February 2016. The use of praise as a valuable tool to promote safety behaviors and practices.

Praise is powerful and we all enjoy receiving it when it is not prompted by ulterior motives. Praise can inspire employees/co-workers to perform better. This makes the ability to praise a valuable tool.

Praise when "catching" either our subordinates or peers working safely is a positive way to reinforce safety in the workplace. Praise only works, however, when it is sincere, not given with an ulterior motive. Here are some hints to help:

- Do you sound sincere when you give praise? Your level of excitement, as well as your words should convey genuine enthusiasm without going overboard.
- Do you always say the same thing? For example, if you always say "nice job" to everyone in every situation people may wonder whether you am really noticing the specifics and/or are sincere.
- Do you acknowledge a good/safe job as soon as possible? The longer you wait, the less the impact.
- Do you maintain eye contact? Looking employees/co-workers in the eye is critical because a lack of eye contact it taken as a sign of insincerity.

Catching people doing things right and praising them for it will help your employees/co-workers create a sense of pride in their safe work practices. This makes them more likely to follow safety procedures and policies.

Richard Hawk. "All About You: The power of praise." National Safety Council *Safety+Health digital edition.* December 29, 2015.
http://www.safetyandhealthmagazine.com/articles/13398