



I often hear this from doctors. “Do I really need to waste time showing appreciation to our team members? We’re all so busy! Stopping in the middle of our busy schedule for a verbal “pat on the back” seems like a waste of everyone’s time! They know that we appreciate them. If we didn’t we would say something, right?”

The fine art of showing appreciation – Is it all fluff or is it really good stuff? Sadly, appreciation is often left out of our busy day-to-day routine. On the level of importance, it is usually considered fluff. You know, things that are nice to do but not really necessary! The problem is that we get so focused on checking off what we consider to be the important things that we don’t leave time for the good stuff – the niceties in life. The niceties like please, thank you, that was awesome, I appreciate you...

So how important can a show of appreciation really be? The truth is that appreciation is not fluff but instead it is really the good stuff that helps nurture our culture, our purpose and value! When we don’t show our appreciation for others, it seems as if we don’t care – that there’s no value to

their contribution. We are basically saying to our fellow team member that what they are doing doesn't matter to us or to our patients. After all, if it did matter, we'd notice it, wouldn't we?

Since they are doing it, they obviously think it matters. Also consider the fact that part of their purpose is connected to what they do. What else would they conclude other than that we think they are not important or valuable? In essence, when we don't show appreciation, our message is "your efforts have no value or purpose!"

When we acknowledge people's contributions and appreciate them for their efforts we send a completely different message. It shows the person that what they are doing is important enough for us to remember the details. After all, if I'm excited about what you are doing, it probably has similar effects on some other people, too. You're obviously creating of value for others; which gives you purpose. When we show appreciation we are telling others that they have value and purpose! Value and purpose are really big, good stuff!

We create a work environment that nurtures value and purpose when we show appreciation. It's what I refer to as a kudos environment! To create a kudos environment it is important to know and be aware of what is good and right in your environment. Most people see what's negative and wrong in their environment. Instead, focus on what is good and right and verbally reward those behaviors with statements such as "I am proud of you", "Great job", "Way to go" or even a simple "thank you", or "kudos". In a very short time, everyone will begin to feel recognized, important, and cared about because they know they are being seen and praised on a daily basis. I love this kudos stuff because it really works. It only takes one person to get the ball rolling in the right direction. The person could be you! You don't need permission to start. Just reward what is good and right such as good moods, good attitudes, uplifting mindsets, even just a smile. I'm not talking about sappy, disingenuous gushing! I'm talking about simple, heart-felt appreciation.

When I was a practicing administrator, I met a wonderful, vibrant, professional speaker by the name of Amanda Gore. She shared the magic of her wand. I brought the wand back to our office and hung it on the wall in a

central location. Whenever a team member witnessed another team member doing something they thought was either, good, positive or even just made them feel good; they would tap them on the shoulder with the wand. The wand made this wonderful, magical sound that could be heard throughout the office. The magic sound of the wand raised the morale instantly! You might be thinking to yourself that this sounds silly or childish or even unprofessional. On the contrary...

Before implementing the wand, the normal news that spread like wildfire in that practice was who did what wrong. After we implemented the wand, the news became who did what right! Wanding not only raised the morale, it was also fun. And wanding isn't even a word! Team members started looking for good attitudes and behaviors to wand. The focus of the entire team changed from what was wrong to what was right! To think, it all started with something as fluffy as a pink "magic" wand!

The next time you appreciate someone's attitude, actions or behaviors, implement the following steps:

- Show your appreciation as immediately as possible after the event or action you want to point out and reinforce.
- If you have a wand, use it! (You can get your very own at www.AmandaGore.com)
- Be specific. Avoid general clichés and statements.
- Mention how the action or behavior was personally helpful or supports the team vision, values, and purpose.
- Keep it brief. Long, detailed compliments can be uncomfortable and sound fake.
- BE GENUINE! This isn't about "sucking up" or being insincere to manipulate others.
- Ask if there's anything you can do to provide further support or service to that person or team.

You will be surprised at how simply showing a little appreciation can raise the performance bar in your office! Try placing a higher priority on showing appreciation and then decide for yourself whether it's fluff, or good stuff!