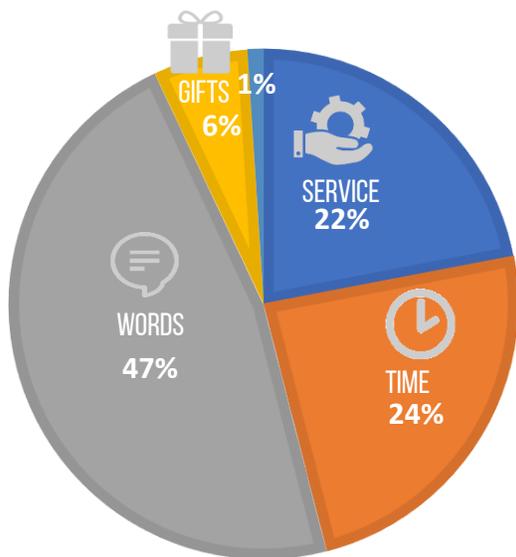


workplace appreciation



STUDIES SHOW THAT EMPLOYEES WANT TO BE SHOWN APPRECIATION WITH ...

- **WORDS (47%)**: praise, acknowledgement, compliments
- **QUALITY TIME (24%)**: quality conversations, close proximity on a project, shared experiences, collegial hang out time
- **ACTS OF SERVICE (22%)**: providing assistance and support (caveat: ask before helping)
- **TANGIBLE GIFTS (6%)**: something that they value (physical items, time off, gift cards, discounts)
- **PHYSICAL TOUCH (1%)**: as applicable hugs, high five, fist bump

According to the studies age/ generation doesn't make much of a difference.

Important to note:

- Approximately 40% of employees (and managers) do not want to go up in front of a large group to be recognized.
- 68% of employees reported that tangible gifts is their least preferred expression of appreciation.
- Individuals report that if they only receive some tangible reward (gift card, tickets to an event) but never receive help when needed, hear a word of praise, or have someone stop by to see how they are doing – gifts feel very superficial and meaningless.
- Don't solely use words to show appreciation. Otherwise you will miss the mark with over 50% of your team members.



CECE has created an unscientific quiz which can give you some insights into your employees. Encourage them to take the quiz at: www.thececenetwork.org/appreciation-quiz/ and share their answers with you.



Words



- First you have to NOTICE what they are doing well
- Acknowledgments – in private
- Public announcements
- Social media highlighting an accomplishment
- Written note
- Handwritten card
- Culture of Peer written notes
- On Staff Lounge bulletin board
- Text, voicenote, email (so they can forward to friend)
- Bragging to others about the great staff – in person, online
- Pull out past compliments too
- Ask the children/parents to show appreciation
 - notes, write in chalk

Time



- Listening.
- Check in regularly
- Staff hangout time (paid)
- Team building activities
- One on one with director
- Paid lunch & fun as a group
- Themed staff party (ex: Imagine we were in Tahiti) with photo booth, related food, music
- Birthday celebrations

Service



- Find ways to support their requested needs.
- Find ways to support their unstated needs.
- Offer to finish up a task for her
- Offer to pick up something from the storage closet
- Offer to organize classroom closet
- Offer a morning off
- Wipe snow off their car at the end of the day
- Provide opportunities for them to show their passions/ talents/ accomplishments
- Learning opportunities (webinars, subscriptions, conferences)

Gifts



- A nice staff lounge
- Staff business cards
- Pinterest pun ideas
- Gift cards (ask local stores)
- Spa day at school
- Warm drink on freezing day
- Cold smoothie on hot day
- Extra school uniform shirt
- Flowers/ balloons
- Food – there are a zillion options
- Free warm lunch
- Massage chair in teacher lounge
- Something for the classroom from their wishlist
- Dinner for their family at home
- Gift them with an experience (ex: photography lessons)

Special effects

- Roll out the red carpet with confetti

caveat

- Avoid general cliché phrases.
- Determine if the person likes public praise
- Praising a job well done is not the same as expressing appreciation. Both ought to be said. “That was a well presented talk. Thank you for representing the company so well.”
- Be fully present.
- Plan these regularly.
- Only do it if you KNOW they will appreciate
- Others may think the gifts are a waste of money or kitchy.
- Don’t forget their special days (birthday, anniversary, etc.)



the power of acknowledgment

Truthful, heartfelt and deserved acknowledgment always makes a difference - sometimes a profound one - in a person's life and work.

Recognizing good work leads to high energy, great feelings, high-quality performance and terrific results. Not acknowledging good work causes lethargy, resentment, sorrow and withdrawal. Recognize and acknowledge good work, wherever you find it. It's not true that people only work hard if they worry whether you value them. Quite the opposite!

Looking for positive qualities in your staff, rather than looking for problems to be fixed, creates a significant shift in the interpersonal dynamic and establishes an environment of trust and mutual respect. Often a staff member is not aware of her own strengths and capabilities. As a leader, you have an opportunity to reveal to her the strengths, qualities, and capabilities she displays.

When you acknowledge her, you hold up a mirror and say, "This is the person I see in you!" Often for the first time, you awaken in her an awareness of qualities she might not have noticed or accepted before. This new self-knowledge builds self-esteem and empowers her to keep learning, growing, and doing her best!

Taking the time to acknowledge your staff (and anyone else who is in your life) fosters an environment where people can perform at their best and tend to be more engaged in their work.

What is an acknowledgment? It recognizes the person and her qualities and inner character that enabled her to do what she did. It's a statement of "I see who you are!" It goes beyond the person's action.

It's not about what someone has done, but rather who she was when she performed that way. Acknowledgment is not a thank you. There's a big difference: "Thank for working 60 hours this week." vs. "Your dedication to this school is so inspiring!" An acknowledgment says that we see who she is, and we have benefited from *her*, not only from her actions.

How to Acknowledge

Keep your acknowledgment succinct and clear; shorter statements have greater impact. And from the heart; your tone and context will reflect your sentiments.

Some qualities to look for are: patience, dedication, commitment, perseverance, caring, thoughtfulness, creativity, initiative, enthusiasm, clear communication, or wisdom. Acknowledge the process, working through the ups and downs, persevering despite the obstacles.

Some examples of acknowledgment statements. Notice that they are not expressions of gratitude; rather they address a wonderful part of the person's character.

- "Did I ever tell you that your creativity inspires me?"
- "I feel so calm when I am around you."
- "Knowing I can count on you makes all the difference in the world."
- "There's no doubt to me that you want to be successful in this new role."
- "Your supportiveness made this project possible for me."

If you can't easily find something to acknowledge about her, look harder. If this person is still on your team, there's a reason, find that and acknowledge it. At the very least, acknowledge her good intentions. "I know you really care about the children." This might help her remember that this is true about her, and might get her back on track. Many people need this acknowledgment most when they are struggling.

Some more important points:

The acknowledgement should stand on its own. Don't sandwich in a 'but' or a weakness. It will negate the acknowledgment and make it feel like manipulation. Do not say, "You are so creative and a real asset to the team. But we see a problem with you coming late. We're really lucky to have you on our team." And don't state a request right after. "You're so dedicated to the school. Can you please stay late tomorrow?"



Acknowledge often, even daily. Rarely given acknowledgments have no more value than frequent ones. Sincere praise should not be withheld due to fear of diminishing returns, of appearing inappropriate or out of embarrassment. Those obstacles can and should be overcome in order for you and your recipients to reap the tremendous rewards.



Determine how and when and where the acknowledgment should be given. Will it be best if done in private or in front of the team? Spontaneous or after a project? The context is very important in how the recipient will actually accept your words. Many people are uncomfortable with acknowledgment; they may feel that other people may be jealous and will try to 'bring them down'.

Make sure it is authentic and sincere, and not a form of manipulation, or as a motivator masquerading in the words of an acknowledgment. People pick up on insincerity and it will likely have negative ramifications.



Just start acknowledging – right away! If you haven't been giving acknowledgments regularly, it may feel awkward to begin. Just do it! You'll get used to it. And so will your staff.



Help people receive acknowledgment. So they can also give them more freely. This will create a more supportive and happier culture.



Reflect about how the others are receiving the acknowledgments. For many people, it is uncomfortable to hear something so personal. And they might deflect it. If someone has difficulty receiving, stay with them and let them know it is sincere. Pause and be present and say something like, "I really mean it".

Don't forget to acknowledge yourself – for your intentions, for your process, for your contributions to the success of your school!

You, as a human, will benefit from acknowledgment too.



knowing your staff

The ‘one size fits all’ approach doesn’t work well in the workplace. The more you know each staff member individually, the easier it is to develop the strong relationships and culture in which great work can flow.

When you know what motivates your staff, you can build that into your program.

If your staff would prefer a gourmet coffee bar in the teacher’s lounge over a periodic sushi platter, then you ought to bring in some coffee syrups or a keurig.

People choose where to work based on many reasons in addition to the salary; this is referred to as the **Psychological Contract**. Get to know those reasons and make sure they are receiving those. Some things: camaraderie, convenience, great learning experience, matches their values, they like you, flexibility, meet interesting people. All kinds of things.

When you identify their strengths and passions, you can have them bring it into their work.

One of your teachers might love flower-arranging and can bring in an arrangement once a week to sit at the reception desk. Or she might teach others how to arrange flowers. Or maybe do a workshop for parents in honor of Shavuot.

Maybe a teacher has a cool doll collection that she can show the children.

Or she might love ceramics and can do a project with the kids. Or gardening. Or building. Or organizing – hey, maybe she’d love to organize the supply closet. Or maybe she has a friend in a museum who can bring in some artifacts to the children.

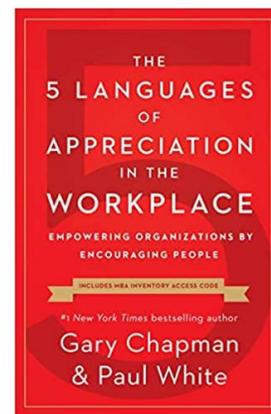
Younger teachers might have some interesting ideas using tech that they might share with others less tech inclined.

When you recognize their uniqueness and their accomplishments, you can give more meaningful compliments and feedback.

When you slow down to and actually contemplate each person and their accomplishments and contributions, you can really become grateful for they are and how they enrich your school. This helps you formulate meaningful acknowledgements and expressions of gratitude. Everyone on your entire team is part of making your school work – the teachers, the bus drivers, the deliverymen, the maintenance staff. Notice them and mention it often.



CECE has created a short form that you might give to your staff members so they can share how they want to be shown appreciation.



People feel appreciated in different ways. Gary Chapman of The Five Love Languages fame identifies **5 languages of appreciation in the workplace**. The better you know your staff members, the better you can show your appreciation in the way they prefer.

Words of Affirmation: praise, acknowledgement, compliments

Quality Time: quality conversations, close proximity on a project, shared experiences

Acts of Service: providing assistance and support (caveat: ask before helping)

Tangible Gifts: something that they value (physical items, time off, gift cards, discounts)

Physical Touch: as applicable hugs, high five, fist bump

How to really get to know your staff

- **Ask.** Ask directly. Do a survey. Do it as a game. Informal conversations.
- **Observe their behavior.** They are likely doing for others what they wish others would do for them.
- **Observe what they request of others.** What we request tend to indicate our primary appreciation language.
- **Listen to their complaints.** The things about which an individual complains may well reveal their primary appreciation language. The opposite of what hurts the most is probably their appreciation language.

What to find out about them, in general

- **Their personal interests / passions (outside of school).** (ex: horseback riding, quilting, bird watching, traveling, etc.)
- **What s/he is proud of – outside her teaching.** (ex: her children, her relationship with politicians, her home gardens, etc.)
- **What made him/her join the education profession.**
- **Their family life.**
- **What s/he likes to do in her free time.**
- **Their personal strengths.** (ex: resilience, coming up with innovative solutions, speaks 3 languages, always happy, helps diffuse problems, etc.)
- **Some of their pet peeves.** (ex: self-aggrandizement, wasting time, dead plants, etc.)
- **What s/he was doing before s/he joined your school.**

What to find out about them in your organization

- **Their strengths in the classroom.** Specifically related to teaching (ex: asking high level questions, sets up inviting discovery tables, morning meetings, etc.)
- **What s/he likes about working in your school.** (ex: great team, progressive education, lots of professional development, etc.)
- **Special passions that s/he brings to his/her students.** (ex: art, gardening, music, upcycling, etc.)
- **Their contributions to their fellow staff members.** (ex: shares relevant articles, brings interesting materials that they can use, teaches them art skills, etc.)
- **Their contributions to the school.** (ex: writes newsletter, dresses up for Shabbat party, maintains the building, etc.)
- **Their limitations/ weaknesses in the classroom.** (ex: doesn't use the preferred language, likes too many worksheets, doesn't allow children to ask questions during storytime, doesn't allow kids to make a mess, etc.)
- **Some of their limitations/ weaknesses that impact their work.** (ex: comes late to work, on cell phone too often, dresses sloppy, can't get down on the floor, forgets to write notes to parents, negative, doesn't want to do more than others, gossipy, etc.)
- **How likely s/he is to explore something new.** Rate 1 [Would fight it] <-> 5 [Would jump in totally]

SINCERE
COMPLIMENTING
SUPPORTIVE
RESPONSIVE
DEVOTED
COURAGEOUS
IMPACTFUL
ENERGETIC
COMPASSIONATE
STRONG
LOVING
EMPOWERING
INSPIRING
HELPFUL
PASSIONATE
WISE
RECOGNIZING
ACCOMMODATING
SELFLESS
ENCOURAGING
APPRECIATIVE
ENTHUSIASTIC
PAYING ATTENTION
IMPACTFUL
PATIENT
DEDICATED



workplace appreciation

name	your preferred language of appreciation results from the quiz*
------	---

favorite food or snack

how you enjoy spending a day off

favorite place to shop

if you received an award at work, who would you want to know about your accomplishment?
(significant other, parents, children, etc.)

Pick one: behind the scenes in the limelight a little of both

we will do our best to recognize your contributions in a way that is most meaningful to you.
Would you value...

receiving an award for an achievement?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
being recognized in a group of peers/ others?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
being thanked privately by the director?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
receiving a note of appreciation?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no

anything else you'd like to share with us?

*Take the quiz at: www.thececenetwork.org/appreciation-quiz/