiness.

Have you thought of any other good ways for giving people deserved praise?

And if you're grappling with the opposite problem -- of not getting enough praise yourself -- check out these Five tips for dealing with feeling unappreciated. I've tried all these strategies. With mixed success.

* Sign up for the **Moment of Happiness**, and every weekday morning, you'll get a **happiness quotation in your email inbox**. Sign up here, or email me at **gretchenrubin1 at gmail dot com**.