

Weekly Wisdom

Grow the Green for You and Your Team



“I can live for two months on a good compliment.” -- Mark Twain

The Art of a Good Compliment

The quality of our relationships depends on our “compliment to criticism ratio.” Researchers have determined that high-performing teams (and happy couples) have a minimum of 5 positive interactions for every negative one.

Is there a *wrong* way to give a compliment? Unfortunately, yes. “Done poorly, compliments can be ineffective, even destructive.”

But not to worry! There are three basic guidelines for delivering a compliment that could have someone floating on air.

First, **be honest**. Some praise may be offered strategically (I need this person to do something for me) or to flatter someone. Simply ask yourself, “Do I truly believe what I am going to say to this person?” If yes, go for it!

Make your compliment a pure gift. In other words, it’s not about reciprocation. “Thank you. You made my shift so much better.” End of story.

Don’t add qualification. Comments such as, “You look terrific for your age” or “You did great for a Clin I” or “You did better than the last traveler we had” can backfire.