November 19, 2025





Gratitude is the act of recognizing and appreciating the good things in life—whether big or small. It's not just about saying "thanks"; it's about truly acknowledging someone's effort, kindness, or positive impact on your life or work. In essence, gratitude is an emotion that builds stronger connections and fosters positive feelings among individuals.

In the workplace, gratitude goes beyond polite manners. It's a powerful tool that can transform how employees interact, collaborate, and engage with their work. When leaders and colleagues express genuine appreciation, it makes employees feel valued and recognized, boosting morale and motivation.

Why Gratitude Matters at Work

Gratitude isn't just about saying "thank you." It's about recognizing the efforts and contributions of those around you. In the workplace, showing gratitude can be a game-changer. It helps employees feel appreciated, improves workplace culture, and even boosts overall performance.

When we make a habit of practicing gratitude, it creates a ripple effect. Managers and colleagues alike begin to feel valued, motivated, and more connected. This simple act of acknowledging each other's efforts can strengthen relationships and make the workplace a better place for everyone.

Importance of Showing Gratitude in the Workplace

Gratitude in the workplace is more than just a feel-good concept—it's a catalyst for positive change. When gratitude becomes a regular part of workplace culture, it creates an environment where employees feel appreciated, valued, and motivated to give their best.

In this newsletter you can expect:

What is Gratitude?

10 ways to show Gratitude

Benefits and Success Stories

Gratitude in the Workplace

Events

Handshake

Editor's Corner



10 Ways to Show Gratitude in the Workplace

1. Build Appreciation and Praise into Team Meetings

Start every team meeting with a moment to acknowledge recent successes or efforts. This simple practice helps employees feel recognized and sets a positive tone for the discussion. Sharing praise in front of the team also reinforces a culture of appreciation.

2. Create a "No Meeting" Day

Meetings can be draining, especially when they dominate the workweek. Implementing a "no meeting" day shows employees you respect their time and trust them to manage their workloads. It's a meaningful way to express gratitude for their hard work and commitment.

3. Put a Weekly 15-Minute Time Block on Your Calendar

Schedule a recurring 15-minute block to reflect on and express gratitude. Use this time to send a quick thank-you email, acknowledge a team member's effort, or plan a small gesture of appreciation. Consistency is key to making gratitude a habit.

4. Share Team Success with Leaders

When your team achieves a big win, don't keep it to yourself—share it with company leadership. Highlighting team accomplishments helps employees feel valued and ensures their contributions are recognized at all levels.

5. Pay Attention to Milestones

Celebrating milestones like work anniversaries, project completions, or personal achievements shows employees that their efforts matter. Acknowledging these moments fosters loyalty and strengthens relationships within the team.

6. Perform Random Acts of Kindness

Simple, unexpected gestures like bringing coffee for the team, leaving a note of encouragement, or helping out with a task can create a ripple effect of gratitude. These acts help build a culture of kindness and appreciation in the workplace.

7. Create a Wall of Gratitude at Work

Set up a physical or digital wall where employees can post notes of appreciation. This interactive space encourages everyone to express gratitude and serves as a visual reminder of the positive impact colleagues have on each other.

8. Express Appreciation Verbally

Sometimes, the simplest gestures are the most effective. Take a moment to say "thank you" during daily interactions. Whether it's acknowledging someone's hard work or appreciating their help, verbal expressions of gratitude build stronger connections.

9. Write Thank-You Notes

A handwritten thank-you note adds a personal touch to your appreciation. Taking the time to write one shows genuine effort and leaves a lasting impression. Even a quick note on paper or via email can make someone's day.

10. Give Public Recognition

Celebrate achievements and contributions publicly. Whether it's during a meeting, in a company newsletter, or on social media, public recognition highlights employee efforts and motivates others to aim higher. It's a powerful way to boost morale and team spirit.

Incorporating these strategies into your daily routine can help create a workplace culture where gratitude thrives. By showing appreciation in meaningful ways, you'll build stronger relationships, enhance employee satisfaction, and contribute to a more positive work environment.



1. Improved Morale

When employees feel recognized for their efforts, their morale soars. Gratitude fosters positive emotions that help employees stay engaged and enthusiastic about their work. Whether it's a simple thank-you note or a shoutout in a team meeting, acknowledging contributions can make a big difference in how people feel about their jobs.

2. Boosted Productivity

Gratitude has a direct impact on productivity. When employees feel appreciated, they're more likely to stay focused and go the extra mile. Expressing gratitude creates a supportive atmosphere where people feel encouraged to give their best effort.

3. Increased Employee Satisfaction

Feeling valued at work is a key driver of job satisfaction. Employees who are regularly acknowledged for their contributions are more likely to stay loyal to their organization. Gratitude can also reduce stress and promote better workplace relationships, contributing to a more harmonious and fulfilling work environment.

4. Strengthened Workplace Culture

Gratitude helps build a positive workplace culture where appreciation and kindness are the norm. When managers and team members express gratitude regularly, it sets the tone for collaboration, respect, and trust.

5. Better Retention Rates

When employees feel appreciated and valued, they're less likely to leave their jobs. Gratitude helps foster loyalty, which can significantly improve employee retention and reduce the costs associated with turnover.

Incorporating gratitude into daily interactions—whether through verbal acknowledgment, handwritten notes, or team-wide recognition—can have a lasting positive impact on your workplace. It's a simple practice that pays off with happier employees, stronger relationships, and better overall results.

Campbell Soup Company: Turning Culture Around with Gratitude

Campbell Soup's former CEO, Doug Conant, is a shining example of how doing gratitude can drive change. During his tenure, Conant wrote over 30,000 handwritten thank-you notes to employees. This simple yet heartfelt act not only boosted employee morale but also helped the company achieve record-high levels of employee engagement. His approach reinforced the value of recognition and made employees feel truly appreciated.

Google: Fostering Gratitude in a High-Performance Environment

Google is known for its innovative culture, and gratitude plays a big role in their success. They've incorporated "gThanks," an internal peer-to-peer recognition platform that allows employees to publicly show appreciation for their colleagues. This tool has created a culture where gratitude flows freely, and employees feel valued by their peers.

Zappos: Building Relationships Through Appreciation

Zappos, a company famous for its customer-centric approach, also places heavy emphasis on gratitude within its team. They encourage managers and employees to acknowledge each other's efforts regularly. From sending thoughtful thank-you emails to celebrating milestones, Zappos fosters a strong sense of community and appreciation among its employees.

Work-Related Gratitude: Practical Tools and Techniques

But how do we develop a culture of appreciation and gratitude at work? Resear<mark>ch s</mark>uggests a number of evidence-based strategies that managers and employees can use to cultivate appreciation and gratitude at work.

Managers can employ the following means to show gratitude with their teams:

Clarify expectations:

Managers and employees should communicate expectations not only regarding work-related tasks but also about the nature of their working relationship.

Articulate how gratitude is shown and experienced:

Gratitude and appreciation are shown, shared, and perceived differently by different people. Gratitude can be expressed through (a) words of affirmation (i.e., telling a person they are appreciated; praise), (b) spending quality time (i.e., providing undivided attention in conversations or personal meetings), (c) acts of service (i.e., providing supper and assistance when and where needed; helping to get resources), and (d) tangible rewards (i.e., rewarding people with physical artefacts). It's important for employees and managers to know how they show appreciation and to ensure that that appreciation is shown in a way that matches the employee's needs.

Provide balanced feedback:

Managers should provide balanced feedback in performance meetings where the focus should be on "what went well" and "what can be done differently". Balanced feedback shows appreciation for what was done well, acknowledges past performance, and creates a positive climate to discuss performance improvement targets.

Authentic expressions of appreciation:

Although showing appreciation and gratitude doesn't come naturally to most of us, it's important to express appreciation authentically. Just saying, "Thank you, great job!" with no meaning behind it does more damage to morale than good. Managers should therefore attempt to express gratitude more authentically through ways and means that feel natural to them.

Show appreciation regularly and in a timely fashion:

Appreciation is also not a "one-off" deal. To establish feelings of appreciation, gratitude should be expressed regularly. Further, gratitude should be shown in a timely fashion. If something extraordinary happens, appreciation should be shown immediately and not six months down the line. This not only communicates genuine appreciation but also reinforces the positive effects of gratitude.

Create gratitude rituals:

Managers should consider incorporating gratitude rituals into team meetings or weekly routines. Simple strategies like ending staff meetings by asking everyone to share something they're grateful for, either personally or professionally, could create a more positive work climate. Managers could also consider holding circles of appreciation. Here, people could show appreciation and gratitude to each other for their contribution to our personal working lives.

For employees, the following evidence-based strategies can be considered:

Start a gratitude journal:

Keep a gratitude journal at work to document positive aspects, relationships, and things you are grateful for. Reflect on these regularly to enhance your appreciation for your work context.

Express gratitude to colleagues:

Initiate expressing gratitude to colleagues for their support, guidance, or collaboration. A simple thank-you email or heartfelt appreciation can make a significant impact.

Act as a mentor or offer support:

Offer mentorship and support to new employees or colleagues in need. Helping others cultivates a sense of gratitude and fulfillment while building positive relationships.

Practice mindfulness:

Stay present at work to extend the positive aspects of your work life. Mindfulness helps you become more aware of moments of gratitude and enhances their impact over time.

Creating a culture of appreciation and gratitude has powerful implications for individuals and organizations. Understanding its dimensions and employing evidence-based strategies to cultivate gratitude can create unity, buffer against the negative impact of high job demands on well-being and performance and can reignite motivation at work. By infusing gratitude into every aspect of work, organizations can create positive and fulfilling environments where individuals feel valued and teams can thrive.

Article Here

"Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you have not; remember that what you now have was once among the things you only hoped for."

— Epicurus, an ancient Greek philosopher who founded Epicureanism, a highly influential school of philosophy

"Cultivate the habit of being grateful for every good thing that comes to you, and to give thanks continuously. And because all things have contributed to your advancement, you should include all things in your gratitude."

 Ralph Waldo Emerson, an American essayist, lecturer, philosopher, minister, abolitionist, and poet who led the Transcendentalist movement of the mid-19th century.

"Each day brings new opportunities, allowing you to constantly live with love — be there for others — bring a little light into someone's day. Be grateful and live each day to the fullest."

Kyo Maclear, author, Birds Art Life: A Year of Observation

"Learn to remember you got great friends, don't forget that and they will always care for you no matter what. Always remember to smile and look up at what you got in life."

— Marilyn Monroe, an American actress and model.

"Gratitude opens the door to the power, the wisdom, the creativity of the universe. You open the door through gratitude."

— Deepak Chopra, a prominent Indian American author and alternative medicine advocate known for his holistic approach to well-being, integrating spirituality and science.



Exciting opportunities are just around the corner! Keep an eye out for our upcoming events designed to help you enhance both your personal and professional growth.

Whether you're looking to sharpen your skills, expand your network, or gain valuable insights from industry experts, our lineup has something for everyone. From workshops and seminars to webinars and networking mixers, you'll find a wealth of resources and connections waiting to elevate your career. Mark your calendars and prepare to invest in your future—these events are not to be missed!



All Students Welcome!

Virtual Career Fair

7 Date: Friday, November 21, 2025

Time: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Preregister by 9:30 AM on Nov. 21

Registration Here



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Director of CTE Career Services Rachel Boyd 319-208-5092 rboyd@scciowa.edu

DAILY AFFIRMATIONS FOR MEN

Societal expectations of what it means "to be a man" often cause men to keep their emotions hidden from others (often from ourselves), making it harder to take positive actions to manage our mental health effectively. But what if practicing a simple daily habit could help change that?

Daily affirmations can be a quick, yet powerful tool for improving our mental health. By reinforcing our self-worth, building resilience, and challenging negative thought patterns, affirmations can also serve as a steppingstone to other important self-care strategies.

Some men may be skeptical of affirmations, viewing them as overly simplistic or feeling uncomfortable with the idea of being kind to themselves. For those facing anxiety, depression, or low self-esteem, it can be tough to believe in positive affirmations, leading to frustration when their mind resists or even mocks their efforts. However, the reality is that affirmations can be incredibly beneficial for many men.

Why Affirmations Matter for Mental Health

Affirmations are positive statements designed to combat self-doubt and promote a healthier mindset and stronger sense of self.

For instance, a man struggling with anxiety might often think, "I can't handle this." An affirmation like, "I am capable and strong enough to face whatever challenge I'm confronted with," directly counters these thoughts. And by getting used to countering self–defeating thoughts more often and more quickly, we can gradually shift our thoughts toward reinforcing a sense of self as strong, capable, and resilient.

Benefits Backed by Research

Researchers have found that affirmations can be a powerful tool for handling stress and improving mental well-being. One method, known as values-affirmation, involves identifying what matters most to you—like family, independence, or personal beliefs—and reflecting on why those values are meaningful.

Studies show that guys who practice this kind of self-affirmation are better equipped to deal with stress, perform better at school/work, stick to healthier habits, and feel a stronger sense of belonging, all while cutting down on negative thinking.

It's a simple way to remind ourselves of our strengths and stay steady during life's challenges.



How to Use Daily Affirmations: 4 Steps to a Positive Mindset

1. Identify Common Negative Thought Patterns

To start, pinpoint recurring negative thoughts or self-doubts. Are you feeling inadequate at work? Struggling with self-image? By identifying these pain points, you can craft targeted affirmations.

• For example: Replace, "I'll never be successful" with "Every day, I am taking steps to move toward my goals, and even the smallest steps count."

2. Make Affirmations Personal and Specific

Generic statements like "I am happy" probably won't resonate deeply. To construct impactful affirmations, we need to make them align with our values and goals. Research suggests that the brain responds better to affirmations grounded in reality and possibility.

• For example: Instead of saying, "I'm confident", try "I value clear and honest communication. I'm learning to speak confidently at work by preparing more thoroughly."

3. Practice Consistency

Repetition is key. Dedicate time each day to affirmations, whether in the morning, during a workout, while out for a walk, or before bed. Some guys find it helpful to integrate affirmations into their existing routines, like saying them aloud while shaving or writing them in a journal.

• Pro Tip: Set reminders on your phone or post sticky notes with affirmations in highly visible spaces.

4. Visualize Positive Outcomes

Saying affirmations without conviction won't yield results. Visualize the positive outcome as you repeat your affirmations. This emotional connection strengthens neural pathways, making the statements more believable (and helpful) over time.

• For example: When saying, "I deserve respect and kindness", picture a scenario where someone acknowledges your contributions and you respond confidently.

Common Mistakes to Avoid When Practicing Affirmations

- 1. **Using Unrealistic Statements**: Affirmations like "I am the most successful person in the world" can feel too detached from reality, making them harder to believe. Instead, focus on achievable goals, like "I am steadily working toward my goals and aspirations."
- 2. Lack of Emotional Connection: Affirmations are most effective when you truly believe in them. If a statement feels forced, tweak it to better reflect your personal journey or values.
- 3. **Inconsistency**: Saying affirmations sporadically won't yield results. Building a daily habit ensures your brain has regular reinforcement of positive patterns. Try habit stacking, like doing an affirmation each time you pause to put on your shoes or while washing your hands.
- 4. **Ignoring Actionable Steps:** Affirmations work best when paired with actions. For example, combine "I am improving my physical fitness" with a commitment to a workout routine and healthy eating.

NEXT STEPS

Daily affirmations for men aren't just about saying nice things to yourself; they're a proven strategy for promoting good mental health, building confidence, and establishing a sense of resilience. By practicing affirmations consistently and coupling them with actionable steps, you can create a more positive mindset and take control of your mental well-being.

Remember, it's okay to start small. Choose one or two affirmations that resonate with you and incorporate them into your daily routine. Over time, these small steps can lead to big changes in how you see yourself and the world around you. So why not start today? Your mental health is worth the effort, and you deserve to feel strong, capable, and happy.





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Our article on common negative thought patterns and our Cognitive Restructuring Course can help you recognize recurring self-beliefs that might be holding you back.

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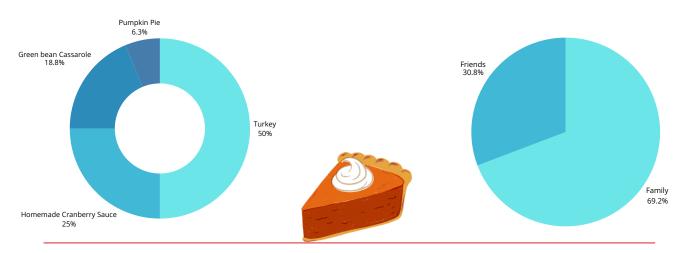
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Survey Results

Turkey came out as the top favorite food while an overwhelming three fourths said that will be celebrating the holiday with close family. Thank you to everyone who participated!



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