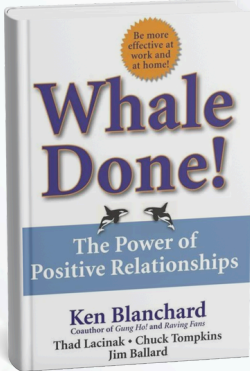




WHALE DONE!

Power of Positive Performance Coaching



The 4 Types of Responses to a Team Member's Performance

When responding to an employee's actions or performance, leaders typically react in one of four ways:

- 1. No Response (Ignoring):** This occurs when a leader does not acknowledge an employee's actions, whether positive or negative. The absence of feedback can lead to disengagement, as team members may feel their efforts are unnoticed or unappreciated.
- 2. Negative Response (Punishment):** This response focuses on mistakes or undesirable behavior and often involves criticism or reprimands. While some level of correction is necessary, excessive negativity can lead to fear, decreased motivation, and avoidance behaviors.
- 3. Redirection:** When an employee makes a mistake, a leader using redirection acknowledges the effort but provides guidance on how to improve. Redirection focuses on learning and encourages employees to adjust their approach while maintaining confidence.
- 4. The "Whale Done" Response (Positive Reinforcement):** This is the most effective approach for building morale and encouraging desired behaviors. It involves actively looking for and recognizing positive actions and reinforcing them with praise and encouragement.

The Whale Done philosophy emphasizes positive reinforcement to build trust, strengthen relationships, and enhance performance. Inspired by killer whale training at SeaWorld, Ken Blanchard applies these principles to workplace leadership. It suggests that focusing on and reinforcing positive behaviors increases productivity and engagement.

The "Whale Done" Response: How to Apply It Effectively

The Whale Done response consists of **three** key elements:

Catch People Doing Things Right: Actively seek out moments when employees demonstrate positive behaviors, even small successes. Acknowledge these moments immediately to reinforce them.

- Example: "I noticed how you handled that customer complaint with patience and professionalism. That was excellent problem-solving!"

Praise Immediately and Specifically: Deliver praise as soon as possible to reinforce the action. Be specific about what the employee did well and why it was valuable.

- Example: Instead of saying, "Great job," say, "Your ability to collaborate with the team during today's meeting made a big impact on our decision-making process."

Encourage and Build Trust: When people feel recognized and supported, they become more engaged, take initiative, and strive for excellence. A culture of positive reinforcement strengthens relationships and fosters a workplace of trust and high performance.



The Lasting Impact of the "Whale Done" Response

- **Increases Motivation:** Employees feel valued and are more likely to repeat positive behaviors.
- **Strengthens Relationships:** Creates a positive and trusting work environment where employees feel safe to take risks and innovate.
- **Enhances Productivity:** Encourages higher performance levels by reinforcing effective habits.
- **Reduces Fear-Based Work Culture:** Shifts the focus from mistakes to learning and growth, reducing anxiety and defensiveness.

By consistently applying the Whale Done approach, leaders can transform workplace dynamics, foster deeper engagement, and create a culture where individuals and teams thrive.

