

I'm not a bot



Everybody loves compliments, right? I mean, who doesn't? It's always nice to be appreciated by your boss or colleagues for a job well done. The problem is how to properly receive it without making the situation awkward, or downplaying the compliment, or giving other people the credit when you truly deserve it, and ultimately how to respond to compliments professionally. Giving compliments plays a crucial role in building and maintaining relationships in a professional environment like a company, organization, and university. Knowing how to respond to compliments can help you acknowledge the affirmation while continuing to build your professional working relationships and showing humility. A compliment is one of the most powerful ways to let someone know that you appreciate them. It can be overwhelming at sometimes embarrassing at the same time. Imagine a situation where you have been working on a particular presentation on a new product to give to a board of directors for the past couple of weeks. You and your team spent hours organizing ideas, coming up with the best way to express yourself, and double-checking your facts. Then the meeting came and you were able to deliver an outstanding presentation and answer follow-up questions. The meeting is over and people are going on about their business. On your part, you think the presentation was a success and you think everything went well. Then one of your supervisors came into your office and gave you a compliment saying "You did an excellent job on that presentation. You made our job relatively easy and we look forward to implementing your ideas." Wow! That's a super exciting compliment you have just received. So, how do you respond to compliments professionally? Responding to compliments can be difficult, especially if you feel like accepting them will make you seem vain. However, politely accepting a compliment will make you seem more modest than deflecting or rejecting them. This article will discuss why responding to compliments is important and how to acknowledge them, with helpful examples. Smiling is a great way to show your boss, colleagues, client, and managers how you feel when they recognize and compliment you. It's a great ingredient for responding to compliments professionally. Smiling is a great way to immediately show your appreciation before even speaking out to respond to compliments. You may feel compelled to say all sorts of things when someone compliments you, but sometimes the best way to acknowledge a compliment is to simply say thank you to the person. When responding to compliments from people be sure to smile and look them in the eye as you thank them. This shows your confidence and professionalism as you respond to compliments. Research shows that when you receive a compliment be sure to simply and humbly say "Thank you" or "Thank you; I appreciate your kind words." When you respond to compliments, you show gratitude for the other person's kind remarks and do not come off as vain, bashful or prideful. Thank you Thank you; I appreciate your kind words. I'm glad you liked it. I appreciate you saying that. That's very kind of you. Thanks for noticing. I appreciate that. That means a lot coming from you. Thank you for noticing. You think so? Thanks so much. How nice of you to say that. How nice you noticed. That's nice hear. Thanks. I'm glad you enjoyed it. When people compliment you it is important to share credit with those that contributed to the success of the project or work you are being complimented for. If you are complimented on a particular project that involved the contribution of other people like your team or colleagues, don't take all the credit for all the achievement, make sure you acknowledge others that made the project or presentation a success. Responding to compliments like this will show that you can both be dependable and rely on others to meet goals. Plus, it will make sure that you are willing to share the credit for a job well done. For example, you can say something like "Thank you for noticing, but it would not have been possible without the help of Peter and Sade, their input was really helpful" If you are leading a project, accept the compliment first, and then credit your team for the effort they put in. When someone compliments you for a project you lead, they aren't complimenting only the results you've achieved, they are also complimenting your ability as a leader. The project was a success under your leadership after all, so take the compliment wholeheartedly and give credit to your team also. For example "Great work on the presentation today." "AwW! Thanks. My team really worked hard on this and I am glad we were able to achieve such a huge project. Instead of downplaying your work or changing the subject, give credit to other people and let the person giving the compliment know how much it means to you. A person offering you a compliment has nothing to lose or gain by complimenting you, so it is only polite to appreciate them and acknowledge their kind words. Don't downplay your hard work and deprive yourself of a good compliment. Look them in the eye and thank them for the compliment. When you respond to compliments, don't do it competitively. Sometimes you might feel the need to be polite and you end up downplaying your abilities by redirecting a compliment you just received towards the person. For example, you might say something like "Thanks, but not anywhere as good as yours though." Responding compliments like this gives the impression that you are insecure and sucking up to the person or even trying to outdo the person. Therefore, you can redirect the compliment by saying "Thanks, yours was great too." This is a competing complementary reply that you can give to a person who complimented you. When you receive a compliment, you can also use it as an opportunity to get more feedback or more conversation from the person that complimented you. For example, if your supervisor gives you a compliment about your proposal. Thank them and ask them for feedback. You can say something like "I appreciate that coming from you. Do you have any suggestions for how I can apply my learnings in my next chapter?" A senior member of your department gave you a compliment about your presentation. In this case, you can invite them to share more ideas. Try saying, "Thank you. Do you have any suggestions that you'd like me to keep in mind?" It's a great feeling when someone appreciates your work. Getting that pat on the back for a well-done job can be exhilarating. The dilemma is how to respond. To save you from this dilemma, we've included samples to update you on how to reply when someone says "great job": Subject: Grateful for Your Appreciation Dear [Name], Thank you for your kind words of appreciation. Your recognition of my work means a lot to me. It's truly gratifying to know that my efforts have made a positive impact. I'm grateful for your support and encouragement, and it motivates me to continue striving for excellence. Thank you once again for your kind appreciation. Best regards, [Your Name] Subject: Appreciation for Your Feedback Dear [Name], I wanted to express my gratitude for your feedback and the compliment. Your recognition means a lot to me and serves as motivation to continue giving my best. I appreciate your support and encouragement. It's a pleasure working with you, and I look forward to delivering more exceptional results in the future. Thank you once again for your kind words. Warm regards, [Your Name] Subject: Grateful for Your Compliment Dear [Name], Thank you for your kind compliment! I truly appreciate your recognition of my work. It's wonderful to receive positive feedback and know that my efforts are valued. Your words have made my day and inspire me to continue giving my best. I'm grateful to be a part of such a supportive team. Best regards, [Your Name] Subject: Thank you for your compliment! I appreciate the opportunity to be part of this team and will continue to give my best. Thank you once again for your kind words and encouragement. Sincerely, [Your Name] How do I give a compliment? When do I give a compliment? These may be the questions on your mind. Let's explore this. Knowing how to give a compliment and appreciate others is a fundamental leadership skill. Positive feedback and praise can have a powerful effect on the professional work environment. When you notice conduct or hard work that you appreciate, communicating positive feedback can encourage, motivate, balance out criticism, bolster esteem, and may prevent an employee from giving up. When giving compliments, take note of the following: When giving a compliment, be sure that it is sincere and authentic. Don't compliment someone because you need something from them. Don't make them feel good about themselves before giving them difficult feedback or cheer them up after a mistake. If your intentions are not genuine then your compliment is not genuine either and this does not tell well about your personality. Don't compliment someone because you feel you should rather compliment them because you felt compelled to recognize their hard work and how they impacted you and others. A backhanded compliment is an insult disguised as a compliment. It is a compliment that blurs the line between an insult and a compliment. Backhanded compliments can be very damaging. They usually stem from a person's insecurities about themselves. Sometimes, the person giving the "compliment" might not realize they're being hurtful, but unfortunately, others know exactly what they're saying. For example, saying something like "I didn't expect you to be this good at your job. Great work!" This is a backhanded compliment that can be damaging and hurtful. When giving feedback or compliment, be sure to be specific about what you are complimenting the other party for. This way the person does not doubt what you are complimenting them about., For example, if you say "That was great." Incomplete compliment: "That was great!" Specific compliment: "John, that was a great job you did on the software, I can now successfully backup my data." A compliment is always more about the giver than the receiver. If possible share what the person did and how it affected you and the people around you. If you want to give a powerful compliment, give the person a glimpse of what you experienced and how it impacted you or others. You can share how their leadership impacted you or the company. For example, "Kelvin, I wanted to let you know I really appreciate how you challenged the "No leave policy" adopted by the company. I and some of my team have been trying to bring it up but the fear of the boss shooting it down made us keep quiet. I watched how you encouraged all of us to speak up and share ideas, and I felt comfortable taking risks. I really enjoyed working with you and feel like I am growing every day. Thank you." When giving a compliment it is more advisable to focus on the effort the person put into achieving the result than the result itself. Appreciate the time, sacrifice, hard work. This makes the compliment more genuine and emphatic, for example "Matt, I am blown away by the content you created and put together for the client. I can't even imagine all the hours, work, and creativity that went into making sure that the client had high-quality content. Thank you for everything you did behind the scenes on this project." Conclusion Responding to compliments says a lot about who you are. It opens a window into your personality and reservations. This is why it's important to be cautious when responding to compliments. Follow the steps listed in this article to come up with a compliment that is genuine, specific, and meaningful. Responding to compliments is a great way to show your appreciation and to let the person you are complimenting know how much you value their work. We'll also explain why responding well to compliments at work is important, how to give a compliment well, and how to practice these skills. Key takeaways Respond to a compliment by saying thank you. Don't deflect, brag on, or diminish a compliment someone gives you. After you say thank you for the compliment, you can follow up with more information, a question, or a compliment in return. Respond to a compliment, say thank you. If you want and if it's appropriate, you can follow that with more details about the item or action they complimented, ask a question of them, or compliment them in return. Before we narrow it down to how to respond to professional compliments, let's look at those more personal compliments. Let's say you're wearing a nice top and someone compliments you on it. How do you respond? Personal Compliment Example Answers A) Oh gee, this old thing? I just threw it on. B) Uh, thanks. I like your top too. C) Thank you. Which one of these is most like you, and which one do you lean into when responding to others? They're all common ways to respond to a compliment, but only one of them is a good response. You guessed it — C. Here are some tips on how to reply to a compliment in any setting: It's never good to downgrade someone's compliment and insinuate that they're wrong to give it. It's never necessary to follow up with a compliment in return unless you truly mean it and it feels genuine. Simply saying thank you is always a great option. While a simple thank you is sufficient, the more comfortable you become with compliments, the easier it will be to say more than that to continue the conversation. If it's a work-related compliment, for example, there's a good chance you did something that helps the person giving the compliment, or that they did something to help you out. In this case, you could say something like, "Thank you, I hoped it would be helpful," or "Thank you, I couldn't have done it without you!" In a personal situation, if someone compliments your awesome shoes, they probably want shoes like them, so it's nice to share your own. Give the compliment more detail. You might not make them feel a little better. It also increases the likelihood of their complimenting you and others in the future. You're more likely to talk about the good work you did on the project, and you're more likely to do better. You can try these responses: Nice Reply to a Compliment About Your Clothing Example Compliment: I like your top. Response: Thank you, it was a gift. I really like it too. Compliment: I like your top. Response: Oh, thank you. I just got it at Macy's. I love this color for fall. Compliment: I like your top. Response: Well, thank you. That's funny because I was just going to tell you I like yours also. See how easy that is. Now let's take the personal compliment a little deeper and look at some good responses. Nice Reply to a Compliment About Your Kids Example Compliment: Your children are so well-behaved. Response: Thank you. We work hard to teach them manners. Compliment: Your children are so well-behaved. Response: Thank you, they do their best. Compliment: Your children are so well-behaved. Response: Thank you. I'm glad they were enjoyable for you. I really appreciate your watching them for me. There's no reason to say any more in this situation. A thank you and a genuine smile are good enough. Nice Reply to a Compliment About Your Smile Example Compliment: You have a beautiful smile. Response: Thank you. That's really sweet. Compliment: You have a beautiful smile. Response: Thank you. This compliment can be awkward to receive. After all, you probably don't work on your smile or have much else to say about it. It can also lead to uncomfortable conversations, so just saying thank you is a perfectly acceptable answer. A compliment in return is a good option as well, but don't force it. Example responses to professional compliments at work Knowing how to respond to compliments at work can be difficult, so saying thank you immediately gives you a second to think about what they said and come up with a good follow-up — or keeps you from having to follow up at all. Remember, just saying thank you is good enough. The trick to responding to compliments professionally is not to deflect, brag, or diminish the compliment. Here are some examples of how to do this: Responding to a Compliment at Work Example Compliment: You knocked it out of the park on that presentation. Response: Thank you. I have to give the same presentation next week. Was there any area that you thought could have used a little work? See how this can be handled in different ways. You can let them know how their appreciation has meaning to you. You can express thanks and give credit to others involved. Depending on the person, you can ask for more information. Let's try another work compliment scenario, this time, it will demonstrate how to reply to a compliment from your boss: Responding to a Compliment at Work Professional Growth Example Answer Compliment: You've come a long way since you started here. Response: Thank you. I've worked really hard to understand this business and to make my mark here. All three are equally gracious and express genuine thanks. Once you've said thank you, credit can be doled out as appropriate. Responding to a Compliment at Work Leadership Example Answer Compliment: You did a great job managing that project. Response: Thank you. My team was awesome. Compliment: You did a great job managing that project. Response: Thank you. I really appreciate all your help. Compliment: You did a great job managing that project. Response: Thank you. I appreciate you saying that. Responding well to work compliments is important because it helps you come across as courteous and gracious, it rewards the person giving the compliment, and it helps you take the compliment to heart. It makes you look good. Getting a compliment at work reinforces your good points. Compliments are supposed to make you feel good, competent, and maybe even a little proud of the job you do. When you respond to a compliment graciously, it reinforces your good points to everyone who can hear you. The person who gives the compliment also gets a boost. Compliments are supposed to make you feel good, competent, and maybe even a little proud of the job you do. When you respond to a compliment graciously, it reinforces your good points to everyone who can hear you. The person who gives the compliment also gets a boost. Compliments are supposed to make you feel good, competent, and maybe even a little proud of the job you do. 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you hate the style or fresh shave, accept the compliment and realize that someone cared enough to notice. DO NOT DIMINISH: You were so proud of that thrift store find for \$5, so why are you telling the adoring coffee barista that it's a piece of junk you picked up downtown? Most of all, if you do handle it wrong, forgive yourself. You aren't alone if you have awkward compliment syndrome. Nearly 70% of people in a research study felt the same way. Do you want to know the single most effective way to get better at accepting compliments? Compliment yourself often, especially when dealing with that pesky inner critic.