



Magical words

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We are all aware of the importance of words. They can be healing or inspiring, humorous or hurtful. They can also be motivating and magical.

Two of the most powerful words in the English language are “thank you.” Most of us were taught that phrase when we were toddlers learning to verbally express our thoughts and

feelings. It was part of our parents programming us to treat people with respect. Unfortunately, for many people, the basic rules of politeness have gotten lost through the years. It’s time to bring those rules back—and to put them into play.

The pandemic seems to have brought out the worst in many people

who were—and, in many cases, still are—dealing with fear of the unknown. When people are fearful, they often become so obsessed with what they are feeling personally that they neglect to recognize the feelings and needs of others. One of those needs is feeling valued, and nothing conveys value as much as being thanked. It’s almost as inherent as our need for food and water.

There is magic in the words “thank you.” That magic isn’t automatic, however. To fully unleash the power of “thank you,” you must be specific, sincere, and speedy.

handshake, and eye contact, it loses much of its power. People can tell whether a “thank you” is sincere or not. If they think your “thank you” is phony or not heartfelt, it’s worthless.

A “thank you” shows people you value them and what they have done to help you. That might be a waitress who was attentive to your needs, a grocery store employee who helped you find the olives you wanted for a charcuterie tray, or a parking lot attendant who greeted you with a smile and wished you a good day. How often do you take for granted how others treat you and what they do for you?

It’s also important to recognize that the more power you hold, the more important it is to thank people. When a company’s CEO or executive thanks an employee for a job well done, it has a huge impact because it comes from someone in a position of power. When people know that others acknowledge and appreciate their work, it energizes them to do more, to do better.

If you’re a business owner or executive, make a resolution to thank your employees. When you do, you show them that you value them. When they feel valued, they will work harder and pass on that message of value to your customers.

Saying, “Thank you” to employees, customers, coworkers, and anyone else for doing a great job costs nothing, but the benefits of doing so—professionally and personally—are immeasurable. Make these two magical words —“thank you”— part of your everyday life. 

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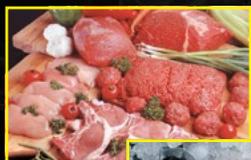
Let’s say you’re leading a team of coworkers on a project. Once it’s completed, you should thank those team members immediately and be specific about what you’re thanking them for. For example, “I thank each of you for your contributions to this project. We would not have been able to complete it without you and what you bring to the table.” Then acknowledge what each team member contributed and how that contribution resulted in a successful outcome.

Don’t wait weeks or months to thank someone. The longer you wait, the less power those words have. To realize the full impact of “thank you,” you must deliver it within hours—days, at the very longest.

You also must be sincere when you thank someone. If you simply throw out the phrase without a smile, a

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