

Moments that Matter

Elevating the Employee Experience

Greater Madison Area SHRM Professional Development Summit

January 20, 2026





8 6 4 0 0
S E C O N D S

Bringing People into Focus





-  Talent Discovery
-  Strategic Planning
-  Teamwork
-  Communication
-  Performance Management
-  Leadership Development
-  Transition & Change
-  Belonging

everyone's unique · everyone believes · everyone connects
everyone believes · everyone connects · everyone contributes ·
everyone connects · everyone contributes · everyone rises · everyone
contributes · everyone rises · everyone learns · everyone thrives
everyone learns · everyone thrives · everyone matters · everyone
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everyone believes

Organizational & Personal Values

core
values

What are GREAT core values?



“Gutsy”

The real, authentic
you



Unique

Unlike anyone else



Active

Something you can
do

The Value of Values



Sets an expectation
for how you interact
with (everyone)



Differentiates you
and connects you
with (anyone) who
shares your values



Guides your
decision making
and tells what you
will... and won't do

LEAD WITH
LOVE
GROW WITH US
BETTER
TOGETHER
DO WHAT IT TAKES
BE PRESENT

Penfield Children's Center, Milwaukee, WI



Miron Construction, Neenah, WI



The City of Sun Prairie, WI

personal values

CHAMPION PEOPLE



BE AUTHENTIC



ELEVATE



BREATHE



WONDER

If you know my core values, you know...

1. What matters most to me
2. What you can expect from me
3. What my strongest relationships are built on
4. The basis for the decisions I make



Step 1

Answer:

1. What is important to you?
2. What makes you unique?

Tips:

- If you get stuck, try asking yourself the opposite.
- Try to get 20-25 at least

Step 2

Make an “affinity map”

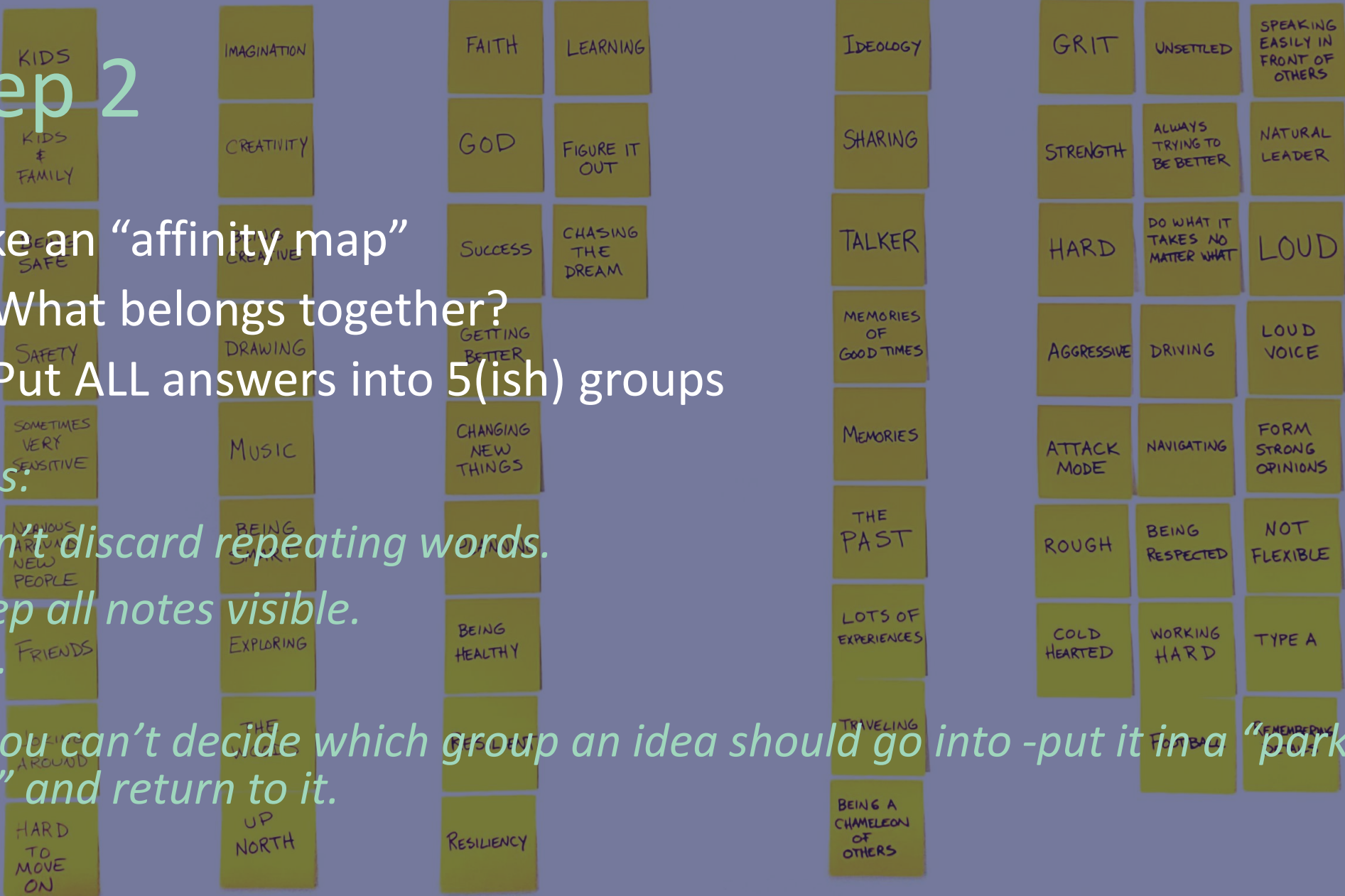
1. What belongs together?
2. Put ALL answers into 5(ish) groups

Rules:

- Don't discard repeating words.
- Keep all notes visible.

Tips:

- If you can't decide which group an idea should go into -put it in a “parking lot” and return to it.



Something about...

Something about...

KIDS
KIDS & FAMILY
BEING SAFE
SAFETY
SOMETIMES VERY SENSITIVE
NERVOUS AROUND NEW PEOPLE
FRIENDS
JOKING AROUND
HARD TO MOVE ON

IMAGINATION
CREATIVITY
BEING CREATIVE
DRAWING
MUSIC
BEING SMART
EXPLORING
THE WOODS
UP NORTH

FAITH
GOD
SUCCESS
GETTING BETTER
CHANGING NEW THINGS
PLANNING
BEING HEALTHY
RESILIENT
RESILIENCY
LEARNING
FIGURE IT OUT
CHASING THE DREAM

IDEOLOGY
SHARING
TALKER
MEMORIES OF GOOD TIMES
MEMORIES
THE PAST
LOTS OF EXPERIENCES
TRAVELING
BEING A CHAMELEON OF OTHERS

GRIT
STRENGTH
HARD
AGGRESSIVE
ATTACK MODE
ROUGH
COLD HEARTED
UNSETTLED
ALWAYS TRYING TO BE BETTER
DO WHAT IT TAKES NO MATTER WHAT
DRIVING
NAVIGATING
BEING RESPECTED
WORKING HARD
FOOTBALL
SPEAKING EASILY IN FRONT OF OTHERS
NATURAL LEADER
LOUD
LOUD VOICE
FORM STRONG OPINIONS
NOT FLEXIBLE
TYPE A
REMEMBERING DETAILS

Something about...

Something about...

Something about...

Step 3

Define the main idea or thought behind each affinity group:

1. Boil each list down to the most important idea
2. Start with “Something about”
3. Write 1-2 sentences describing the main idea

Tips:

- *Ask yourself: Why did you put these things together? What does this list represent?*

Step 4

Author core values phrases:

1. Choose words or a phrase that summarize each list
2. Make it something you can do. Use an actionable phrase in the present tense.

Tips

- Chose words you love – that mean something to you

Shawn's Core Values

Friends & Family Are Foundational, Being There, Help, Empathy, Laughter, LGBTQ+, Love, Bonds

Stay Close

Hiking, Travel, Water, Order & Organization, Cats

Nourish In Nature

Arts, Writing, Reading, Create , Collections

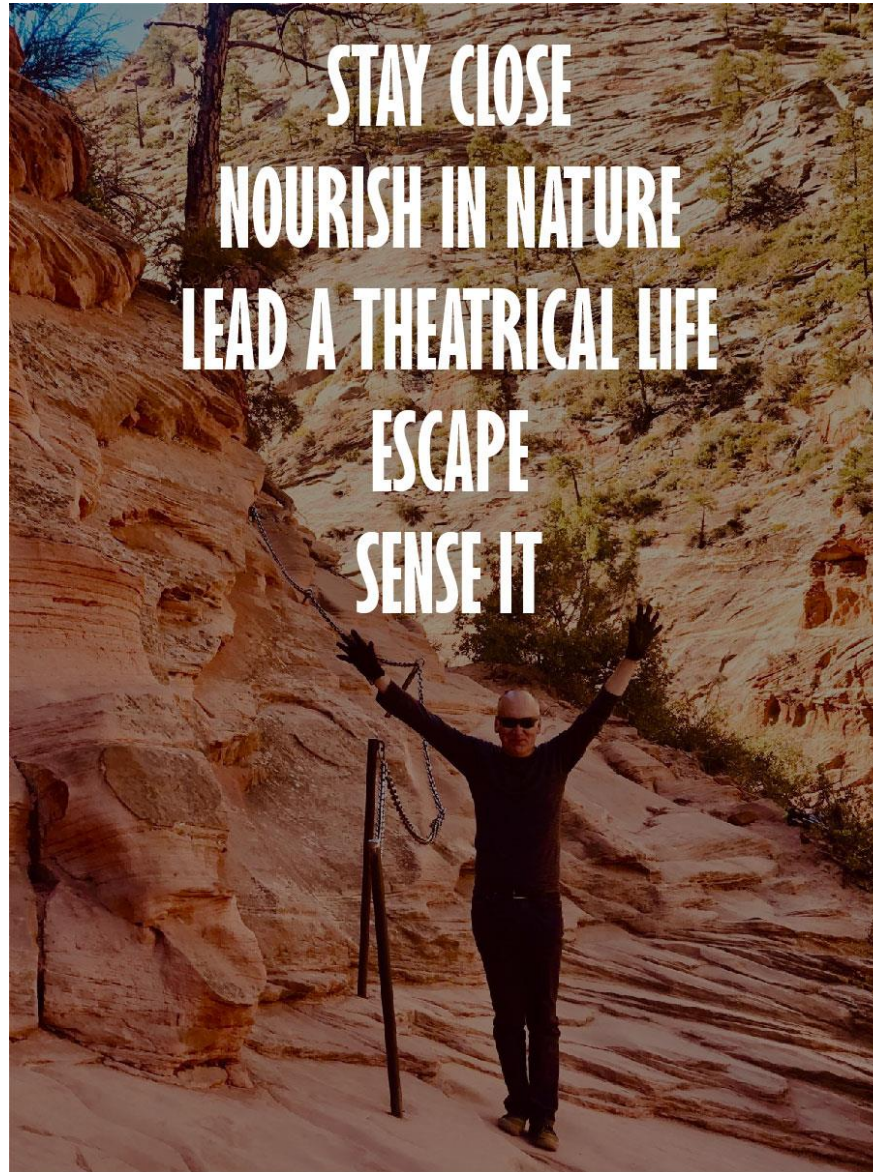
Lead A Theatrical Life

Calm, Peace, Do Nothing Time, Wine \ Martinis, Fearless

Escape

Believe / Belief, Feelings, 5 Senses – Texture, The History of an Object – Antiques, A-ha, Insight, Understanding, Drive, Reason for Being, Non-Competitive

Sense It



Be Curious

Brainstorm new thoughts, experience exciting new things. Get off the beaten path. Be Adventurous. Stay Inquisitive.



Elevate Experience

Dare to bring a brighter future. Sometimes you need to crawl, walk, run to get there.



Leverage Creativity

Instead of looking only at the linear and logical, look at all the angles and see things differently.



Positively Contribute & Connect

Generously give ideas, time, love, and empathy. Community.



Stay Grounded

All ground rules apply here. All the integrity, organization, timelines, accountability, and reliability.



Resiliency

Count on me to rise up. No matter the challenge, I will only continue to learn and become stronger.



AJK

TAKE THE NARROW PATH

BE RESILIENT

TALK IT THROUGH

MAKE YOUR MARK

LOVE YOUR BROTHER

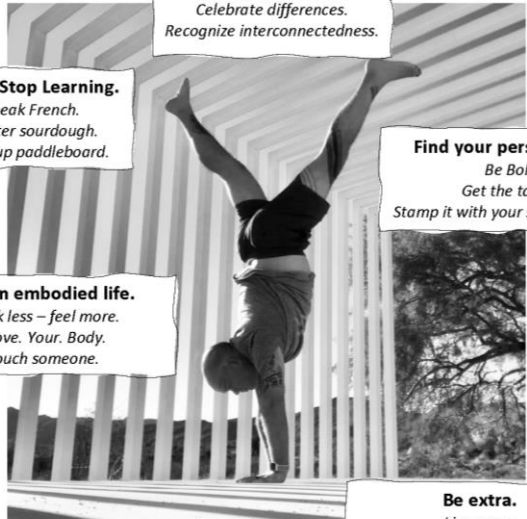
Never Stop Learning.
*Speak French.
Master sourdough.
Standup paddleboard.*

Live an embodied life.
*Think less – feel more.
Move. Your. Body.
Touch someone.*

Build inclusive spaces.
*Be an ally.
Celebrate differences.
Recognize interconnectedness.*

Find your personal flair.
*Be Bold.
Get the tattoo.
Stamp it with your signature style.*

Be extra.
*Live more.
Love more.
Laugh more.*



OPTIMISTIC ENGAGEMENT

ALWAYS EXPLORING

THE MORE THE MERRIER

COLLABORATE, CONTRIBUTE AND CONNECT

CULTIVATE BALANCE

OVERALL HARMONY

BELIEVE THE BEST

PLATINUM RULE

BETTER WAY

STAND OUT

MAKE THE CONNECTION



ACQUIRE AND SHARE
Knowledge

WORK TOWARDS
Progressive Growth

PROTECT
Trust

MAKE IT
fun (ny)!

LIVE Authentically WITH
MEANINGFUL *Experiences*

EXPLORE *Wellness*



SHARED SUCCESS

BE MORE

KEEP SWIMMING

LIVE WELL

Always looking for ways to be (and help you be) "more than".

Stay the course. The best direction is forward.

Your success is my success. My business is your business. Win-win.

Work to live and live well.



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everyone learns

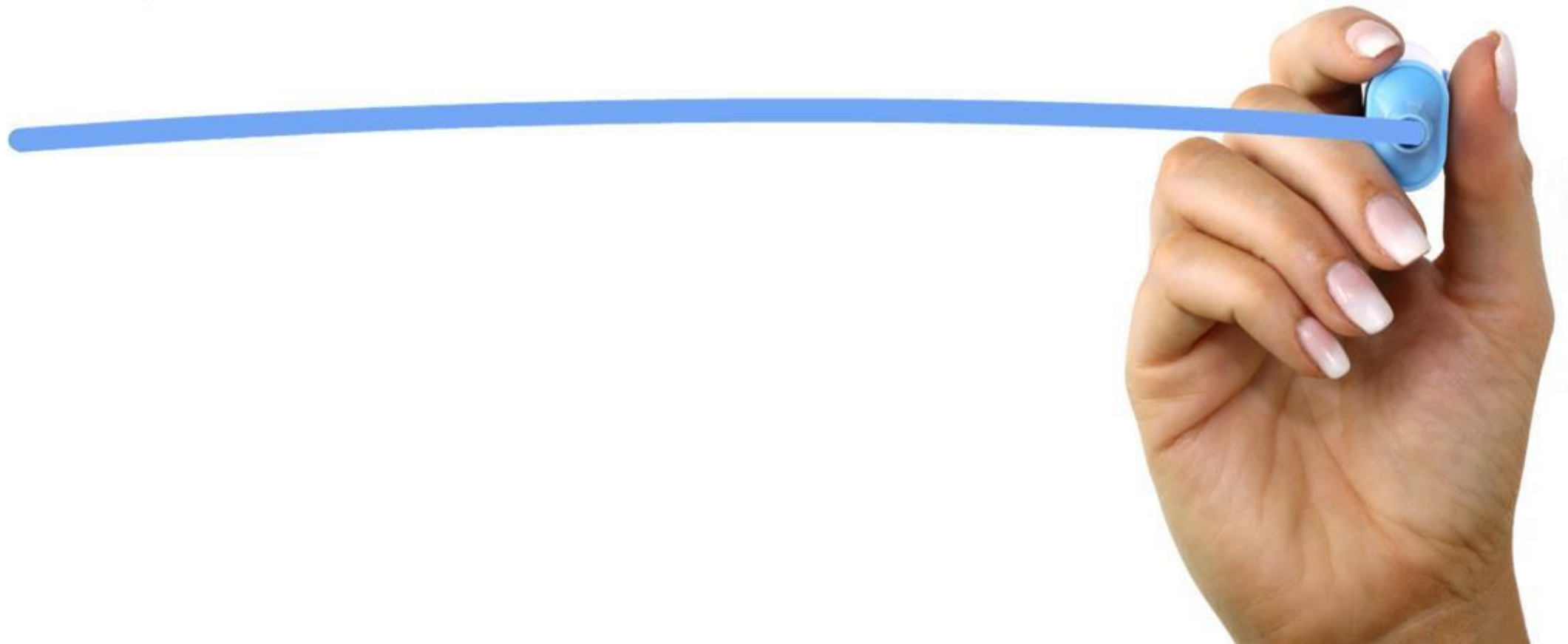
Gratitude

A close-up photograph of a smooth, light-colored stone with the word "Gratitude" engraved on it in a serif font. The stone is surrounded by other stones of various colors and textures, including dark blue, grey, and yellowish-brown. The lighting is warm, creating soft shadows and highlights on the stones.

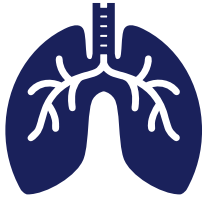
Gratitude

Gratitude is an **internally generated capability** that allows an individual to create and discover unlimited meaning and value in **every situation** and relationship in life.

APPRECIATE



Benefits of Gratitude



PHYSICAL

- Stronger immune systems
- Lower blood pressure
- Better & longer sleep, more refreshed upon waking
- Tend to exercise more
- Less bothered by aches and pains

Research shows...higher levels of activity in the hypothalamus and increased levels of dopamine

What happens when you are stressed?



PSYCHOLOGICAL

- Higher levels of positive emotion
- More joy and pleasure
- More optimism and happiness

Research shows...letters of gratitude improved mental health for individuals suffering from depression and anxiety

Who should receive your next letter of gratitude?



SOCIAL

- More helpful, generous & compassionate
- More forgiving
- More outgoing
- Feel less lonely and isolated

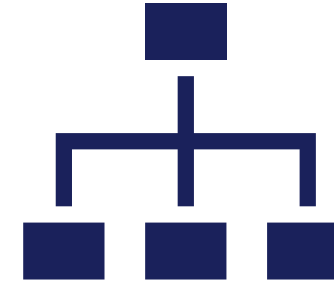
Research shows...couples who expressed gratitude for their partner felt more comfortable expressing concerns about their relationship

What do you appreciate about the person sitting next to you?

Benefits of Gratitude at Work



Job Satisfaction
Reduced Burnout
Increased Productivity
Stronger Relationships
Increased Confidence
Improved Collaboration
Greater Trust



Increased Retention
Enhanced Customer Satisfaction
Stronger Teamwork
Improved Reputation
Higher Efficiency
Attraction of Top Talent
Brand Ambassadors

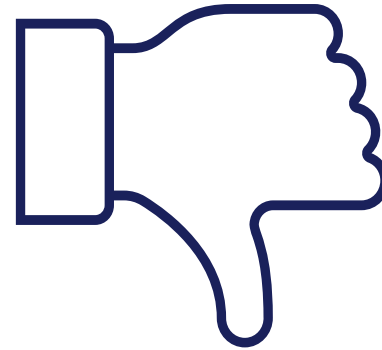
Obstacles:



Time



Energy



Bad > Good



Vulnerability

1. Embracing the “Get to”

Have to

Obligation, burden, lack of control

Get to

Opportunity, privilege, choice



“We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorns have roses.”

Alphonse Karr

2. & Grateful

Busy & Grateful

Tired & Grateful

Proud & Grateful

Excited & Grateful

Nervous & Grateful

Frustrated & Grateful

Accomplished & Grateful

Overwhelmed & Grateful

3. The Grateful Moment

What's the difference between
react and respond?

How can you respond in
gratitude?

“Between stimulus and
response, there is a space. In
that space lies our freedom
and power to choose our
response. In our response lies
our growth and our
happiness.”

Viktor Frankl

Habit Stacking



Getting Started: 30 Days of Gratitude



Focus on the person you'll be, not the 30-day checklist.

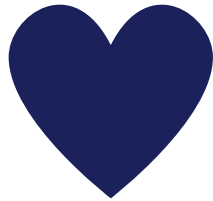


Commit to sharing your progress with a friend.

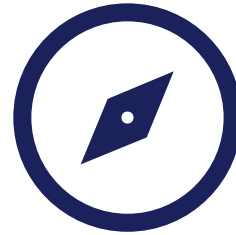


Find the joy in gratitude. If it's not fun, adjust.

Bringing Gratitude to Life at Work



Core Values



Ground Rules



**People
Touchpoints**

Where are gratitude opportunities built-in?

Where does your organization need more gratitude?

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Belonging

Moments of Belonging



- It's hard to read the label when you are inside the jar.
- What experiences can you curate for your life to evaporate ignorance and biases?



Bursting Bubbles



CHAMPION PEOPLE



BE AUTHENTIC



ELEVATE




BREATHE



WONDER

You Matter Here Conversations


YOU MATTER HERE CONVERSATION PLANNER

LEADER NAME:
EMPLOYEE NAME:
YEAR:

Use this planner on an annual basis to increase engagement with each of your direct reports during your one-on-one meetings.

PRE-MEETING REFLECTION

What is a specific attribute you are grateful to them for bringing to your team? Express gratitude.

How have they added value this week? Recognize and share feedback.

What's going on in their personal life? Reflect on celebrations, heartaches and everyday life.

YOU MATTER HERE QUESTIONS

1. What keeps you working here at our organization and in your role?

How will I ask it?
When will I ask it?
Q1
Q2
Q3
Q4

Discussion Notes & Follow Up Actions:

2. What is something in your current role you wish you had more/less of?

How will I ask it?
When will I ask it?
Q1
Q2
Q3
Q4

Discussion Notes & Follow Up Actions:

3. Have you been given the freedom to be yourself and do things your way in your role?


How will I ask it?
When will I ask it?
Q1
Q2
Q3
Q4

Discussion Notes & Follow Up Actions:

4. Which of your skills are you not using in your current role?

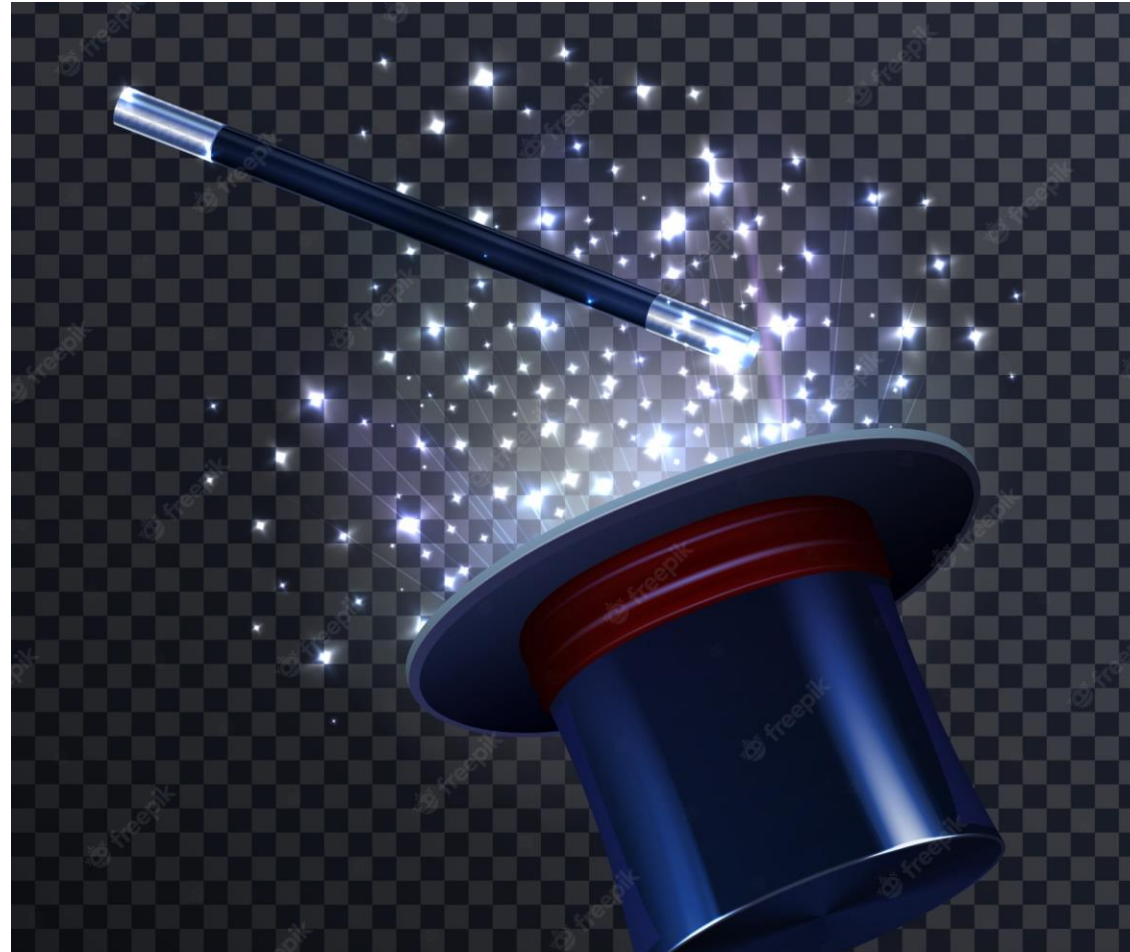
How will I ask it?
When will I ask it?
Q1
Q2
Q3
Q4

Discussion Notes & Follow Up Actions:



1. What keeps you working here at our organization and in your role?
2. What do you want to have happen in your role?
3. How do your personal values align with our corporate values?
4. What is something in your role that you wish you had more/less of?
5. Have you been given the freedom to be yourself and do things your way in your role?
6. Which of your skills are you not using in your role?
7. How can I make your work more enjoyable/fulfilling?
8. What is an area you would like to learn and grow in?
9. What opportunity would interest you enough to step away from your role?
10. Where or who would you like to mentor with or learn more about at our organization?
11. If you were going to coach me on one thing to make me a better leader, what would it be?
12. What is the single most meaningful action I could take as your leader?

Magic in the Moments



humanworks⁸

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*Wondering Wednesdays on LinkedIn

