

A TOKEN OF MY ESTEEM

PRACTICE IN GIVING AND RECEIVING COMPLIMENTS

GOAL: To practice giving and receiving compliments.

METHOD: Form rows of dyads (two persons facing each other) . . . dyad partners change with each given compliment

PROCEDURE:

1. Giving Compliments

One person hands the other a physical object . . . "A Token of My Esteem" (smiley face, buckeye, etc.) and tells that person why he/ she is giving it to them. This comment is to be based on something positive you see or know about the person (e.g. "I am giving you this "Token of My Esteem" because I really like the color of your shirt.")

The receiver says nothing . . .

After the hand-off, shift dyads by row . . . old receiver becomes the new giver. New giver gives the new person the token using the same process as above.

Shift dyads again . . . continue pattern

At midpoint (5 moves), stop the exercise to check in with the group.

Questions to consider:

- How do you feel about giving or receiving compliments?
- Does the giver of the gift know how the receiver feels?

2. Receiving Compliments

Ask the group to continue with the exercise . . . but, this time when they do the exercise the receiver is to acknowledge the compliment either verbally or non-verbally.

At end, I lead a discussion with the group and summarize the ideas.

FOLLOW-UP:

1. Project the "Giving and Receiving Compliments Summary Sheet" (see following page) on the screen and discuss each of the ideas suggested.
2. Ask each candidate to pay a compliment to at least five persons at YSU (or persons at home or work if you are not at YSU) prior to the next class and report to the class next week.

GIVING AND RECEIVING COMPLIMENTS SUMMARY SHEET

Giving a great compliment is an art form. A poor compliment comes across as creepy or patronizing. Like any skill, good compliment giving takes practice.

When paying a compliment, consider both what you say and how you say it:

- Decide what it is about the other person you want to compliment.
- When complimenting be as specific as possible. Nothing falls flatter than the generic: "You look great" or "Good job!"
- Choose the right time and place to express the compliment.
- Express the compliment in a sincere and friendly manner.
- Maintain good eye contact with the person to whom you are paying the compliment.
- Use appropriate body language, especially facial expression.
- Your tone of voice is just as important as what you say.
- Say it and let it be done, don't dwell on it, and do not push for a "thank you" or a reciprocal compliment.
- If a compliment is thrown back in your face, don't make its rejection an issue. You might say "I'm sorry, I didn't mean for you see it that way." Again, don't dwell on it.

When someone pays you a compliment, consider the following:

- Smile and say "thank you."
- Avoid deflecting the compliment or pointing out your weaknesses (this is a sign of low self-esteem).
- If the compliment is based on achievement, don't pass it off as just luck. Be confident but humble and gracious.
- Later, give a compliment directed at the person who complimented you. (Why later?)
- Don't internally discount compliments. Treat them as gifts.