

# Keep gratitude at the forefront

The fall holidays are often a special time for gathering with loved ones, focusing on our blessings and expressing appreciation for all of the people and opportunities in our lives. But the true spirit of gratitude is anchored by more than cozy celebrations and superficial generalizations. It's an intentional way of living that persists 365 days a year.

Here are several ways that we can all model gratitude as a year-round state of mind; lead happier, healthier lives; and authentically motivate our team at home as well as the office.



## **Understand how it affects personal and professional development.**

In the workplace, gratitude is key to job satisfaction, employee productivity and retention. One Glassdoor survey found that 81 percent of employees said they're motivated to work harder when they feel appreciated. A study by Dr. David DeSteno, professor of psychology at Northeastern University, also found that it "increases perseverance on difficult tasks by over 30 percent." Gratitude plays a critical role at home too, including decreasing problem behavior in children, strengthening romantic relationships, and inspiring greater self-control and patience.

## **Reward and incentive your team members.**

Don't underestimate their need to be recognized and valued (e.g., praise their work, go out to eat, check how their family is doing, ask about their interests, offer training or more challenging work opportunities, involve them in important conversations and decisions). As stated by Dr. Richard Weissbourd, a psychologist and lecturer at Harvard, "In a society that has become so splintered and self-focused, gratitude is a common bond and offers one of the best ways for us to connect with one another."

## **Load up on health benefits.**

Leading researchers on this subject emphasize that living with gratitude inspires a positive outlook; improves sleep and mood; encourages a better diet and exercise; reduces stress, anxiety and depression; and boosts the immune system. Robert Emmons, a UC Davis psychology professor, adds, "Gratitude is good medicine ... heals, energizes, and transforms lives in a myriad of ways."

### **Find the good in bad situations.**

Even when something negative happens, or someone does something to hurt you, shift your perspective. Life is our greatest teacher; every experience yields a valuable lesson. Observe how you feel and allow that self-awareness to guide you more positively and create a successful outcome.

### **Embrace an abundance mindset.**

Be proactive in contacting friends, take a walk and appreciating your surroundings, pray, or keep a gratitude journal. These are a few more wonderful practices that can inspire us to live each day with a grateful heart.

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