

Thanksgiving All Year Long

by David B. Burns

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The Holiday season can be a challenging time in the workplace. It's tough to stay motivated day after day. We have our regular work, plus the added tasks generated by the season itself. Add in the fewer hours available because of parties and days when the business is closed, and it's no wonder that people often sigh, "I can't wait until the holidays are over."

So it's good that the Holidays start with Thanksgiving. Throughout this time we are constantly reminded to be thankful for all of the blessings we have, and being thankful is one of the most powerful motivators there is – motivation we need to help us through the "difficult" days. As powerful as these reminders are though, they can contain two downsides.

The first is that when the Holiday season passes and the reminders disappear, we forget to be thankful. We start giving more of our focus to what we don't have and less to what we have. Or worse, we start feeling entitled and become offended when we see others who we think have "more" than we have. We sit and sulk instead of being productive.

The second is that we sometimes hear people talk about being thankful, and we snort, "Huh, what do I have to be thankful for? Business is down, my car needs repairs, and I haven't bought a new suit in months." In this case, we sit and gripe instead of working.

To recover the motivation for productive work, simply cultivate the habit of living and working thankfully. This habit will help you find energy and enthusiasm for both the short- and long-term. I know it works, because I am blessed to witness it time after time.

A concluding activity in some of my seminars is the "Lightning Round." Participants pair up and for 60 seconds, in rapid-fire fashion, tell each other what they are thankful for. Whether their lists of items are personal or professional doesn't matter. The result is that no matter what the mood going in, by the end of the Lightning Round, everyone is energized, smiling, and ready to take on the world. That is the power of thankfulness.

Don't wait for the Lightning Round to harness that power for yourself. Get in the habit of being thankful this Holiday season, and keep it going all year long.

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David travels the country working as a business trainer, speaker, and consultant to organizations ranging in size from micro-businesses to Fortune 500 firms. He brings diverse training and knowledge to every presentation, including a degree in Education, advanced degrees in multiple martial arts, and the practical hands-on experience of running his own businesses since 1980. With his trademark optimism and sense of humor, he shares his experience in terms everyone can relate to, put into practice, and benefit from immediately.

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