



Saying Thanks

We've never met anyone who has heard the words "thank you" too often. That is, as long as the way gratitude was expressed was authentic, creative and sincere.

Who around you deserves recognition from you? It could be a direct report who completed a major milestone, a colleague who expressed a small kindness, or someone in your community who went out of their way to make a contribution to your life.

When we take the time to notice, our world is full of opportunities to provide a bit of recognition to others. Here are some ideas for "encouraging the heart" of others.

- Write a simple thank you card to someone who has helped you in the past. The event itself could have been years ago. When you think about it, who have you neglected to thank. What difference might it make to do so now?
- Review events in your workplace over the past few weeks. Who has done something, however small and seemingly insignificant, that lifted your spirits or created a greater sense of community?
- Think of a team or work group that has struggled to complete a project or deal with a difficult issue. What creative ways can you recognize their efforts, even if they didn't lead to a great outcome?

Key Points of Encourage the Heart

Expect the Best

People frequently step up to higher levels of performance when expectations are high. Set the bar at an appropriately high level and encourage them to meet it.

Personalize Recognition

A cornerstone of meaningful recognition is that it is perceived as personal. People want to know that the recognition is for them, so be sure to know what the person's style and preferences are so that you delight them with the recognition you provide.

Create a Spirit of Community

Leaders not only recognize individual excellence, they also celebrate team values and successes. Celebrating together creates a heightened sense of community, belonging and inclusion, and reminds people of the enormous potential of what can be achieved when we work together.

Be Personally Involved

You cannot delegate affairs of the heart. In leading others, you must make the commitment to search for examples of people doing exemplary things, and then tailor recognition that makes it clear that this is authentically coming from you.