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How Saying

"Thank You"

Can Transform Workplace Culture



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Thank You

In today's dynamic business landscape, creating a strong workplace culture involves recognizing both individual contributions and the value of hard work. Balancing these aspects can lead to a healthy and productive environment, which is essential for an organization's success. A simple yet meaningful "thank you" is critical in fostering a pleasant work culture. This article therefore examines how expressing gratitude can transform workplace culture. Yusof et al. (2022) stated that courtesy and manners are very important in language usage. One of the language acts commonly used by society is saying "thank you". Gratitude is often expressed to someone who has provided assistance or has done some kindness to us. However, most people today find it difficult to express gratitude in their daily lives as the utterance is considered unimportant, especially in the organizational context.

In any organization, a culture of appreciation is crucial as it makes individuals more enthusiastic and motivated to work. Putra and Kurdi (2024) stated that a culture that prioritizes appreciation cultivates a strong sense of belonging among employees, leading to heightened dedication to accomplish organizational objectives. When individuals feel recognized and valued for their contributions, they are naturally inclined to invest more effort into their work. This may foster a dynamic environment where productivity and innovation flourish. Prioritizing gratitude and

recognition through consistently saying "thank you" in one's daily interaction can have a profound impact toward the workplace culture. This effort can enable an organization to unleash the full potential of their empowered employees to succeed, thereby enhancing organizational excellence.

Besides that, the expression of gratitude that goes beyond mere politeness within an organization can foster camaraderie among team members, reinforcing the bonds established through effective communication practices. As noted by Ilavarasi (2024), effective communication is a cornerstone for ensuring clarity and alignment within the organization, which builds upon the framework of appreciation. Clear communication channels facilitate the smooth flow of information, goals, and expectations, thereby minimizing misunderstandings and promoting collaboration. Transparent communication nurtures trust among team members and between employees and the management. It may foster a supportive atmosphere where ideas can freely circulate, and feedback can be openly shared. When colleagues regularly express appreciation for each other's efforts, it cultivates a supportive environment in the generation of ideas and solutions, which then enriches the diverse insights and perspectives within the organization.



implementing formalized recognition programs to supplement the informal expressions of gratitude. Chantal et al. (2022) supported the idea that leaders should acknowledge their employees' efforts in encouraging the adoption of positive behaviors that influence performance. While spontaneous "thank you" gestures are valuable, structured recognition programs can provide a systematic approach to acknowledging employee contributions. These programs allow both leaders and colleagues to publicly commend outstanding performance. At the same time, cultivating a culture that encourages positive behavior while encouraging fairness and transparency is critical for retaining top talent in today's competitive employment market. It assists organizations in dealing with the problem of keeping competent staff and minimizing turnover rates. By establishing clear criteria for recognition, these programs can align employees' efforts with organizational objectives.

Additionally, integrating gratitude and recognition initiatives into an organization's fundamental principles and leadership approaches is essential. Leaders wield significant influence in shaping workplace dynamics and emphasizing the significance of appreciation. By actively exemplifying gratitude and recognition in their interactions, leaders can cultivate an environment where appreciation holds profound importance. This implies active-constructive listening, facilitating meaningful recognition, as well as encouraging employees to recognize each other (Chapman & White, 2019). Recognition should be part of the organizational culture, not something that authority. Recognition practices impact organizational performance by enhancing employee engagement and loyalty. Expressing gratitude results in increased mental well-being, while reducing stress and enhancing happiness and fulfillment (Deichert et al., 2021). This makes employees feel



The organizational landscape today illustrates an increased focus on individualistic character development and materialism, which has led employees to deliberately undervalue the simple act of saying "thank you" (Mstar, 2020). The prevalence of individualistic values could cultivate an atmosphere of rivalry, where acknowledging and appreciating others can be seen as indicators of weakness rather than resilience. Neglecting to tackle this concern may lead to diminished morale and strained relationships within the organization. Therefore, organizations must invest in initiatives that encourage open communication and foster a sense of belonging within the workplace. This is supported by Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Ahmad Zahari, Consultant Psychiatrist at the University of Malaya Medical Centre (UMMC), who stated in Bemama that the act of saying "thank you" can increase the desire to give and extend something repeatedly which is even better than before. Thus, cultivating a culture of gratitude can counteract the negative effects of individualism by promoting teamwork and mutual respect among employees.

To address the challenge of transforming workplace culture through the simple act of saying "thank you", employees need to reassess their priorities within the organization by promoting a culture of gratitude and recognition. Leaders can consider

appreciated and motivated to continue performing, and creates space for greater productivity and a supportive environment. Essentially, the integration of gratitude and recognition into core values cultivates an environment where appreciation can flourish, benefiting both individuals and the organization holistically.

In summary, simply saying "thank you" has great potential to reshape workplace dynamics and drive organizational success. By promoting gratitude and making recognition visible, organizations can cultivate an environment where employees feel valued, motivated, and empowered to contribute. By utilizing informal expressions of thanks, formal recognition programs, and strong leadership commitment, a culture of gratitude that permeates the workplace can be established. This strategy makes employees feel valued and respected for their everyday efforts. Maya Angelou's comments beautifully, "People will forget what you say, what you do, but they will never forget how you made them feel." Indeed, gratitude's transformational effect in molding organizational culture and employee pleasure cannot be underestimated. It has the potential to reshape organizational culture and drive employee engagement. This can ultimately lead the organization to achieve success, which highlights the importance for researchers, leaders, and practitioners in every organization to embrace the impact of gratitude in their workplace. This will allow employees and organizations to pave the way for a brighter future.

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