

# Creating an environment that nurtures leaders

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Unlocking appreciation in the workplace

By Jessica Davis  
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# Developing leaders starts with a positive work environment

When employees are happier at work:

- 85% say they take **more initiative**;
- 73% say they are **better collaborators**; and
- 48% **care more** about their work.



# We're all not that different

## Millennials and Older Workers Have Many of the Same Career Goals

### PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WITH THE FOLLOWING LONG-TERM GOALS



## 5 keys to nurturing leaders

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- The nurturing starts **before the job begins**: Set the tone in the interviewing stage.
- Give everyone a **path of growth**. What are they passionate about? Build a diverse team that allows individuals to pursue their passions.
- **Training, training, training**. A team with confidence can boldly go where no one has before.
- **Invest in the relationship**. Regular 1:1 meetings.
- **Set expectations**. Clarity helps employees understand what success looks like.
- Consistently fill them up by **showing appreciation**.\*

# Appreciation in the workplace

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People in the workplace need to feel appreciated to enjoy their job, do their best work, have positive work relationships and stay with the organization long-term.

# DISCUSSION

- Describe a time when you felt appreciated at work.



# Nurture the whole person

“It makes for a much more productive newsroom when **people feel respected**, when you accommodate their **needs of their lives**, beyond just what stories they produce for you lately.”

- Bill Keller, *Editor in Chief of  
The Marshall Project*

# The value of appreciation

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- Improved relationships
- Increased job satisfaction
- Less turnover





# The value of appreciation

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- The person that knows when you are having a bad day and discouraged is the person you are working alongside with and it may not be your supervisor, right away.
- Sometimes managers have felt burdened to communicate appreciation on the team solely by themselves.

# Anyone can show appreciation, any time

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- There's studies that show – it's not just something between managers and employees.
- It's something we can do for anyone on the team at any time.



# Improved relationships

“Encouragement is oxygen to the soul. Good work can never be expected from a worker without encouragement.”

*-George Adams, US Representative  
from Kentucky*

# Cues that appreciation is needed

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- **Discouragement:** Means “lack of courage.” Sometimes people “lose heart” when they don’t feel appreciated. They say things like, “Why try. It won’t matter,” or “I’m ready to give up.”
- **Irritability and Resistance:** Indicates they are upset or angry about something. The problem is more intense when resistance is also present to instruction, new procedures or change. Often workers become irritable and resistant when they don’t feel valued by others for what they do.
- **Increased Absenteeism:** Some people send indirect messages when they are unhappy. Not showing up regularly to work or consistently arriving late is one way to indirectly say, “I don’t want to be here.”

# Cues that appreciation is needed

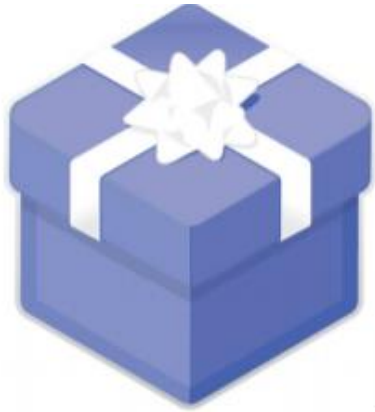
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- **Cynicism and Sarcasm:** Ways people subtly communicate anger and a lack of trust. Usually, they are accompanied by a condescending attitude.
- **Apathy and Passivity:** People become passive when they believe their actions don't matter and whatever they may try won't make a difference. Apathy (“why should I try”) is a common motivator behind passivity.
- **Social Withdrawal:** Co-workers who become less communicative don't “hang out” as much, decline offers to go out for lunch or after work, and also just aren't as involved as they used to be are often separating themselves from the team.
- **Negative Work Environment:** Finally, when the overall work environment is characterized by negative communication styles, encouragement and appreciation are in dire need by all.

**Each person is  
unique**

“What makes one person  
feel appreciated does not  
necessarily make another  
person feel appreciated.”

*- Dr. Paul White, author of 5  
Languages of Appreciation at  
Work*



**Tangible Gifts**



**Quality Time**



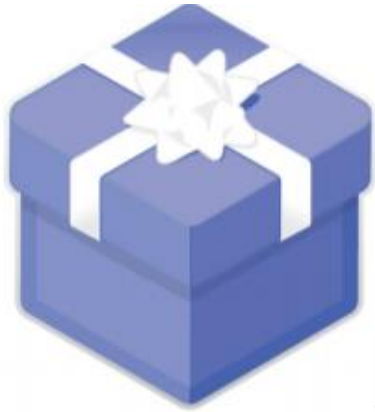
**Words of Affirmation**



**Physical Touch**



**Acts of Service**



### **Tangible Gifts**

Take time to notice your colleagues' hobbies & interests, and the food they enjoy. Buy them a small gift to show that you are getting to know them and what they enjoy.



### **Quality Time**

People enjoy different types of time — “hanging out” with coworkers, working together on a project, or having someone take time to listen to them.



### **Words of Affirmation**

Words, both oral and written, can affirm those around us. Some prefer private communication, while others value being praised in front of others.



### **Physical Touch**

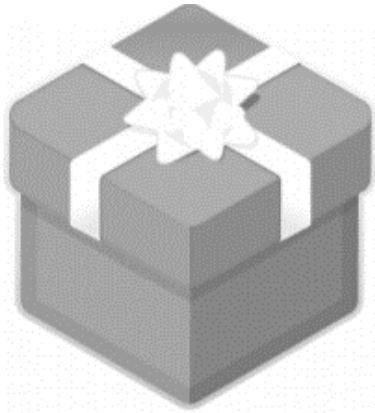
Physical touch in work-based relationships is usually an act of spontaneous celebration — a “high five,” fist bump, slap on the back, or congratulatory handshake.



### **Acts of Service**

Assisting a colleague in getting a task done can be quite encouraging to them. Help them “dig out” from being behind on a project or just work alongside them on a task.





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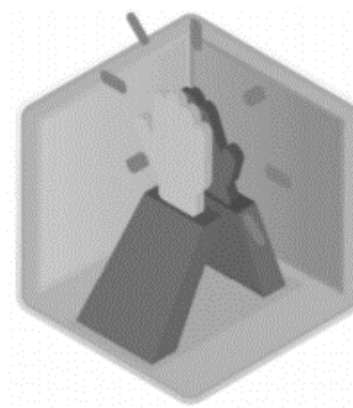
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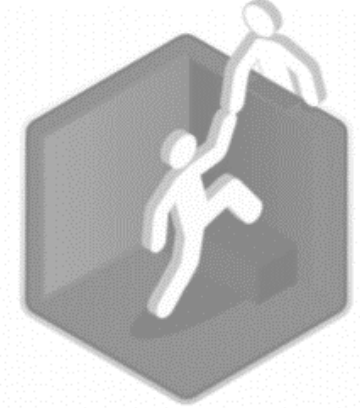
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# Words of appreciation

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More than **45%** of employees cite  
**WORDS OF APPRECIATION** as their primary  
way to receive appreciation

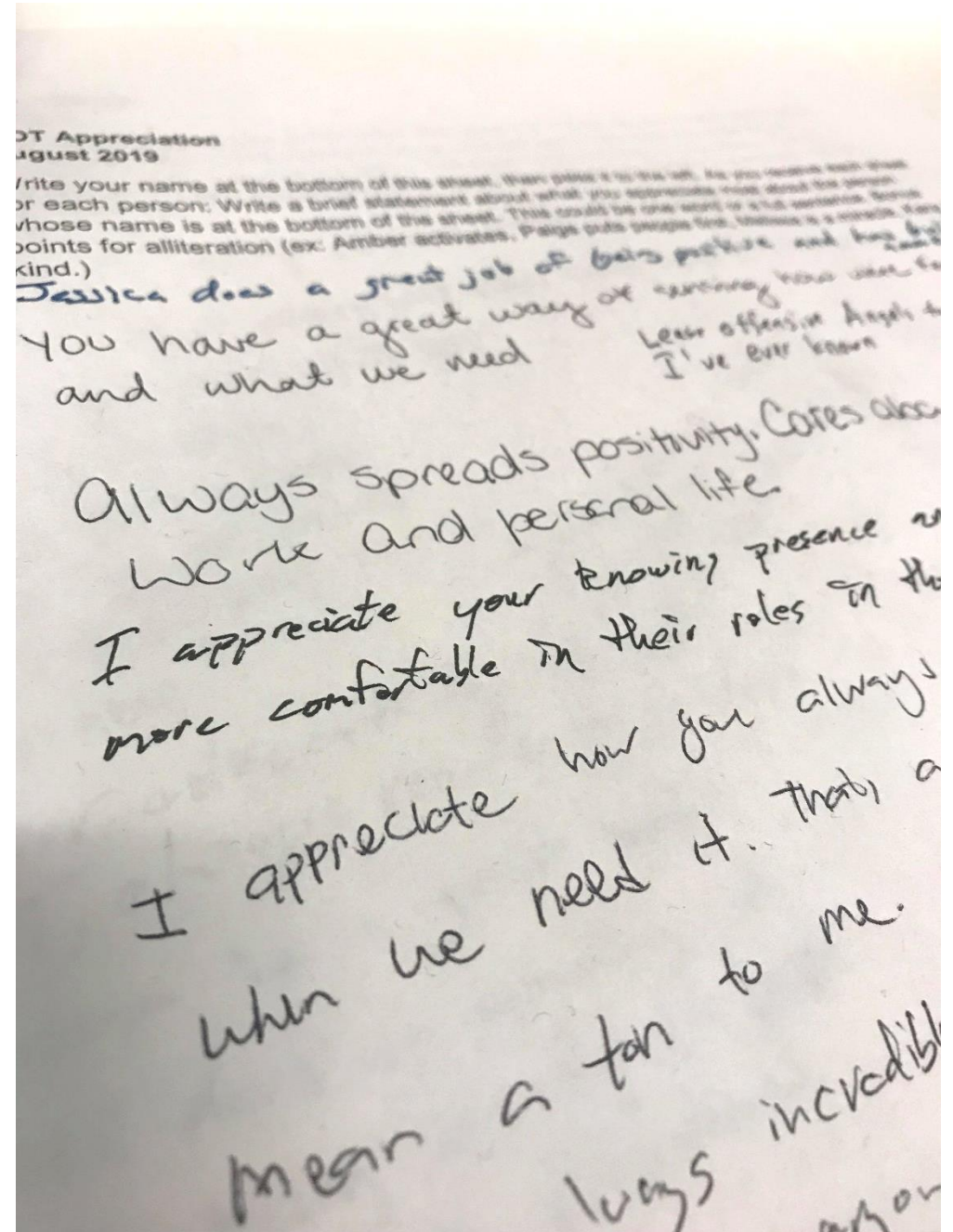
**RECEIVING APPRECIATION**

Approximately **40%** of employees  
**DON'T LIKE TO GO UP IN FRONT OF LARGE GROUPS**



# Example: Appreciation exercise

- After six weeks of unrelenting breaking news (COVID, mass shootings, elections), my team did an appreciation exercise.
- We passed a sheet of paper around the room and wrote down words of appreciation.
- The impact: smiles, tears and a lighter room – a deeper team bond.



# Discussion

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What are some other ways we can show appreciation for your colleagues? What impact might this have?

# Which leadership skills could appreciation unlock in your workplace

## Leadership skills at work

From sources across the web

Empathy

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Positivity

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Feedback

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Problem solving

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Vision

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Innovation

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Accountability

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Motivation

Communication

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Creativity

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Active listening

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Relationship building

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Communicate effectively

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Mentoring

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Confidence

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Reliability

Integrity

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Delegation

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Decisiveness

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Responsibility

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Decision-making

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Strategic thinking

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Flexibility

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Resilience

# Other ideas on how to show appreciation in the workplace

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- **WORDS OF AFFIRMATION**

- Write an email and acknowledge when I do a good job
- Occasionally tell me “thanks” for working hard
- Write a hand-written note of appreciation

- **ACTS OF SERVICE**

- Stay after hours to help me complete a project
- Ask me what you could do to help me
- Bring me or the team food when we work long hours

- **QUALITY TIME**

- Go to lunch to talk about business issues/not talk about business issues
- Stop by, sit down next to me and check in
- Walk together before or after work

- **TANGIBLE GIFTS**

- Gift certificate to a restaurant
- Favorite food
- Flowers or plant

# Key Takeaway

Knowing the person allows us to unlock their value, meet them where they are and help them grow and thrive.



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**THANK YOU.**

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