



Health Matters Well-Being Toolkit: Gratitude in the Workplace

Improve individual and team well-being with gratitude.

GRATITUDE

Gratitude is one of the most powerful things you can do to lower stress and improve outlook. Gratitude makes it possible to have meaningful connections and it can significantly increase well-being and life satisfaction. It is also beneficial for physical health and has been linked to lower cortisol (stress hormone) levels, reduced depression, decreased blood pressure, and even better sleep¹.

Creating a culture of gratitude in the workplace is an effective way to improve employee morale, engagement, and overall well-being!

"Setting aside time on a daily basis to recall moments of gratitude associated with ordinary events, your personal attributes, or valued people in your life gives you the potential to interweave a sustainable life theme of gratefulness."

-Robert Emmons

BE INTENTIONAL AND SPECIFIC

Gratitude can be shared, or it can be practiced internally. The more you do it, the easier it gets, and the more natural it becomes for your brain to seek optimism. Be intentional about noticing what is going well and lean into the feelings of gratitude. A key thing to remember when expressing gratitude is to be specific. The more specific, the more meaningful it is to you and to the person receiving it.

¹ https://health.ucdavis.edu/medicalcenter/features/2015-2016/11/20151125_gratitude.html

GRATITUDE STRATEGIES

Try incorporating some of these simple gratitude strategies into your work week. Gratitude has a ripple effect, so it is likely that your co-workers will start expressing their attitudes of gratitude as well.

- Start or end each day by sending one or two emails, instant messages, or texts to coworkers, friends, and family that you feel grateful for.
- Take a gratitude walk. As you walk, think through the things you are grateful for at that moment, starting with the basics. For example, “I am grateful for the trees, for the five minutes to take this walk, for the fresh air.” Then move deeper into your gratitude with more specific concepts. Your mind will wander and that is okay. Simply bring it back to your gratitude as often as you need to.
- Play the game ‘High, Low, Cheer!’ with your co-workers at your staff meetings. Each person shares something that has gone really well recently, something that has not gone so well (which gives the opportunity to have connection over hardships and opens the door for support), and something or someone they are grateful for.
- Handwrite at least one thank you note each week. There is something so special about a handwritten thank you note, and you will find that you and the recipient will both appreciate this so much.
- Practice gratitude meditation. There are free apps available that will take you through gratitude meditations, like [Calm](#) or [Headspace](#). You can search for gratitude-specific apps in the app store of your choice.

RESOURCES

- https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/five_ways_to_cultivate_gratitude_at_work
- [WELCOA COVID-19 Employee Education Packet](#)