

The Power of Gratitude in the Workplace



BY TARYN BARNES

Workplace Gratitude

Life has many challenges — and the workplace waits for no one. Further, many of the challenges and obstacles that people face daily aren't always readily identifiable. So, with the complexities of workplace, what role can leaders play in creating a positive work environment? One way is by expressing gratitude in the workplace.

Gratitude by definition is the quality of being thankful— possessing readiness to show appreciation and to return thanks. By practicing mindful gratitude, you can contribute to fostering a positive environment in the workplace.

Practice sincerity

When expressing gratitude, provide an *honest* and *meaningful* compliment. When a compliment comes from a place of sincerity, it signals that you respect the person on the other end. It also allows others to lower their guard and develop trust, which is a key factor in employee satisfaction in the workplace. In fact, according to a SHRM report, “respectful treatment of all employees” was the number-one contributor to job satisfaction. And “trust between employees and senior management” was the second. These seemingly “soft” topics can have a hard return in engagement.

Be specific



This approach sets your team up for success down the line. For one, the specificity and focus will provide clarity around what behaviors and actions employees should replicate in the future. Secondly, [according to Heidi Grant Halvorson](#): “Studies show that when we are praised for having high ability, it leaves us vulnerable to self-doubt when we encounter difficulty.” Therefore, by emphasizing actions (things you have control over) over ability, you are developing confidence in a sustainable way.

Be Humble

Proficient leaders understand that teaching and learning go hand-in-hand. They are aware that there is always room for growth and that there is as much to learn from their team as there is to teach. When practicing gratitude, express how your team has helped you grow as a leader. Maybe your employees have helped you improve your listening skills or how to best give feedback. Bottom line, by [practicing humility](#) your employees can feel empowered by the help they’ve given you, creating the cycle of a positivity and gratitude in the workplace.

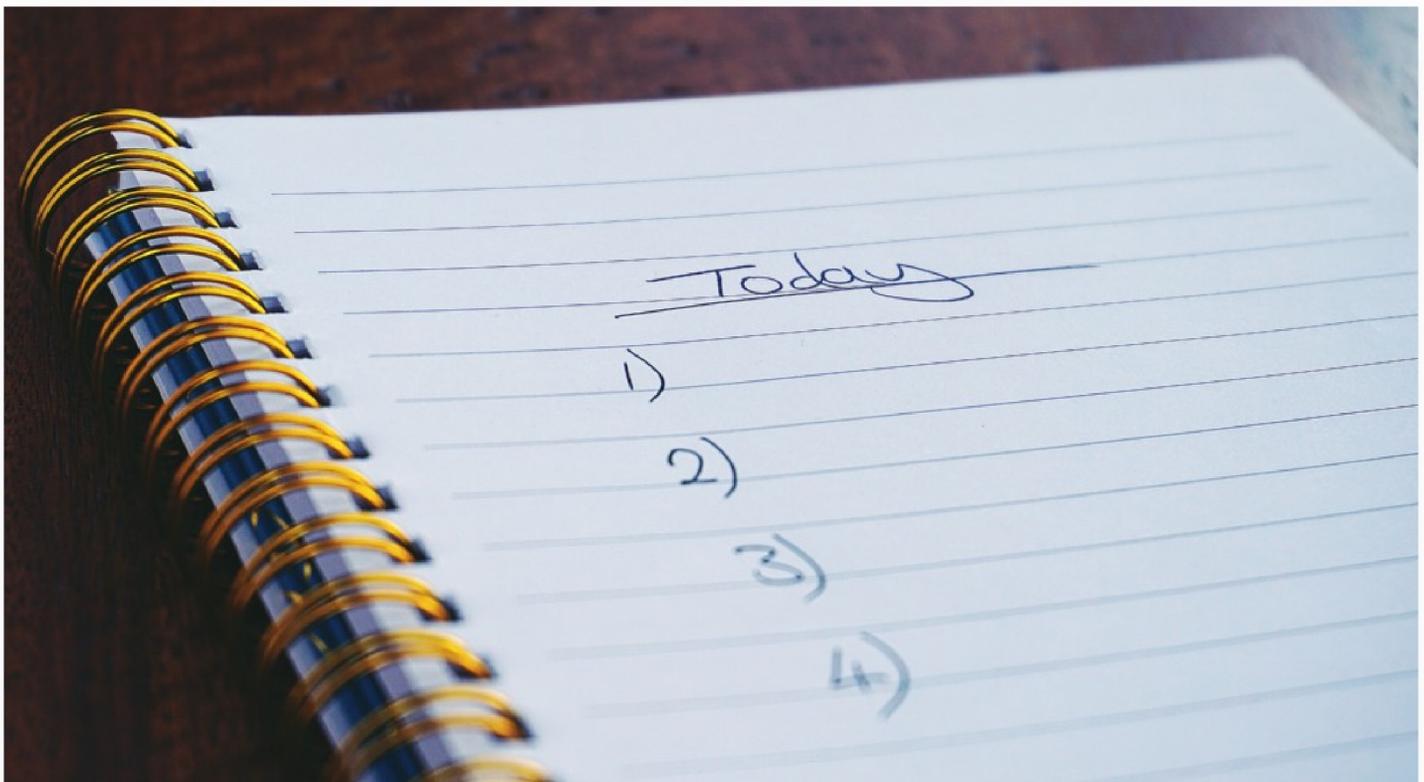
As much as we’ve come together with the aid of technology, leaders will always have a key role to play in fostering a positive work environment. Expressing gratitude in the workplace is an important place to start.

See what positive company cultures look like. [Download our culture report.](#)



Laryn Barnes writes for CultureIQ about HR Tech and the evolution of the workplace and has written on workforce trends for Forbes and Workforce Magazine.

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