

Reinforcing Positive Behaviors

One Point Lesson



Purpose

Guide individuals toward the future state by reinforcing the required behaviors needed to thrive there.

When change occurs, it is easy for people to slip back into previous, comfortable behaviors while they are learning new uncomfortable ones. Reinforcement of positive behaviors keeps people moving forward through the discomfort so they can succeed in the future state.

Watch for...	What these behaviors demonstrate...	How to reinforce them...
Asking questions	Asking questions shows a willingness to have greater awareness about the situation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give them your full attention.• Thank them for asking and provide information they are seeking.
Acceptance	Acceptance demonstrates they have a desire to move forward.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask what support they need to continue to successfully move forward.• Provide clear instruction for how they can adapt to what's changing.
Enthusiasm	Enthusiasm indicates there is positive energy being brought to the work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acknowledge when you see this shift in behavior.• Inquire into what is bringing them joy.• Leverage the enthusiasm to spur others to a more positive place.
Quality Work / Steady Output	Doing great work indicates there is engagement and a connection to purpose. It also shows one has ability to do the job.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognize quality work when it's being done and point out the positive impact it has on overall outcomes.• Encourage employees to share what they have learned through their change process.

Additional Actions to Reinforce Positive Behaviors

- **Remain positive.** As a leader you model positivity in what you say and how you say it.
- **Make sure rewards and recognition are proportionate with the effort and outcome.** If they are not equal, it can be demotivating for the team.
- **Make sure recognition is timely, sincere, and states the impact the individual has made.** Specificity matters when recognizing someone and authenticity is key in how you do it.
- **Be sure that recognition is meaningful to the person receiving it.** If it is not provided in a meaningful way, it can be demotivating for an individual.
- **Provide constructive feedback and be ready to listen to theirs.** Dialogue and empathy are important; people want to be seen and heard. They also want to know how to thrive in the new state.
- **Have a senior leader provide the recognition/reward.** Receiving kudos from a senior leader can have a very uplifting effect on engagement.
- **Celebrate team success and milestones.** Let the team know that progress is being made and help them see the vision of the future as it is being created.

Payoff

Organizational Change is every individual making a change at the same time, and change requires new behaviors. It's harder to adopt new ones than live in the old ones! Reinforcement of positive behaviors is what ultimately make a change "stick".