

Bailey & French.

Performance Motivation

**Praise in the
workplace**



Praise in the workplace

Praise expresses recognition, reassurance, or admiration. Praise can be verbal or conveyed through body language.

Why do we need praise?

Pride, pleasure, and increased feelings of self-esteem are all common reactions to receiving a compliment or positive feedback.

This is because being praised triggers the release of dopamine, a neurotransmitter that helps control the reward and pleasure centres of the brain. Dopamine also contributes to innovative thinking and creative problem-solving.

Researcher Lori Kay Baranek found that these well-intentioned rewards and incentives can have a negative impact on a person's long-term motivation.



Praise & the workplace

Workplace recognition motivates, provides a sense of accomplishment and makes employees feel valued for their work.

Recognition not only boosts engagement, it has also been found to increase productivity and loyalty, leading to higher retention.

Recognition and praise are two critical components for creating positive emotions within organisations.

People who receive regular recognition and praise tend to increase their individual productivity, boost engagement among their colleagues, and are more likely to stay with their organisation.

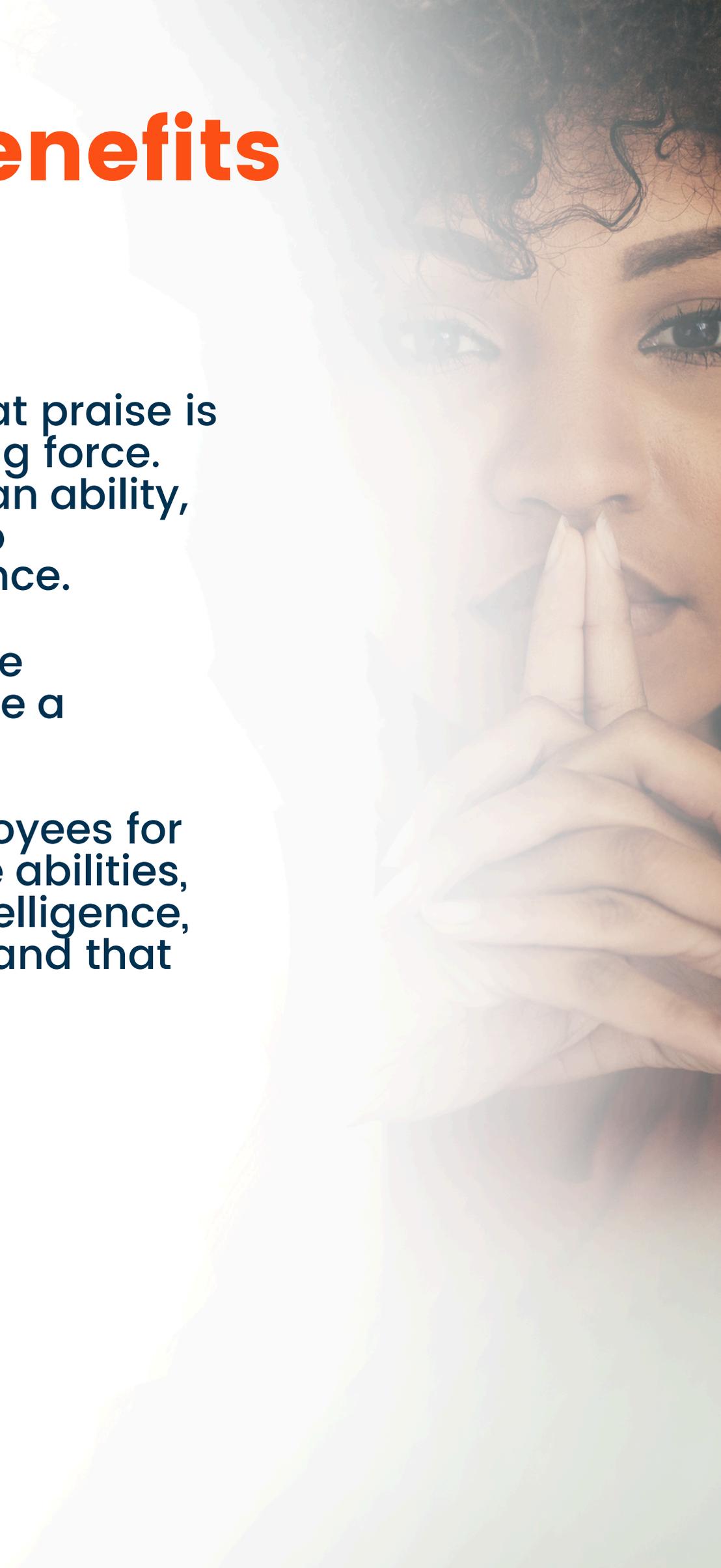
What are the benefits of praise?

Increased productivity

Researcher Carol Dweck found that praise is a powerful and effective motivating force. Praise focused on effort, rather than ability, is sincere, specific, and appears to contribute to enhanced performance.

Dweck emphasises the importance of praising effort, as it helps nurture a growth mindset.

When we praise students or employees for their effort rather than their innate abilities, we help them understand that intelligence, skills, and abilities are malleable, and that they can master new skills.



Study

A study conducted by Dr Joa Julia Lee, co-author of the Harvard study, asked participants to solve problems.

Approximately half of the participants were instructed to ask friends and family members to send them an email before their participation, describing a time when the participant was at their best. Overwhelmingly, those who read positive statements about their past actions demonstrated more creativity in their approach, were more successful at problem-solving, and reported lower stress levels compared to their counterparts.

For example, participants were given three minutes to complete Duncker's candle problem. 51% of those who had received emails prior to the task successfully completed it, whereas only 19% of those who did not receive 'best-self activation' emails were able to solve it.

Additionally, those who received praise experienced significantly less stress than the control group.

