

Thoughts on Thankfulness

by
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At this time of year, we are reminded to reflect on the things, events and people in our lives that we are thankful for. We recall our history lessons about the Pilgrims, and the first Thanksgiving feast to celebrate a bountiful harvest in a new land. We carry on this tradition as we gather together at the Thanksgiving table with family and friends, to give thanks for our own riches and blessings. Thanksgiving officially launches the “holiday season”, those days between Thanksgiving and New Year which are traditionally filled with numerous occasions to visit with friends and family and continue to count our blessings.

“Thank you” – these two powerful words can make a difference in your present and future successes. Why not capture the warm feelings and emotions we experience at Thanksgiving and during the holiday season that follows, and make these emotions a part of our everyday routine throughout the year?

Do you recall the most recent time or place you said thank you to someone? Hopefully, you won't have to think too hard. A thank you, be it written or verbal, should be a regular occurrence. Be telling someone thank you or writing a note, you let them know you value your relationship with them, whether personal or business.

Just the other day, I asked someone how they were, and they replied, “I am fine, and thank you so much for asking!” Their “thank you” reminded me immediately of how people value the little things such as this simple inquiry, and how it conveyed their appreciation of my interest in them. We both walked away from a short, informal exchange feeling good. This is the kind of “thankful behavior” I am talking about. We should all do it often and with sincerity, and make it part of our daily routine.

TIPS on making the simple “Thank You” work for you:

1. Thank people when it is not expected, but appreciated.
2. Make an effort to be the first one to offer a thank you; make it a habit, not a reaction.
3. Send a thank you note before the emotion is gone, don't wait! (Don't forget your referral sources, even if the referral did not end up a sale.)
4. Thank someone in advance for a request you might have.
5. Add a thank you to someone, for something, to your daily “to do” list. This will help make it a habit.

It all sounds so simple, but to really express your thanks and appreciation, you need to master the techniques of being genuine and of listening. When you really listen to your family, friends and your customers, then you can offer those powerful words –thank you – automatically, without delay, but sincerely and from the heart. Your relationships will grow and prosper, both in your personal life and in your business.

Strategies for successful “Thank You” thinking:

1. Make their agenda more important than your agenda, by putting yourself in their shoes. Say thank you even to the customer who has not made a decision to buy from you.
2. Engage with eye contact in your conversations; it shows you are interested and not distracted by other people or events.
3. Make it a point to learn more about your customers all the time; future communications depend on the details you learn today.
4. Contact people before you “have to” because it is about something you need. Let them know that you are thankful for your relationship all the time.
5. Be sincere and share a part of you each time you are with someone.

Remember, being thankful, gracious and happy helps make you a better person, and sharing those thanks with others is an invaluable skill that will enrich both your personal and professional relationships.