GRATITUDE at WORK

The surprisingly simple way to engage employees and improve company culture with incredible outcomes!

It's more than good manners.
It's good business.

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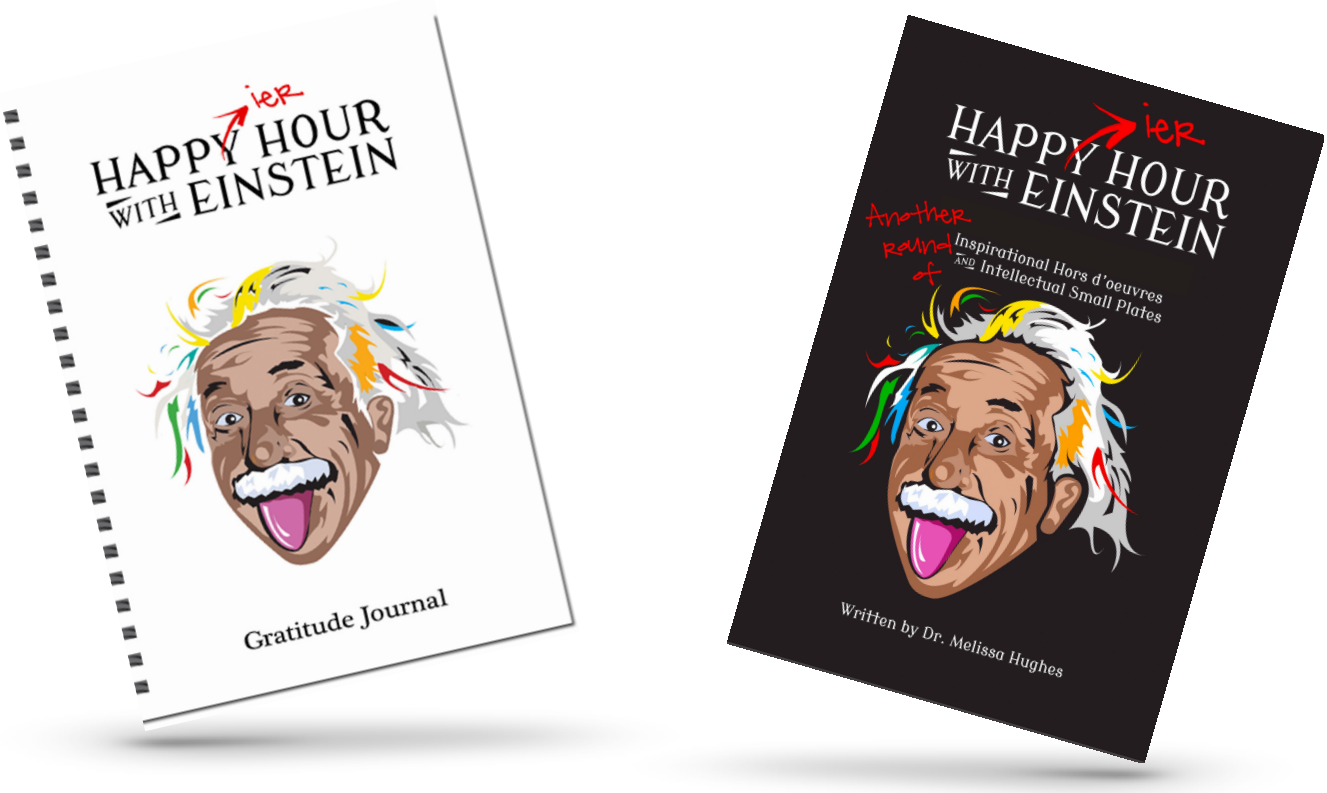
Thinking about Thinking | Learning about Learning



Written by Dr. Melissa Hughes

Dr. Melissa Hughes is a self-proclaimed neuroscience geek, author and keynote speaker. Having spent the first decade of her professional career in education observing how the brain works through the lives of her students, she realized there were simple, applicable tools that could optimize performance outcomes and improve their overall learning processes. Understanding how to learn, how to solve problems, and to think creatively becomes even more important when you leave the classroom and step into the work-life arena.

Having worked with a wide range of audiences - from students in the classroom to leaders in the boardroom of Fortune 1000 companies, Dr. Hughes combines her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction and her vast experience in marketing communications with extensive research in neuroscience and behavioral psychology to share simple, applicable strategies that improve performance and outcomes in our professional and personal lives. With energy and humor, Melissa gives attendees tools to harness the skills to create a culture of learning and inspire organizations and teams to tap into their inner genius for extraordinary results.

INTRODUCTION

Cicero (106-43 BCE) is widely considered Rome's **greatest** orator, but he was also an influential statesman, lawyer and philosopher. By all accounts, he tried to lead by example in his quest to live ethically, continually better himself and gain knowledge. One of his more famous quotations comes from Pro Planico, a legal defense:

> ***"Etenim, iudices, cum omnibus virtutibus me adfectum esse cupio, tum nihil est quod malim quam me et esse gratum et videri."***

Directly translated:

> ***"In truth, O judges, while I wish to be adorned with every virtue, yet there is nothing which I can esteem more highly than the being and appearing grateful. For this one virtue is not only the greatest, but is also the parent of all the other virtues."***

In our modern wisdom, we have condensed and simplified that to:

> ***"Gratitude is more than 'the greatest virtue,' it is also 'the mother of all other remaining virtues.'"***

On many levels, research supports this Cicero's sentiment. When we appreciate what is good in our lives, we are inspired to do good things. We are more generous, altruistic, and kind to others. People with more grateful dispositions report being happier and more satisfied with their lives. Sociologists maintain that gratitude functions as social glue that enables us to cultivate new relationships and nurture existing relationships — the very foundation of a civilized society.

Why, then, shouldn't gratitude be the foundation of a civilized workplace?

Navigating this ebook:

The tabs along the right side of each page will take you to the corresponding section. The icons throughout the text will link to outside videos, books, and websites for further exploration on a specific topic. (At the time this ebook was published, all links were active.)

THE SURPRISINGLY SIMPLY WAY TO ENGAGE EMPLOYEES AND IMPROVE COMPANY CULTURE FOR INCREDIBLE OUTCOMES

What if there was an initiative you could put into place that would make your employees more creative, collaborative, and engaged for a healthier company culture? You'd want to check it out, right?

> ***And what if that program was completely free, required no special training, and would begin generating results almost immediately?***

That initiative isn't too good to be true. It exists and it is surprisingly simple. We've known for years that the practice of gratitude delivers a wealth of physical and emotional benefits and overall well-being. Feeling valued and appreciated is a basic human need.

Now, more recent research identifies the benefits of gratitude in the workplace. Employees who feel appreciated are more productive, better team players, and more motivated to contribute to the success of their company. Unfortunately, many organizations do not actively promote gratitude among employees. This guide was designed to make the business case for gratitude and help you cultivate the power of gratitude in your organization.

A FEW WELL-CHOSEN SINCERE WORDS OF APPRECIATION COST NOTHING YET BRING A FORTUNE IN RETURN.

The Neuroscience of Gratitude

Even before we can tie our shoes, we know the importance of saying “thank you.” It’s one of the first social courtesies we’re taught. Somewhere between the kindergarten classroom and the rat race of life, the practice of gratitude often gets lost.

If good manners aren’t enough, there are scientific reasons why gratitude feels good. Neuroscientists have identified neural activity and blood flow in the brain when we experience gratitude. They found that greater levels of gratitude generated increased activity in the hypothalamus. The hypothalamus is responsible for some pretty important body functions such as eating, drinking, sleeping, metabolic activity and managing stress levels.

In addition, feelings of gratitude trigger a release of neurotransmitters that influence happiness and overall well-being like dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin and endorphins. Practicing gratitude is one of the best ways to generate these neurotransmitters.

As complex as the human brain is, it has a one-track mind. It likes to focus on either positive stimuli or negative stimuli but not both at the same time. When the brain is focused on positive events, the natural tendency is to stay in that positive loop until a negative experience ultimately intervenes and breaks the cycle. Conversely, the brain can also get stuck in a negative loop called a vicious cycle. When the brain gets trapped in the vicious cycle, all it focuses on are negatives. There may be many positive things going on, but the brain is too busy processing the negatives to notice them.

The brain also has a natural tendency to look for things that prove what it believes to be true. It’s called ***confirmation bias***, and it can be both friend and foe. For example, if you get up in the morning and believe that you’re going to have a miserable day, your brain will search for evidence to prove you right. Likewise, if you start your day with the belief that life is good, your brain will search for evidence to confirm that worldview. The outlook you choose determines whether you’ll get stuck in the virtuous cycle or the vicious cycle.

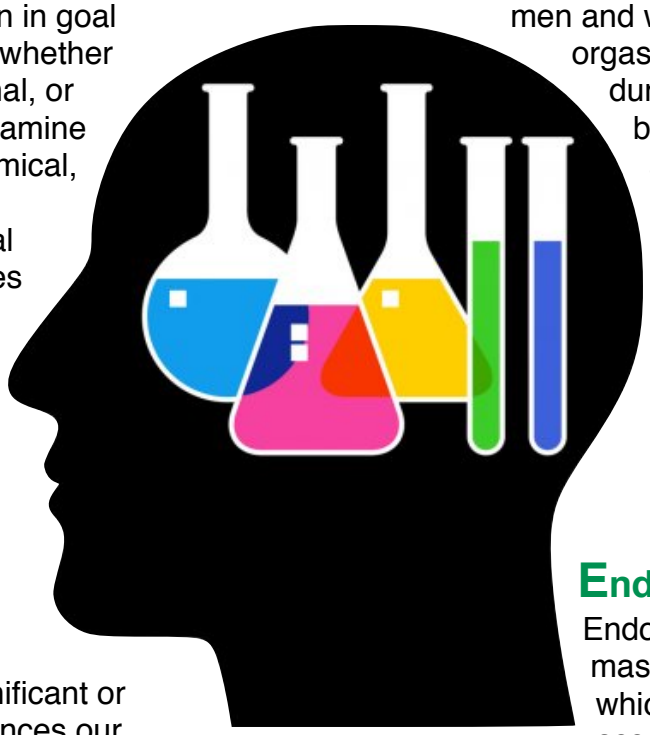
Learn more about the neuroscience of gratitude.

A DOSE of Happy Chemicals

The regions associated with gratitude are part of the neural networks that light up when we socialize and experience pleasure. fMRI scans show increased activity in the nucleus accumbens - or the pleasure center - and an increase in the production of the "happy chemicals" dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin, and endorphins….DOSE!

Dopamine –

Dopamine makes us feel good! It triggers positive emotions, we feel optimistic, and it fosters camaraderie. It's been linked to intrinsic motivation in goal accomplishment, whether academic, personal, or professional. Dopamine is the reward chemical, but it is also the addiction chemical because it is drives us to get that good feeling again.



Oxytocin –

Oxytocin is the "cuddle drug." It's what helps create intimacy, trust, and build healthy relationships. It's released by men and women during sexual orgasm, and by mothers during childbirth and breastfeeding. But we also get a boost of oxytocin with platonic hugs and touches as well as the feeling of safety, belonging and being accepted as a valuable team member.

Serotonin –

Serotonin flows when we feel significant or important. It enhances our mood and motivation. When we are in a good mood, we have serotonin to thank. When we aren't, we have serotonin to blame. Most antidepressants focus on the production of serotonin. Interestingly, 80% of our serotonin is produced in the gut and governed by hunger. This is why we get "hangry."

Endorphins –

Endorphins are responsible for masking pain or discomfort, which explains their association with the "fight or flight" response. Similar to morphine, endorphins act as an analgesic as it diminishes your perception of pain. Laughter is one of the easiest ways to generate endorphins. That funny email a little laughter over lunch is an easy way to induce endorphins.

Learn more about how connecting with others triggers the happy chemicals we need for better cognitive function and physical health.

Benefits of Gratitude: Mind and Body

We know gratitude makes us feel good, but new conclusive research now proves that it's not just good for our happiness. It's also good for our health and relationships.

The world's foremost gratitude expert, Robert Emmons, has studied the impact of gratitude on every aspect of our lives - from our physical health to mental and emotional health to relationships with others. In one study participants were randomly assigned to one of three groups.

One group was asked to record at least five events that happened during each week for which they were grateful. The second group was asked to record five hassles or irritants that they experienced each week. The third group was instructed to record five events from the week but were not told whether to focus on either positive or negative events.

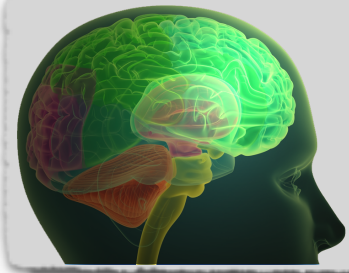
The participants in the first group who recorded positive expressions of gratitude reported fewer physical aches and pains, felt better about their lives in general and were more optimistic about the upcoming week compared to the other two groups. They also exercised an average of 1.5 hours more and made greater progress toward their personal goals than the other participants.

Emmons expanded his research to explore the impact of gratitude on adults suffering from neuromuscular disease. After participants had completed a 21-day gratitude program, researchers found significant physical and socio-emotional differences in the gratitude group compared to a control group including longer and more restful sleep, lower blood pressure and anxiety, improved mood, greater feelings of happiness, and a deeper sense of connectedness and belonging.

Learn more about how gratitude creates a positive feedback loop in the brain for greater mental acuity.

Benefits of Gratitude on the Body and Mind

PHYSICAL	PSYCHOLOGICAL	SOCIAL
• boosts the immune system • lowers blood pressure • promotes restful sleep	• increases positive emotions • promotes optimism • decreases anxiety	• improves relationships • strengthens human connections



People who practice gratitude demonstrate higher emotional intelligence and have a more neural-dense prefrontal cortex. What does that mean? As we make gratitude a daily habit, we build emotional intelligence, and as an added bonus, the part of the brain that handles all of the higher-level executive functions becomes more efficient.

Gratitude Gains in the Workplace

Okay, so we know gratitude is good for our health and happiness. It's a natural anti-depressant. It strengthens relationships and deepens joyful moments of life. But what is it about gratitude that makes it a complete **GAME-CHANGER** in the workplace?

When was the last time you were thanked for your contributions at work? When was the last time you expressed gratitude to another coworker? A recent survey by the John Templeton Foundation revealed that people are less likely to show gratitude at work than anywhere else:

- 60% said they never or rarely express gratitude to co-workers;
- 74% never or rarely express gratitude upstream to their boss.

As further confirmation of these findings, a 2017 survey by WorkHuman revealed that:

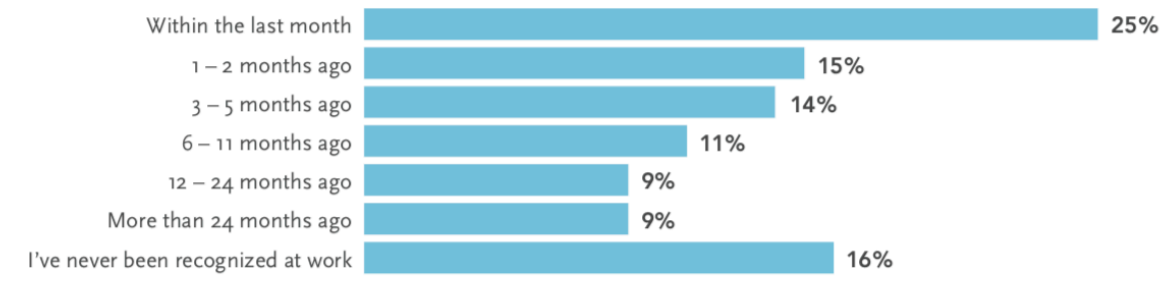
- 45% had not received recognition or appreciation for their contributions to the company in at least six months;
- 16% reported they had never been recognized at all.

Key Findings from WorkHuman Research Institute

- Employees are increasingly searching for meaning in their work; frequent, values-based recognition is one of the best ways to meet that need.
- When it comes to performance, employees are looking for more frequent check-ins, which ultimately can enhance the manager- employee relationship.
- As organizations become places of shared community, workers are craving a sense of belonging and celebration of life events in the workplace.

45% of workers have not been recognized in 6 months or more

Q: When was the last time you were recognized for your contributions at work?



(WorkHuman Research Institute 2017 Survey Report)

Being recognized by managers, peers, and direct reports makes employees feel acknowledged for who they are and what they do. When people feel like what they do really matters and that their contributions are recognized and appreciated, they have more positive attitudes toward their position and the company – and that makes them happier, and more committed to their colleagues and the company.

When we bring human needs into the workplace and infuse gratitude into company culture through social recognition, it connects people to purpose and to one another. If people feel that are valued and appreciated as employees, they will value and appreciate their co-workers and customers they serve. As more people feel the effects, more people will pay it forward.

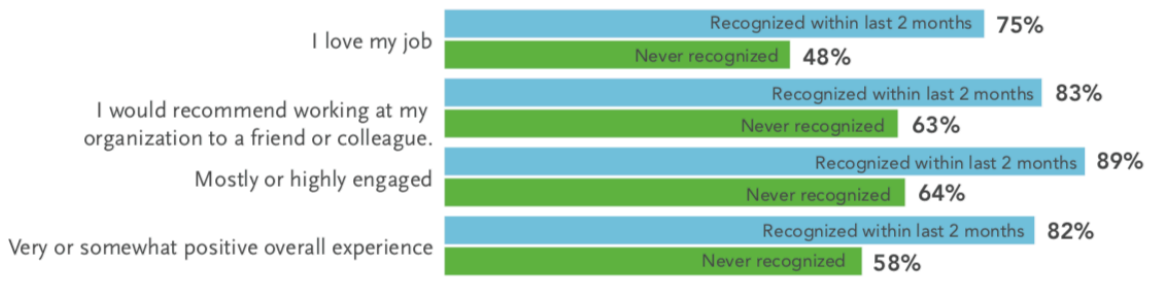
The dopamine effect is a powerful force. Whether it is a simple "thank you" note or a more formal expression of appreciation, the psychological effects of gratitude in the workplace can have a tremendous impact on job satisfaction, effort, productivity, and corporate culture. Every single team member can contribute to a culture of gratitude - from the custodian to the CEO.

> The way you treat your employees is the way they will treat your customers… People flourish when they are praised.
>
> -Sir Richard Branson

Experts agree that the lack of appreciation is one of the primary reasons why people quit their jobs. Recognition is one step forward, but gratitude is the secret to cultivating a workplace where people want to contribute in a positive manner.

Recent recognition linked to positive employee outcomes

Outcomes by frequency of recognition given



(WorkHuman Research Institute 2017 Survey Report)

Dopamine and good vibrations aside, does gratitude actually impact the bottom line of the organization? Francesca Gino at Harvard Business School and Adam Grant of the Wharton School of Business, University of Pennsylvania explored how being thanked and the perception of being valued affects competence and productivity.

In the first experiment, participants were asked to provide feedback on a fictitious cover letter. Half of the subjects received confirmation of their feedback, while the other half received a message that expressed gratitude for completing the task. When the researchers measured the subjects' sense of self-worth afterward, 25% of the group that received confirmation felt higher self-worth compared to 55% of the group that received thanks.

The second experiment was an extension of that same group of subjects. Each was asked to provide feedback on another fictitious cover letter. More than double the students in the gratitude group (66%) agreed to provide feedback on the second letter compared to only 32% in the group who received no gratitude.

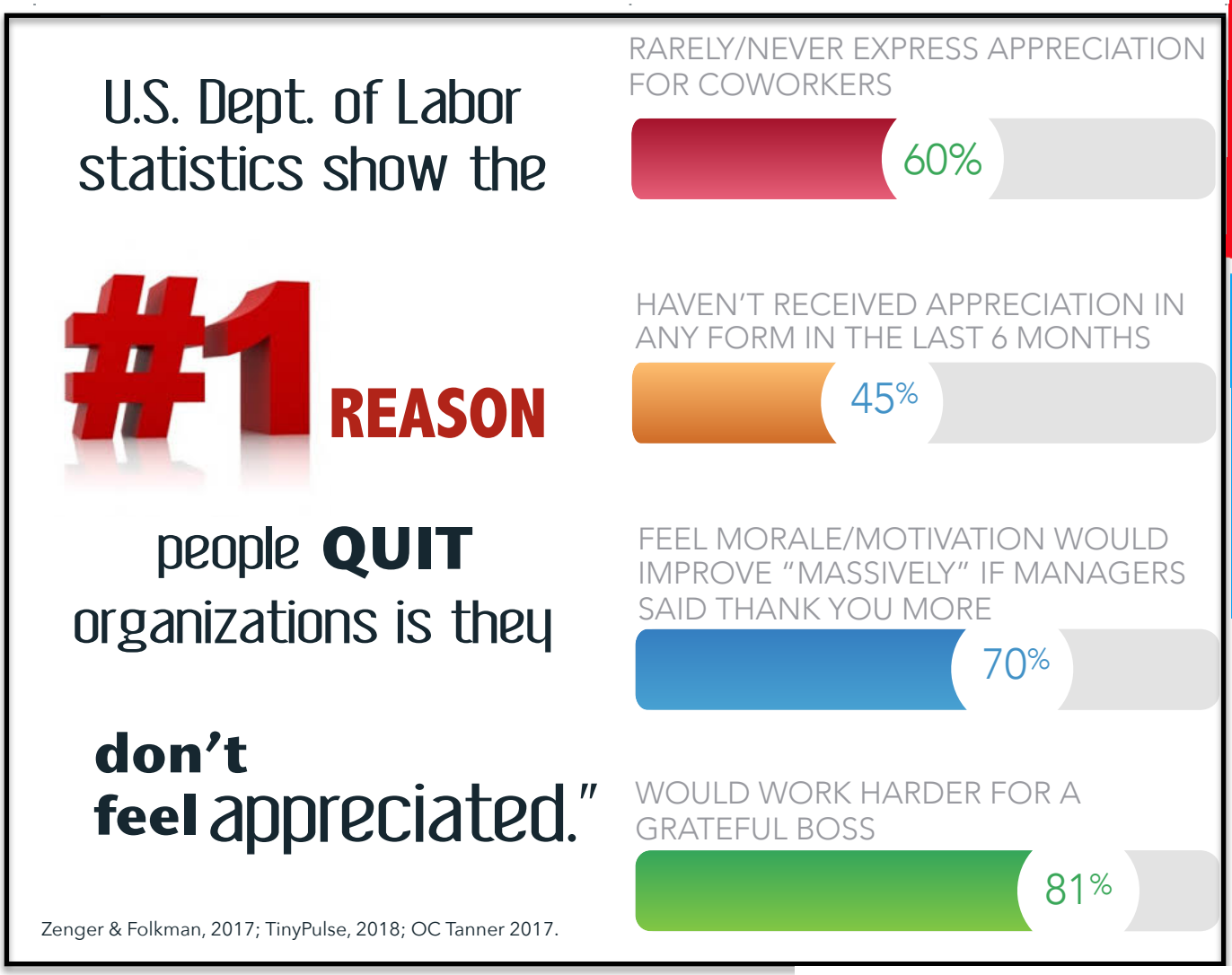
The "gratitude effect" was explored again in a field study to determine how it impacted productivity. The subjects were fundraisers who all received a fixed salary regardless of the number of calls they made. The director visited one group in person to express his appreciation for the job that they did and the contributions they were making to the organization. The second group did not receive a visit from the director or any expressions of gratitude for their work. That simple demonstration of gratitude generated an increase in the number of calls by more than 50% over the previous week, while the calls of those who had not received thanks remained the same as the previous week.

Still not convinced? An employee survey of more than 2,000 adults conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of Glassdoor revealed that gratitude is a big driver in employee satisfaction and engagement. A vast majority (81%) of employees reported that they're motivated to work harder when their boss shows appreciation for their work compared to only 37% motivated by the fear of losing their job and 38% motivated by a demanding boss. Moreover, more than half (53%) of employees reported they would stay longer at their company if they felt more appreciation from their boss.

5 Cultural Benefits of Gratitude at Work

- ☑ Productivity
- ☑ Motivation
- ☑ Loyalty/Retention
- ☑ Job Satisfaction
- ☑ Professional Relationships

Learn more about the ROIs of gratitude on company culture and employee engagement.



David Desteno has conducted numerous studies to explore the impact of gratitude on success at work. In one study, participants were asked to recall a time they felt grateful, happy, or neutral. They were then asked to make several choices of the form: "Would you rather have $X now or $Y in Z days (where Y was always greater than X, and Z varied). Desteno found that gratitude almost doubled participants' self-control. They were more willing to wait for the future reward than those who were feeling happy or neutral.

The benefits of gratitude also extend to a willingness to help others. In one experiment, researchers fabricated a scenario in the lab requiring a lab assistant to come to their aid in solving the problem. After leaving the lab, participants were asked if they would stop an help someone else solve a problem. Those who had experienced gratitude volunteered to help more and persevered longer to solve the problems longer, in spite of not being watched or paying a price for doing so.

> Gratitude is often called "the mother of all virtues" because it nurtures the development of other virtues such as patience, humility, and self-control.

Research demonstrates that one's level of gratitude is directly correlated with job satisfaction, as well as cooperation with and respect for their co-workers. There are numerous studies showing that gratitude increases happiness and overall well-being which contributes to feeling more satisfied in all areas of life - including work.

We often assume that an employee is happy and satisfied *because* he or she is successful. However, new evidence supports an alternative hypothesis. Could it be that happiness is the source of successful employees? ***It is possible that people are more successful because they are happier?***

A decade of research proves that happiness raises nearly every business and educational outcome: increasing sales, productivity, and accuracy on tasks, as well as a myriad of health and quality of life improvements. Researchers Julia Boehm and Sonja Lyubomirsky, found that, compared with their less happy peers, happy people earn more money, demonstrate higher performance, and engage in more helpful acts with their coworkers.

> Happy people earn more money, demonstrate higher performance, are more helpful to coworkers and customers — they are brand ambassadors.
>
> " "

To this end, the authors consider evidence from three types of studies—cross-sectional, longitudinal, and experimental—that relate happiness to various work outcomes. Taken together, the evidence suggests that happiness is not only correlated with workplace success but that happiness often precedes measures of success and that induction of positive affect leads to improved workplace outcomes.

Another benefit of gratitude in the workplace is that it increases employees' perceived sense of community. This is importantly been identified as one of the most important components of company culture with significant influence on the employee experience.

The belief that there is a strong sense of community among team members enhances collegiality, encourages more effective collaboration and promotes greater interdependency. Team members who are committed to the contributions they make to the team and confident that they can depend on the contributions of others create an inclusive culture that has high expectations of all members.

Moreover, gratitude promotes a sense of trust and shared ownership over company goals. With more and more organizations striving to improve collaboration and team dynamics, focusing on building a sense of community is essential, and the most effective way to do it is through gratitude.

Think the "slackers" are the most disengaged employees? This video might surprise you!

Recognition: A Powerful Driver of Engagement

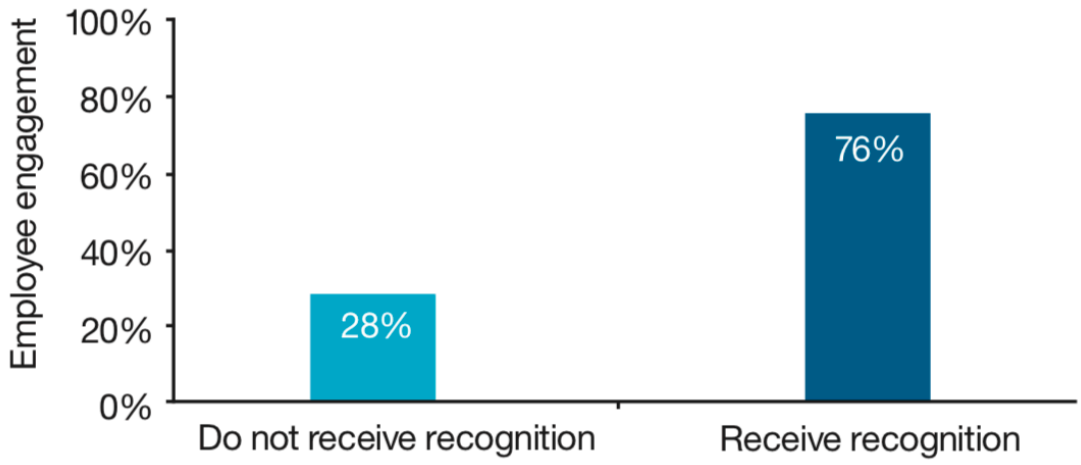
IBM's WorkTrends survey of over 19.000 employees in 26 countries across industries and thousands of organizations revealed direct correlations between recognition and increased job satisfaction, decreased turnover, and higher business results.

> People may work for the paycheck, but they go the extra mile when they feel appreciated and are recognized for their contributions.
>
> "

Find out the best way to de-motivate employees.

Key findings of the IBM WorkTrends Survey:

- Employees who receive recognition are more likely to be engaged at work. The engagement level of employees who receive recognition is almost three times higher than the engagement level of those who do not.
- Workers who receive recognition are less likely to quit. Without recognition, about half (51 percent) of surveyed employees say they intend to leave, with recognition just one quarter (25 percent) say they intend to leave their organizations.
- Employees whose organizations use multiple communication channels for recognition are more likely to feel appreciated and show a higher level of employee engagement. The more channels used for recognition, the higher the employee engagement level.



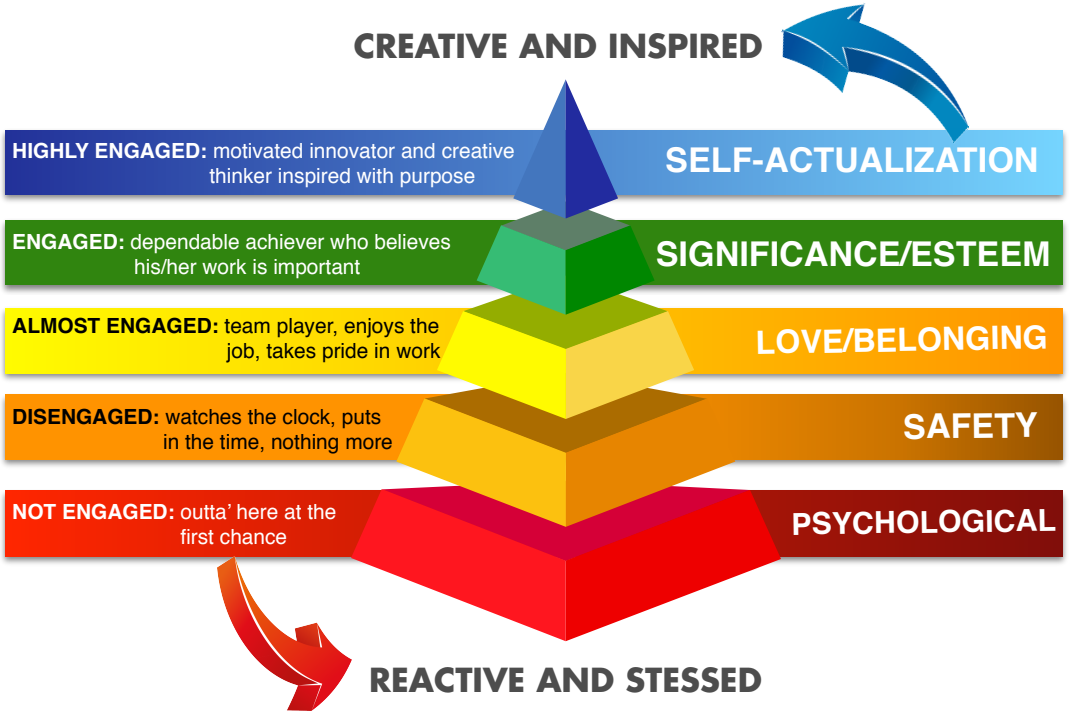
(IBM WorkTrends Survey, 2014)

Meeting Basic Human Needs

There is no question that healthy organizational cultures with engaged employees are much more successful. There is a wealth of neuroscience and behavioral science research to explain this, but distilled down into simplest terms, people won't thrive without meeting their basic human needs. Maslow's theory posits that human motivation is determined by needs being fulfilled in a specific order – from survival to what he calls "self-actualization," or the ability to pursue personal goals with purpose. While these needs may have been laid out for basic human survival, they're applicable to how engaged people are and what motivates us to a greater sense of agency in our work and contributions.

Learn more about the alignment between basic needs and engagement.

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS ALIGNED TO EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

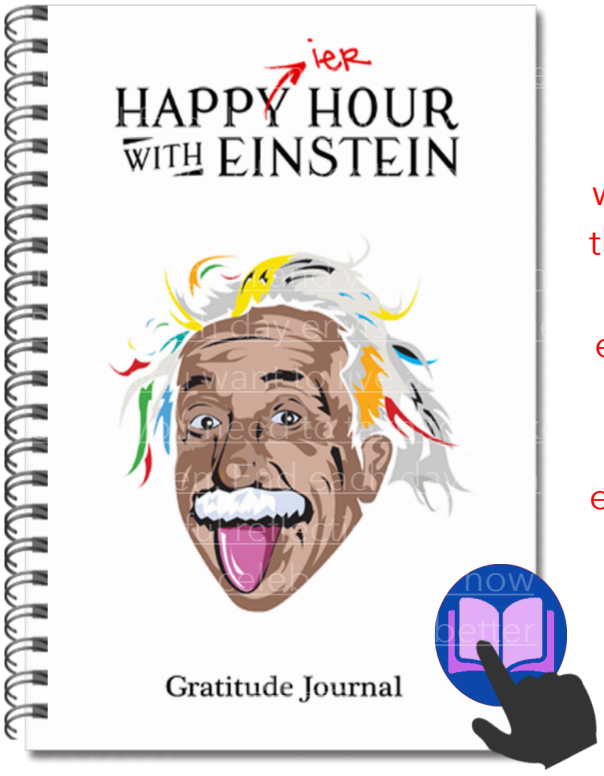


> "When people appear to be something other than good and decent, it is only because they are reacting to stress, pain, or the deprivation of basic human needs such as security, love, and self-esteem."
>
> -Abraham Maslow

USE BRAIN-BASED RESEARCH TO CULTIVATE GRATITUDE AS AN INTENTIONAL HABIT.

Taking time to reflect upon the people and things in your life that bring you joy is important, but transferring your thoughts to paper - in your own handwriting - makes a greater imprint on your brain. Seeing those thoughts materialize on the pages forces your brain to search for more good things which keeps you in a positive feedback loop.

Gratitude journals shouldn't be confined to the bedside table. For many people who are stressed or anxious at work, a gratitude journal on the desk is a great subconscious reminder to look for the good things and stay positive throughout the day. Simple things like fresh coffee in the lunch room or the receptionist in the building who always greets you with a smile can make the everyday irritants and hassles seem less significant.

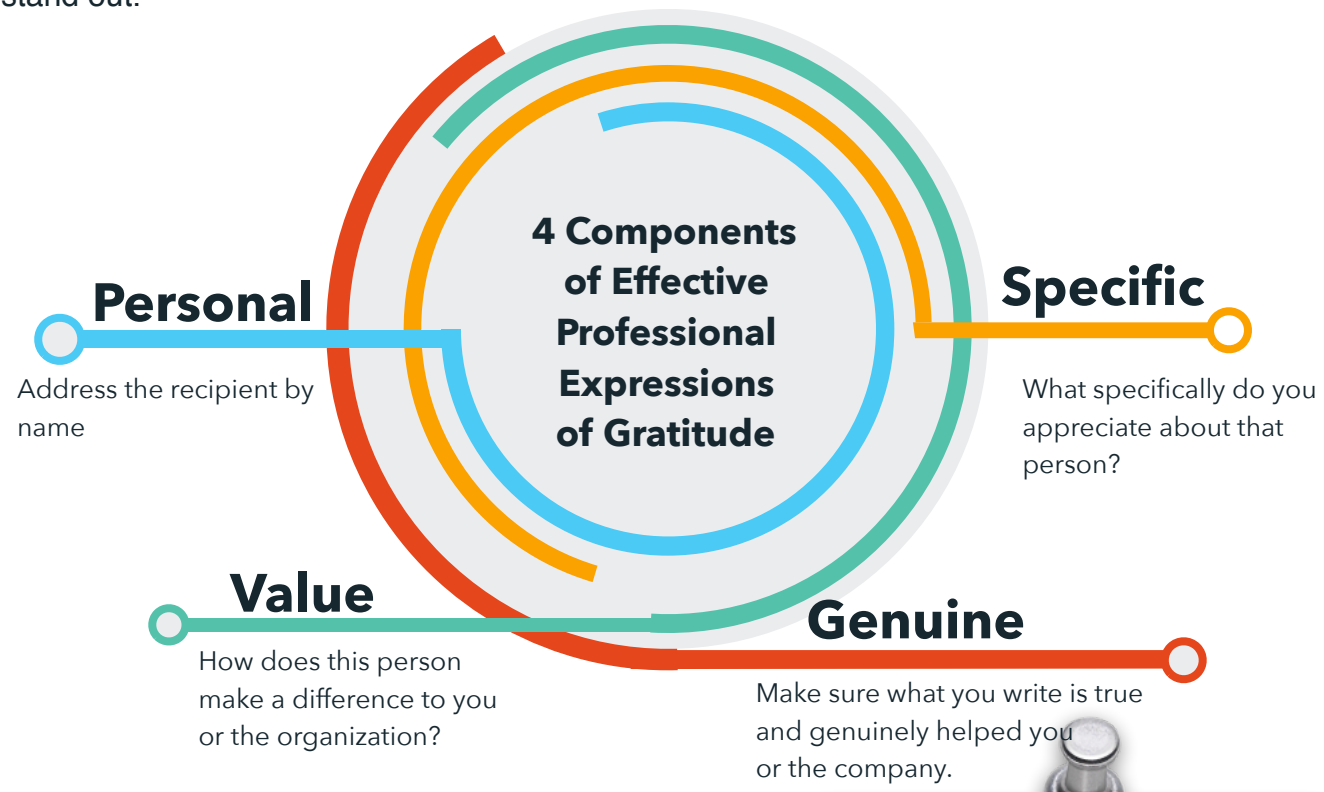


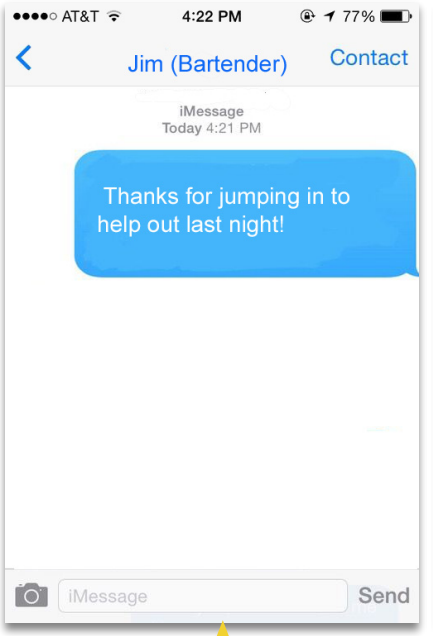
Each full-color daily entry incorporates images of nature and free-flowing watercolor washes of color to help facilitate the process of introspection and visualization. Begin each day envisioning the day you want to live and the steps you need to take to make it happen. End each day with grateful reflection, introspection, and an opportunity to celebrate how you made the world a better place.

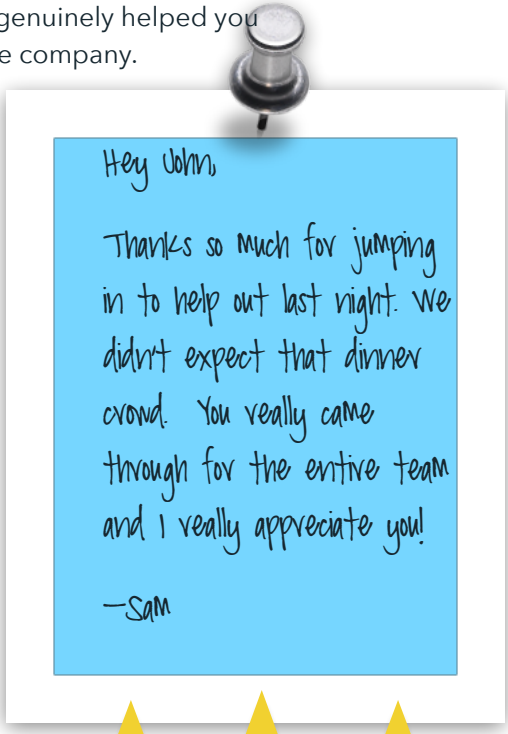
Order now at amazon.com

The Anatomy of an Effective "Thank You"

While great "thank you" notes aren't hard to write, they are rare to receive. They don't have to be fancy or long, but a handwritten note that specifically identifies the act or behavior that you appreciate is far more valuable to the recipient than a vague "thanks!" days or weeks later. There are four components that make the really special messages stand out.







25 Ways in 25 Days to Put Gratitude to Work

Putting gratitude to work doesn't require a huge investment of time, money or energy. There are some very simple ways to make the practice of gratitude an intentional part of your daily routine. Commit to 25 days with these simple tasks. For an extra boost, print this page and mark the day with a star or smiley face when you complete each task. Thinking about each action or behavior and seeing the visual representation of completing it will trigger a nice dose of oxytocin and dopamine in your brain!

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Write down 3 things you are grateful for at work. Place it where you can see it throughout the day.	No whining, no complaining, no griping - about anything - all day.	Make a conscious effort to greet every single person with a smile before you say a word.	Perform one random act of kindness for a co-worker you know well.	Write one thank-you note to someone you appreciate in your personal life.
Day 6	**Day 7**	**Day 8**	**Day 9**	**Day 10**
Write down the names of 2 people who make your job more enjoyable or easier.	Tell the 2 people you named on Day 6 that you appreciate them for making your job more enjoyable or easier.	Perform one random act of kindness for a co-worker you don't know very well.	Write one thank-you note to a co-worker you appreciate.	Think of a time when you were acknowledged for helping someone in need.
Day 11	**Day 12**	**Day 13**	**Day 14**	**Day 15**
Write down 3 things you like about your job. Place it where you can see it throughout the day.	Be on the lookout for "do-gooders" today. Catch 3 people doing good work and acknowledge them for it.	Write one thank you note to someone you appreciate in your personal life.	Think of a time when someone expressed appreciation to you for something you did or said.	Write down examples of how other people helped you this week. How many can you list?
Day 16	**Day 17**	**Day 18**	**Day 19**	**Day 20**
Write down 3 things you like about yourself and the contributions you make to your team or organization.	Write one thank-you note to a co-worker you appreciate.	Perform one random act of kindness for a total stranger.	Share 3 genuine compliments.	Write down 2 things you like about your boss.
Day 21	**Day 22**	**Day 23**	**Day 24**	**Day 25**
Write one thank you note to someone you appreciate in either your personal or professional life.	Start your day by writing down 3 people, 2 places, and 1 thing that you are grateful for.	List 5 things you are grateful for before you go to bed.	Write down 2 ways you contribute to your co-workers, team goals or organizational goals.	Perform one random act of kindness for a stranger.

XENIAL: “Make Your Mark”

Tracy Gallimore is the Vice President of Sales at Xenial. As an industry leader of technology in the quick-service and fast-casual markets, Tracy’s organization has enjoyed steady growth. One of the challenges that often accompanies growth is maintaining a healthy corporate culture.

The guiding mantra of the organization is "everything we do matters," and Tracy recognizes that philosophy only works if "everyone matters." So, the concept of gratitude was completely aligned with their vision and mission.

Recently, Tracy shared his experience of writing and delivering that first thank-you note. He sketched out a genuine message of appreciation on a little piece of paper and left it for an employee to find on his keyboard when he arrived the next morning. "I feels a little like playing Santa Claus!" Tracy said. "It was just a quick hand-drawn note, but it felt so good to think about that person finding it the next morning." And the reaction from the recipient was much different than that from the casual, "Hey, good job!" that we so often give or receive. The employee was grateful - truly grateful - for Tracy's simple, yet genuine expression of appreciation.

Perhaps what surprised Tracy the most was what has happened next. He was amazed at how contagious something as simple as an expression of gratitude can be. The organization already had a formal employee recognition program in place. But, Tracy noticed people at all levels of the organization reinforcing those values by informally recognizing one another for contributions, victories, and even challenges. Tracy could have called a meeting with HR and directed them to incorporate the "weekly thank you note" component into the existing program. But the altruistic, organic nature of this new mindset not only reinforced that program from the bottom up, it also enabled individuals at every level of the organization to take ownership of creating a more grateful culture.

The gratitude initiative at Xenial has recently expanded into an exciting new employee recognition program focused on the daily contributions people make to help the company succeed. “Make Your Mark on our Business” celebrates people instead of projects.

At Xenial, gratitude isn’t an initiative; it isn't a mandate. It is the opportunity given to everyone in the organization - regardless of title or position - to recognize people who matter, and it is contagious!

> Our guiding mantra is “everything we do matters.”
> That only works if ***everyone matters***.
>
> -Tracy Gallimore

> It's easy to focus on the problems and the obstacles. But being in the market of gratitude enables us to see all of the small victories along the way that we otherwise might have overlooked.
>
> -Tracy Gallimore

Make Your Mark at Xenial

Employees at Xenial are recognized with a Make Your Mark pride t-shirt.

jetBlue: "Lift"

According to J.D. Powers, jetBlue has had incredible customer satisfaction ratings for more than a decade. In addition, it often takes the top spot on the Forbes list of top employers in the transportation and logistics category. There is stiff competition for a job with one of the nation's favorite economy airline. jetBlue's current applicant acceptance rate is around 5%.

Their success aligns with research that shows that customer satisfaction directly correlates with employee satisfaction and more specifically, peer-to-peer recognition programs like that of Xenial. "Lift" is an online social recognition rewards program that allows "crew members" to recognize anything from small victories to daily efforts to big wins. The recipients get to choose the rewards that are meaningful to them.

jetBlue has concrete numbers to demonstrate the effectiveness of peer-to-peer recognition. A mere 10% increase in recognition resulted in increases in both staff retention and employee engagement.

SnackNation:"Crush it Calls"

Every Friday, the entire SnackNation team gathers to end the week with a "Crush it call." Each employee shares two things: (1) someone they want to "crush" for a specific contribution he or she made that week and (2) something they are grateful for. It's a great chance for people to not only recognize the efforts of their coworkers but also let the entire team recognize them, too. It helps break down the departmental silos because it gives everyone a chance to see the contributions of people that they may not work with on a daily basis.

See for yourself… Check out a SnackNation Crush it Call!

According to a 2018 SHRM/Globoforce study, effective peer-to-peer recognition programs can deliver serious ROI including:

- 35% lower turnover,
- 50% higher productivity,
- and as much as 20% increase in business outcomes.

Zappos: "Zollar"

Zappos is widely known for its outstanding customer service and company culture. But many people don't know that they also prioritize peer-to-peer recognition as a way to contribute to an overall positive team spirit. Zapponians are encouraged to acknowledge coworkers who are excellent examples of the culture by going above and beyond to help out a team member or by WOWing a customer.

Any employee across the can give or receive Zollars redeemable for Zappos branded schwag or movie tickets. They can also be donated to one of the charities that Zappos partners with on behalf of the employee. Remaining true to their core value "do more with less," they prioritize keeping it affordable and scalable.

Campbell's: It's Personal

In 2001, Douglas Conant stepped in as CEO of the failing Campbell Soup Company. By 2011, it was back on top as an industry leader and a perennial winner of Gallup's "Great Workplace Award." How did Conant manage such a huge turnaround? A whole bunch of thank-you notes. Over the 10 years that Conant was at the helm, he sent, on average, about 10 hand-written notes to employees and customers each day. That amounts to more than 30,000 thank you-notes. Conant maintains that part of what made these expressions of gratitude so meaningful to people is that he didn't send them by tweet, email or text. He wrote a personal card to each recipient himself.

The purpose of every single note was to recognize a very specific and contribution that individual made to the company. Conant wanted to do more than make people feel good. He wanted to build trust in the form of what is known as the Campbell Promise: 'Campbell valuing people; people valuing Campbell.'"

Learn more about the neuroscience in a hand-written note.

5 Immediate Benefits of Hand-written Thank-Yous

1. Writing a specific note of appreciation requires intention and focus and forces you to slow down.
2. Expressions of gratitude in writing increase feelings of empathy and altruism.
3. Seeing your thoughts in your own handwriting involves more senses and neural activity than a text or email message.
4. Writing by hand tends to boost your ability to retain information, comprehend new ideas, and be more productive.
5. Hand-written thank-you notes memorialize the contribution. Giving the recipient something tangible makes the sentiment more meaningful.

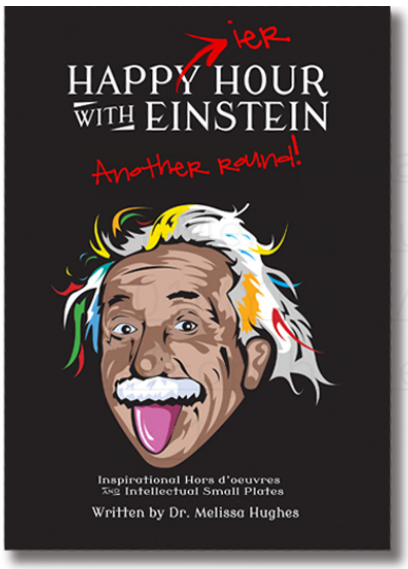
Gratitude is the ultimate touchpoint of human existence. It is the ultimate performance-enhancing substance.

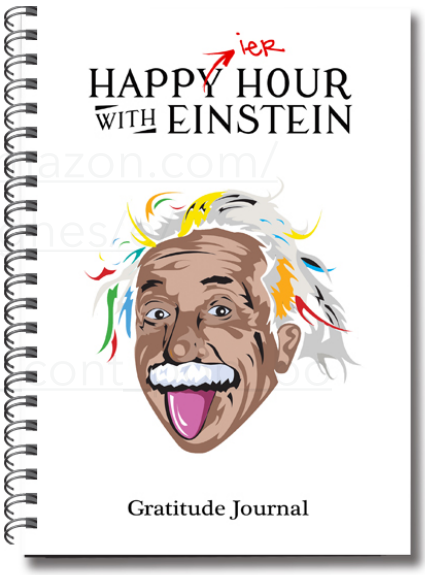
– Robert Emmons, the Father of Gratitude

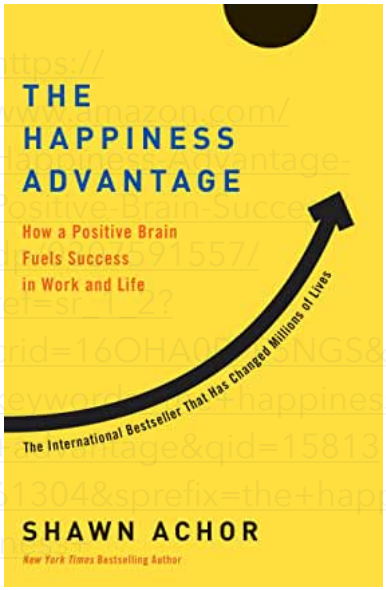
Additional Resources

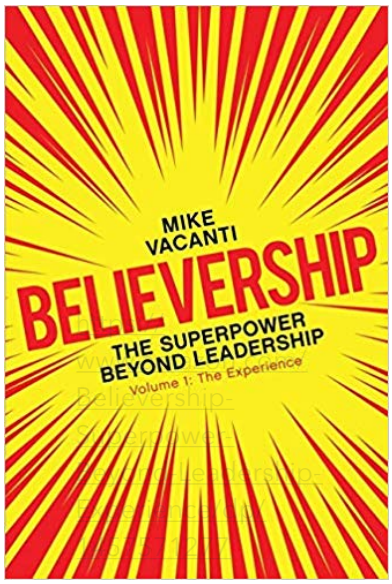
If you made it this far, then you recognize the value of creating a gratitude-rich culture in your organization. Don't stop now! Check out these great sources for further learning.

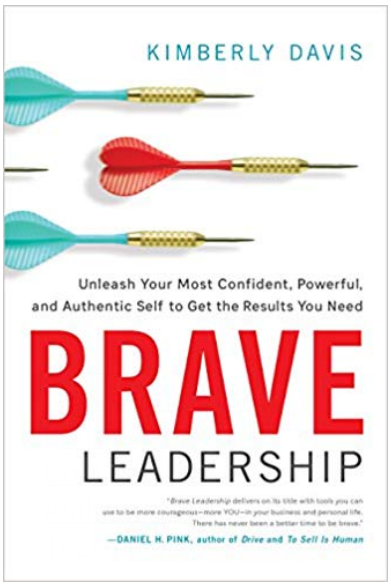
(Note: all images are clickable to active links at the time this document was published.)

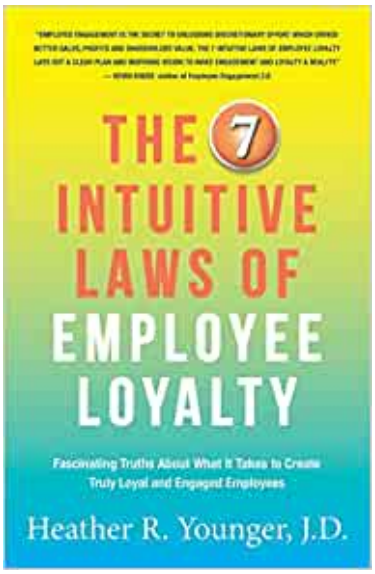


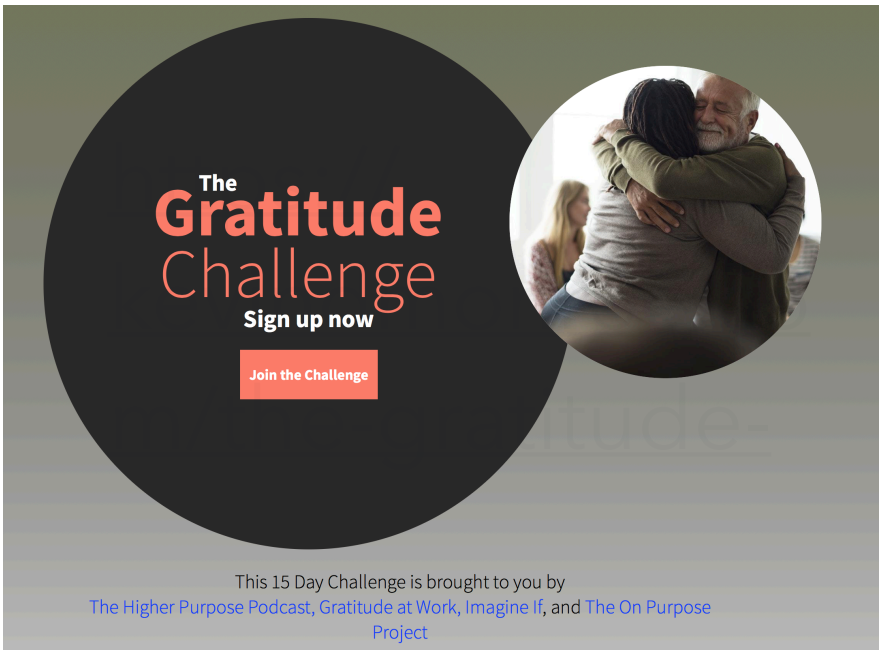












Psychology Today

Gratitude
Thankfulness

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GRATITUDE WORKS

Robert Emmons, Ph.D., Director

GGSC Greater Good Magazine
SCIENCE-BASED INSIGHTS FOR A MEANINGFUL LIFE

O.C.TANNER

How Do I Recognize Thee, Let Me Count the Ways: Research insights into the impact of multi-channel recognition. An IBM Analytics Thought Leadership WhitePaper.

The Grateful Are Patient: Heightened Daily Gratitude Is Associated With Attenuated Temporal Discounting. Dickens, L., & DeSteno, D. (2016, March 28). *Emotion*. Advance online publication, American Psychological Association.

Gratitude: A Tool for Reducing Economic Impatience. David DeSteno, Ye Li, Leah Dickens and Jennifer S. Lerner *Psychological Science* 2014 25: 1262 originally published online 23 April 2014.

The Effect of Performance Recognition on Employee Engagement. A Cicero Whitepaper.

Melissa Hughes, PhD, is a self-proclaimed neuroscience geek and the author of two best-selling books, ***Happy Hour with Einstein*** and ***Happier Hour with Einstein: Another Round***. Dr. Hughes helps us to understand how the brain works and how to increase and optimize its function. Having worked with a wide range of audiences - everything from students in the classroom to the boardroom of Fortune 1000 companies - she combines her **PhD in education** and her vast experience in marketing communications with extensive research in neuroscience and behavioral psychology to share simple, applicable strategies that improve outcomes both at work and in our personal lives. With energy and humor, Melissa gives attendees tools to **harness the skills to create a culture of learning** and inspire organizations and teams to tap into their inner genius for extraordinary results!

Dr. Hughes speaks to corporations, HR, NPOs, entrepreneurs, colleges /universities, and all organizations looking to maximize results.

Topics for Keynotes and Seminars Include:

- ***Build a Culture of Genius-*** *Discover the neuroscience of employee engagement and creative learning for an improved company culture and optimized outcomes.*
- ***Naturally Release Your Positive Neuro-Transmitters-*** *Counter the negative effects of stress through simple, applicable, science-proven strategies.*
- ***Harness Your Team's Skills, Innovation and Creativity-*** *Dr. Hughes's blueprint for turning ordinary into extraordinary, positively enhancing your bottom line.*

Book Melissa for your next event!

Check out Melissa's testimonials!

Learn more at Melissa's blog!

Click here to get one every Friday!

Neuro Nugget