

It's That Time of Year (Already?)

By Susan Schilke; November 1, 2016



It's November, and we set aside time this month every year to practice gratitude – giving thanks. We've shared a lot about this topic over the last few years as we've learned more about the impact of gratitude on our positivity and productivity. So here are some reminders for your personal thankfulness – and for remembering to recognize your team.

1. **Keep a gratitude log or journal.** The simplest exercise is to write three things you're thankful for every day for 21 days – with no repeats. This programs your brain to scan each day for things you appreciate – beyond the initial obvious responses like your spouse, your kids, etc.

“Time and again, studies have shown that performing simple gratitude exercises, like keeping a gratitude diary or writing letters of thanks, can bring a range of benefits, such as feelings of increased well-being and reduced depression, that often linger well after the exercises are finished. This result suggests that the more practice you give your brain at feeling and expressing gratitude, the more it adapts to this mind-set — you could even think of your brain as having a sort of gratitude “muscle” that can be exercised and strengthened (not so different from various other qualities that can be cultivated through practice, of course). If this is right, the more of an effort you make to feel gratitude one day, the more the feeling will come to you spontaneously in the future.”

By Christian Jarrett; [How Expressing Gratitude Might Change Your Brain](#)

2. **Maintain your perspective on your challenges.** We all have individual struggles and some are quite challenging. And we all live in a time and place with freedom and abundance – much more so than in some parts of this world today or compared to our predecessors in this country. And since most of you enjoy a career with an exceptional TeamStrength member company, I know you love your jobs!

Like Minna Lee reminds us in [4 Ways to Practice Gratitude Right Now](#), everyone embraces struggle and pain differently. We should respect the challenges other people around the world are living and use them to keep our own seemingly giant struggles in perspective.

“There are people fighting to survive around the world, families living in terror zones and fearing for their lives every day. There are families unimaginably hurting over sickness and loss. Your spilling coffee all over your expensive shirt, that guy rear-ending you, and your boss yelling at you doesn't feel quite as bad now, does it?”

3. **Remember to thank your employees and fellow team members.** This helps keep engagement and energy high in every organization.

Thanksgiving is a perfect time to express your genuine appreciation to your co-workers – after all, you couldn't do your job without them!

As Dr. Woody Woodward says in [What Employees Want Besides Money](#), “The data around recognition and business performance has proliferated over the last 10 years to the point it can no longer be ignored. It's undeniable when you look at companies like Apple, Google and Facebook that a culture of listening and recognition has become a major differentiator in driving break out results.”

The article goes on to suggest that you ingrain real-time recognition into the culture, and not just top down recognition, but incorporating a peer-to-peer model, maybe utilizing digital technology.

“Both in the onboarding process and as part of an ongoing program you want to make sure to consistently teach your people how to spot recognition moments, use localized and meaningful rewards, and connect recognition to the brand and culture. The idea is to teach your people to recognize good performance and authentically demonstrate appreciation for how that performance makes a positive impact in a way that sustains it over the long haul.”

Thanksgiving comes every year. Whether we're excited to have all our family back home or stressed about holiday responsibilities and potential drama, Thanksgiving is a great reminder that thankfulness needs to have a place in work, not just personal life. So, thank you for stopping by and pass it along.