



the power of appreciation

by Joan Fox

I am not a fan of “appreciation days.” Customer appreciation days, employee appreciation days and patient appreciation days send a message that appreciation is a special event. An organization with a culture rooted in the value of appreciating its customers and employees should freely communicate gratitude on a consistent basis as well as demonstrate it in their day to day operations and does *not* need a special day to do so.

These occasions to honor customers and employees are probably rooted in a policy with good intentions. However, wouldn't daily expressions of sincere appreciation outdo an annual event? When was the last time you received a genuine “thank you” from a service provider? In my experience, it's all backward. Typically the customer or patient says “thank you.” When did this

change? Isn't it the service provider's responsibility to say “thank you?”

Sometimes employees tell me that they are not inclined to express appreciation to customers or patients because they don't receive any gratitude from their supervisors. According to a recent Gallup poll, 65 percent of people say they don't feel appreciated at work.

Telling a co-worker how much you appreciate their support is not a difficult thing to do. Changing into a culture of appreciation can begin with you. Although it is especially gratifying to hear positive reinforcement from a supervisor, why wait for your supervisor to show their gratitude? What is holding you back from telling every patient and every co-worker how much you appreciate them?

The expression of appreciation does not need to be anything formal. Can you imagine how powerful it would be if each person took a moment to say “thank you for the privilege of serving you” in their own way? A patient or co-worker who hears this from three of four people during the course of their day would *know* they were valued. *Everyday* can be patient and employee appreciation day – if *we* choose to make it so.



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