

## [Praise](#) (13 min)

Motivation is a tricky thing. If you're a CEO or Manager, how do you create it in your team members? How do you maintain it?

Luckily, most people arrive to a job or a relationship with lots of motivation. So, you're only job is to help them maintain it.

[Jordan Petersen observes](#) that if someone does something willfully or intentionally outside the rules or standards of performance, and you call them out on it, they almost feel relief. They know that they didn't perform, and its almost comforting to know that you noticed. You haven't hurt the person.

By contrast, if you want to hurt somebody, find someone who is earnestly trying, and chastise them for something that they didn't do as you wanted. They will be crushed.

Now, of course, none of us wants to hurt anybody, nor crush their motivation. The key then is to realize that nearly EVERYONE around us is trying. Our team members, our spouse, our kids, our parents and siblings. Nearly EVERYONE.

Treat them as such.

Right now, you are likely thinking: "So, how do I get them to do what I want, if I can't point out what they're doing wrong?"

Do the inverse. Point out what they are doing right!!! Thank them for it. "Thank you for doing ...." Describe a specific action that they did, not a general personality trait.

Good:

- "Thank you for sending out all the board materials one week prior to the board meeting."
- "Thank you for doing the dishes last night."

Not good:

- "Thank you for being so conscientious."
- "Thank you for being so helpful."

It may seem simple. But it's very powerful.

Every time you notice them doing something right, point it out. They will glow with satisfaction that you noticed not only what they did, but also that they are trying. Then they will be eager to do even more that is positive. They may even ask you what else they can do. But even if they don't, they will continue to do that one thing that you praised.

As time goes on, notice and praise other things. You are giving them confidence and motivation. Very quickly, you will notice their overall performance improve.

And note that these praisings do not have to be lengthy nor in person. You can send a text. It often takes less than one minute to write. You can even make this a regular habit: once a week, or even once a day.

At some point, maybe after 4-8 interactions of praise, they will build a sense of trust that you truly appreciate them and want to be in lasting relationship with them. Once that happens, you have the leeway to also point out things that you wish that they would do differently (which is best done synchronously, not via text). But never forget to continue to praise as well.

I encourage you to experiment with this at home first. Try it with a child or spouse. I predict that you will experience magic.