

PERFECT PRAISE



Getting along with your boss and colleagues won't just move you up the corporate ladder

– it can also keep you healthy, suggests a recent study published in *Journal of Management Studies*. Researchers theorise that being politically savvy helps professionals fare better at work, as they're spared the psychological distress that plagues ostracised employees (such as tension and emotional exhaustion). Wheedle your way into everyone's good graces by avoiding these common compliment blunders.

INSTEAD OF:
"That's nice of you."

TRY:
"You're very thoughtful."

The word "nice" can come across as condescending if you're not careful with your tone, says Eunice Tan, founder of Image Flair Academy of Modern Etiquette. A compliment should be a verbal gift to someone, so starting it with "you" puts the focus on the person.

It helps to be more specific (good job on what?). This shows that you've paid attention and are not simply paying lip service, says Eunice.

INSTEAD OF:
"Good job."

TRY:
"You did a great job on that proposal," or "You continue to impress me with your organisational skills."

Avoid commenting on physical appearance as this can easily be taken the wrong way. "Women, especially, feel obliged to return a physical compliment with another, which can get uncomfortable as it shows that you were assessing them very closely," she says. It could also make you seem like a superficial person.

INSTEAD OF:
"You look great/slimmer."

TRY:
"It's always good to see you."