

# Tips, Insights & Tactics

## Grow Your Leadership Skills through Appreciation

Merriam-Webster defines appreciation as “an ability to understand the worth, quality or importance of something.” When that “something” is a “someone”, showing appreciation not only exemplifies the understanding of worth but also cultivates it. The ability to do this is one hallmark of good leadership.



### Lead by Example

Following are some ways you can both show appreciation to others and develop those qualities and behaviors worthy of appreciation in them:

#### Offer Constructive Feedback

Whether conducting an employee’s performance review or proofreading your teammate’s presentation file, make sure that you provide constructive feedback. It’s ok—and even important—to offer critiques so long as they intend to educate or facilitate positive improvements and results. Be sure also to include some positive comments along with any criticisms.

#### Accept Feedback Gracefully

Nobody is perfect, least of all you. Be willing to not only accept criticism or corrections but to put them to work for you. Make appropriate changes based upon the good feedback you receive—and even thank the person who gave it to you.

#### Ask for Input

Along with accepting feedback, you should actively solicit it. Nobody likes a know-it-all and this is a great way to avoid becoming one. At work, ask your boss, your colleagues and even your employees for their ideas. At home, ask your spouse or kids as well. It’s a great way not only to expand your mind but to build someone else up at the same time.

#### Embrace Change

From reorganizations to new processes, systems or even office equipment, change at work is rarely welcome. Instead of jumping on the complaint bandwagon, adopt a “we will get there” team approach and attitude for others to follow.

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#### Look for the Good

Do you see the glass as half full or half empty? Your attitude shapes everything you see, say and do. When you consciously choose to look for the good, you will find it—and others will notice.

#### Walk the Talk

An individual's and a team's goals must align with those of the overall organization. A clearly defined recognition program can be one way of communicating appreciation to employees and of encouraging them to promote such actions.

#### Be Sincere

When giving credit to someone or thanking them for something, sincerity is a must. Have something meaningful to be appreciative of and mean what you say. Don't, for example, thank your employee just for showing up to work. Lack of sincerity in showing gratitude can be worse than not showing it at all.

#### Harness Enthusiasm

An employee's or co-worker's excitement can be an outstanding team asset. Show your appreciation to those that demonstrate this enthusiasm by developing their skills and expanding the business impact of their work.

#### Write it Down

In our digital age, the power of a handwritten note stands alone. It takes but a few moments to pen a thank you note to a colleague, customer, neighbor or friend yet the effects are everlasting. [Download our free cards](#) that you can print and use at work and at home.

#### Leadership through Thankfulness

The best leaders build and feed relationships in a multitude of ways. By showing appreciation and a positive attitude, you can grow your leadership skills. You will also cultivate the best in other people which only further serves to strengthen you as a leader.

Without succumbing to the “everyone's a winner all the time” fad, make it a point to see good in action and to call it out. Ask for help to do better yourself. Enter into strategic partnerships that create a greater good. Find these opportunities in every aspect of your life and watch your outlook improve.

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