

“THANK YOU” TWO MAGICAL WORDS

We're all aware of the importance of words – they can be healing, 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 it as toddlers first learning to verbalize our thoughts and feelings. It was part of our parents’ programming to treat people with respect. Yet, for many people the basic rules of politeness have unfortunately been lost. It’s time to bring those rules back and 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 their fear of the unknown. When people are scared, they often become so obsessed with what they’re feeling that they’re unable to recognize the feelings of others. One of those needs is to feel valued – it’s almost as powerful as our need for food and water. And nothing carries value as much as being thanked.

There’s magic in those simple words, “Thank you.” However, the magic doesn’t happen automatically. To unleash the full power of “Thank you,” you have to be specific, sincere and speedy.

Let’s say you’re leading a team of coworkers on a project. Once it’s completed, you should thank them 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 wouldn’t have been able to complete it without you and what you bring to the table.” Then acknowledge what each team member contributed and how their contribution helped bring about a successful outcome.

Don’t wait to thank someone. The longer you wait, the less power your words will have. To realize the full impact of “Thank you,” you must deliver it within hours (at the very most, days).

You must also be sincere. Simply throwing out the words without a smile, a handshake or eye contact will lose most, if not all, of their

power. People can tell when a “Thank you” is sincere. If they feel that your “Thank you” is phony or isn’t heartfelt, it’s worthless.

A “Thank you” shows people that you value them, and what they’ve done to help. It might be a waitress who was especially attentive to your needs, a grocery employee who helped you find the olives you wanted for a charcuterie tray, or a parking 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’re doing 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 manager 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 feel that others are acknowledging and appreciating their work, it energizes them to do more, and do better.

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

Saying, “Thank you” to employees, customers, coworkers and anyone else for doing a great job costs you nothing, yet the professional and personal benefits are enormous. Make those two magic words – “Thank you” – part of your everyday life. **RO**

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