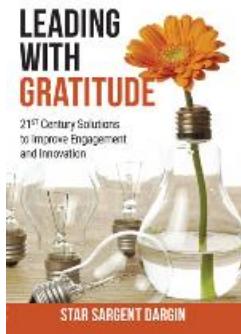


Leading with Gratitude: 21st Century Solutions to Boost Innovation and Engagement

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Gratitude Challenge: Hidden Talent Underappreciated

Engagement – Sue's Story

Sue is a part-time medical lab worker. Throughout Sue's career as a chemist, researcher, and medical technologist, she always received excellent reviews. She had been with a lab for two years and never made a mistake. She always stayed late every time they asked because of understaffing. She also helped to fix instruments when needed because she had gained that experience. She also had never missed a day of work. It is a well-renowned lab with a reputation for excellence. Her written reviews were always excellent, until one week, her supervisor rated one category as satisfactory, resulting in no raise, and there was no explanation.

The raise itself was not even the issue; it was so tiny. She had been giving them her best, and that satisfactory rating changed her attitude about the job and company. She no longer stayed to help them finish and took her time completing tasks. For the first time in two years, she called in sick. Her work was still high quality, but she was no longer engaged. She says that if someone had noticed her just once and had told her she was doing a good job, her attitude would have changed. It was so frustrating to her and everyone who heard her story that such a little thing would have made all the difference. One authentic appreciative notice once a year would have improved productivity at least threefold, she believes.

The sad side of the story, and telling it brought tears to her eyes, is that without asking her, her boss would never know her capacity for work. This story is an extreme example of an

environment that was not showing gratitude. The challenge as a leader is knowing if employees are being shown appreciation and whether you have created an environment, processes, and relationships that support employees speaking up and asking for what they need, even if what they need is appreciation.

Coaching Others Using the GLAD Tool

Innovation: Scott's Story

Scott, a brilliant and talented technical director at a large international company, is starting to emerge as an up-and-coming leader. He is a content expert. His struggle is with politics and complex cultural issues. One of his biggest challenges is working with an individual whose personality differs from his. This person is, at a higher organizational level, the CIO. He believes the person has no value and is harming Scott's career by belittling his initiatives. I started using the GLAD Tool by asking him what he was grateful for about this CIO. His response was quick and to the point, and he reiterated several times that nothing has no value not lovely, and he went on for a while creating a solid case for what the CIO was doing and saying to prove the person's worthlessness. He reiterated several times that he was positive there was nothing good. Then we shifted to the A, analyzing. We reviewed a handful of their typical and specific scenarios and interactions. He made a summarizing point each time like the CIO wanted me to leave the company. I offered possible alternative stories or reasons for the CIO, saying: Is the response out of fear—fear you will take the CIO's job? Perhaps the CIO sees your talent is wasted here. By allowing him to be heard and analyze and dissect each point he made and offering alternative conclusions, he could expand his viewpoint a little bit.

We also clarified his facts and beliefs to identify those he might have made up. About 30 minutes later, he stopped, had an aha moment, and said positive things. The CIO is very persistent and keeps at something until it is done. Other qualities are that the CIO is very giving, especially a lot to the community, does not run from conflict and is a great dresser. We both started cracking up laughing. He could not see anything good when he thought of the CIO negatively. He had wanted to leave the company from a hostile place, with no idea what to do next or how to resolve their differences. He was stuck; he avoided and ignored the CIO as much as possible. When he saw some positive characteristics, many innovative possibilities surfaced for improving this significant relationship. The L lesson for him was to check his unverified

conclusions and to be more open to a personality type different than himself. The D involved finding a joint project for them to work on, being more vulnerable and honest, and not jumping to judgments. Until we walked through the GLAD Tool, he was stuck and unable to move forward. We concluded by saying that he was grateful for the CIO teaching him and allowing him to see how he had made negative judgments, that the relationship was not so damaged, and that there was hope to strengthen it. From a positive place using the GLAD Tool, he is now learning and growing in relationship building and handling politics.

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