

The  
HEART of a  
LEADER

INSIGHTS ON THE  
ART OF INFLUENCE

KEN  
BLANCHARD

THE HEART OF A LEADER

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## INTRODUCTION

When I was in high school, I had a football coach who loved motivational sayings; he covered the walls of our locker room with them. Sayings like, “When the going gets tough, the tough get going” and “Quitters never win, and winners never quit” were imprinted in my mind. When I started teaching and writing in the field of leadership and management, it was second nature for me to use sayings to help people remember key points. That’s why I was thrilled when David C Cook asked me to update *The Heart of a Leader*, a book that includes my favorite sayings.

Leadership isn’t just about having a powerful position. Anytime you use your influence to affect the thoughts and actions of others, you are engaging in leadership. So you can be a leader as a parent, spouse, friend, or citizen. I hope these sayings will give you the wisdom and inspiration you need to lead at a higher level. Remember, the best leaders are those who understand that their power flows through them, not from them.

God bless!

—Ken Blanchard

The key to developing  
people is to catch them  
doing something right.

—Ken Blanchard and Spencer Johnson

*The One Minute Manager*®

Catching people doing things right is a powerful management concept. Unfortunately, most leaders have a genius for catching people doing things wrong. I always recommend that leaders spend at least an hour a week wandering around their operation catching people doing things right. But I remind them that effective praising must be specific. Just walking around saying, “Thanks for everything,” is meaningless. If you say, “Great job!” to a poor performer and, “Great job!” to a good performer, you sound ridiculous to the poor performer and you “demotivate” the good performer.

Catching people doing things right provides satisfaction and motivates good performance. But remember, give praise immediately, make it specific, and finally, encourage people to keep up the good work. This principle can also help you shine at home. It’s a marvelous way to interact with and affirm the people in your life.

Don't wait until people do  
things exactly right before  
you praise them.

—Ken Blanchard and Spencer Johnson  
*The One Minute Manager*

Many well-intentioned leaders wait to praise their people until they do things exactly right, complete the project, or accomplish the goal. The problem here is that they could wait forever. You see, “exactly right” behavior is made up of a whole series of *approximately* right behaviors. It makes more sense to praise progress—it’s a moving target.

Can you imagine standing a child up and commanding him to walk, and then, when he falls down, yelling, “I told you to walk!” and spanking him? Of course not. You stand the child up, and he wobbles a bit. You shout, “You stood up!” and then shower him with hugs and kisses. The next day, he wobbles a step, and you are all over him with praise. Gradually, the child gains confidence until he finally walks. It’s the same with adults. Catch them doing things right—and remember, in the beginning, approximately right is just fine.

What we give our  
attention to, grows.

—Ken Blanchard, Thad Lacinak,  
Chuck Tompkins, and Jim Ballard


*Whale Done!*<sup>™</sup>



**T**he more attention you pay to a behavior, the more it will be repeated. Accentuating the positive and redirecting the negative are the best tools for increasing productivity.

Killer-whale trainers know that when you don't pay a lot of attention to what the animals do wrong but instead give a lot of attention to what they do right, they do the right thing more often. When trainers start working with a new whale, the whale knows nothing about jumping over ropes. The trainers begin with the rope underneath the water, high enough from the bottom for the whale to swim under. If the whale swims under the rope, the trainers don't pay attention, but every time he swims over the rope, they feed him.

Focusing on the negative often creates situations that demoralize people. When good performance is followed by a positive response, people naturally want to continue that behavior.



You get from people  
what you expect.

Whenever I talk about the power of catching people doing things right, I hear, “Yeah right. You don’t know Harry!” Do you have a “Harry” in your life? If so, perhaps you should take a look at your expectations for that person and see if he or she isn’t currently living down to them. It’s all in what you notice. When you judge someone, it impairs your ability to see him or her clearly, as if a filter is screening out everything about that person except what fits your assessment.

Fight through your filter and catch your “Harry” doing something right. It will not be easy, but if you persevere, you will notice that your behavior, even your attitude or degree of acceptance toward “Harry” will change. Try it and see what happens. Then try it again. You might even like it. Guaranteed—“Harry” will.

People who produce  
good results feel good  
about themselves.

—Ken Blanchard and Robert Lorber  
*Putting the One Minute Manager to Work*

In *The One Minute Manager*, Spencer Johnson and I wrote, “People who feel good about themselves produce good results.” After the book came out, I realized I was emphasizing the “old” human relations game—trying first to make people feel good, hoping they would then produce good results. Hence Robert Lorber and I changed the emphasis when we wrote *Putting the One Minute Manager to Work*. These days, everything our company does is focused on helping people produce good results.

When people produce good results, they feel good about themselves because they know they have done a good job, and they have something to show for their effort. An effective leader will make it a priority to help his or her people produce good results in two ways: making sure people know what their goals are and doing everything possible to support, encourage, and coach them to accomplish those goals.

Your role as a leader is even more important than you might imagine. You have the power to help people become winners.