

Thanks Giving

11 Simple, Yet Thoughtful And Powerful, Tactics To Communicate Your Gratitude.

By Kendall C. Wright, President of Entelechy Training and Development, Inc.

Thanks Giving! The practice of giving thanks shouldn't be triggered by the calendar or by awesome smells from the kitchen. Instead, the practice of thanks giving should be continual and commonplace as it is an important and integral component of Actualizing Leadership. Leaders who freely give thanks find that they have more and more reasons and opportunities to give thanks.

To give thanks, to show appreciation, to recognize and praise is essential to keeping your direct reports enlisted and engaged. In fact, the frequency and authenticity with which you engage in activities of thanks giving have a direct impact on employee loyalty and satisfaction. Additionally, there is an auxiliary benefit of thanks giving - the practice of thanks giving helps to tame leadership arrogance and conceit.

As with other critical leadership practices, thanks giving has to be more than a "check the box" activity. The genuineness and sincerity of your praise and appreciation should never be questioned. Sadly, if your direct reports have questions as to whether you truly appreciate them, it won't be long before you'll find yourself asking questions regarding the precipitous decline in the group's passion, productivity, and profitability.

Here are 11 ways to share your gratitude, your thanks giving, for your direct reports:

1. **Humble Yourself.** Arrogant leaders not only alienate customers and clients, they also alienate their direct reports. Humility is magical. Leaders who are humble enough to freely share the glory, rarely have to worry about absenteeism, apathy, and turnover.
2. **Use Social Media.** While many organizations limit the use of social media at work, several of those same organizations have internal variations of social media. Electronic message boards are a great way to publicly thank your associates for their hard work and dedication.
3. **Be Creative.** There are a number of websites that offer translations of "Thank You" into different languages. Perhaps, as a way to reinforce your commitment to valuing diversity and inclusion, you could expand your team's awareness by including various translations in your written communication. Check out www.omniglot.com.
4. **Advertise.** I'm not talking about taking out ads in mass media. Instead, consider putting up flyers in the lunch room, a banner across the break area, or posters in the fitness lounge. Let the entire organization know just how much you truly appreciate your team or task force.
5. **Use The CCTVN.** Get in touch with corporate communications and post a thank you to an individual associate or to the entire team on the Corporate Closed Circuit Television Network. Your associate will feel like the stars they truly are.

6. **Make A Short (Personal) Video.** Today's technology can be a wonderful ally to the Actualizing Leader. Given all of the technological options on even the most basic PCD (Personal Communication Device), it's not a great strain to record and forward a short video to an associate. If a picture is worth a thousand words, video is priceless.
7. **Arrange For Time Off.** For many employees, this is the most appreciated gesture of thanks giving. Granting them the opportunity to simply come in an hour later on Monday, or to leave an hour earlier on Friday goes a long way in communicating appreciation.
8. **Make A Charitable Donation In Their Name.** Giving to an employee's favorite charity is a great way to say thank you. This strategy creates an untold number of winners. But for sure, that list of winners includes the direct report, the individuals who benefit directly from the contribution, and you, the leader, for being so thoughtful and proactive.
9. **Present A Gift Card.** Everyone loves gift cards. Just be sure it's a card to a store or restaurant your associate really enjoys. It's no fun receiving a gift card to a place that doesn't excite you. Also, make sure you investigate any usage fees, aging fees, and the expiration date.
10. **Provide A Free Lunch.** Who doesn't like a free lunch? Springing for an associate's favorite lunch not only communicates appreciation and gratitude, but it can also aid in building trust and rapport.
11. **Send A Thank You Card.** There are many ways to say thank you, but it is really hard to improve upon the old tried and true thank you card. Take some time to make it personal and your sentiments will endure for a lifetime.

These are 11 simple, yet thoughtful and powerful, tactics guaranteed to communicate your appreciation and gratitude. Select just one or two and start your thanks giving today.

Leadership Lesson: Don't assume your associates know how much you appreciate them. You must tell them and show them – often. Thanks giving is important and integral to creating and maintain a high performance environment and highly engaged associates. Want more to be thankful for? Try giving more thanks.

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