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Affirming Others Builds Trust and Motivation

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Millard MacAdam

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Sincerely affirming others is like spreading gold coins as an investment in good will in the hands of a proactive leader. I've found that those leaders who consistently do it feel gratitude toward people? their family members, friends, staff members, business colleagues and customers.

If you're like me, I'm conscious that I don't regularly express the specific gratitude I feel for these people as positive affirmations that will be of encouragement and benefit to them. I too often assume they know how much I appreciate them and fail to deliver meaningful affirmations in timely ways.

Positive affirmations are the things we say to others out of our of genuine gratitude that build them up and enhance their strength and sense of well-being. Positive affirmations empower others to risk and take chances and to be and do their very best. Negative thoughts run through people's minds thousands of times a day. Making the giving of positive affirmations a daily practice gives you a powerful tool to strengthen the confidence of those you relate with at home and work. Here are some tips to help you help others be and do their best by affirming them and showing your appreciation and gratitude toward them.

GET OVER FEELING AWKWARD. Doing something new takes practice and because it is unfamiliar, giving affirmations to others might feel strange at first. Get over it! So often, it doesn't feel funny to talk negatively to people, but giving praise feels awkward. Just do it and don't worry if it feels strange. In time, you will feel less and less awkward as you experience the smile on the faces of others and their increased willingness to cooperate with you and be and do their best.

BEGIN YOUR AFFIRMATION WITH "YOU" AND A SMILE. The more you personalize what you say the more it will hit home and stick in the person's mind and heart.

PUT YOUR AFFIRMATION IN THE PRESENT TENSE. Keeping the affirming statement timely and in the present will give it more power.

MAKE IT SHORT AND SWEET. Make the affirmation meaningful to the person. If affirmations are too long, you may find it cumbersome or difficult to share them on a regular basis. Longer affirmations work well during longer conversations.

PRACTICE. Teaching ourselves to speak well of others takes some practice. For most people the affirmative tongue it is an under developed muscle. Practice and your recognition of your gratitude toward others will help your affirming voice will become stronger.

HAVE A CLEAR VISION OF THE PERSON

. Hold a clear vision of what is possible in terms of being and doing for the person as they become a part of your gratitude toward the person.

WRITE IT DOWN. Writing down the positive affirmations helps your mind remember the new statements. If you have lots of people you need to affirm, it might help to have a collection of 3X5 Affirmation Cards with a name and specific affirmations listed on each card for easy reference and review.

REPEAT THEM OFTEN. Repetition facilitates learning. The more often you say positive affirmations the more they become a part of a person's worthwhile behavior.

MAKE THEM FUN. Enjoy yourself as you give affirmations to others. Laugh and exhibit a sense of lightness as you deliver affirmations to others.

REMEMBER TO BE GENTLE. The more you nourish and cherish others through affirmations the better able you will both live a life of joy and contentment. Be patient and loving as you help others accept and receive the affirmations you deliver to them. Sometimes it is hard for people to accept the "good stuff" about themselves because of a life of suffering too much criticism.

I urge you to use these principles to also affirm yourself! Self-affirmation is a tool for deterring the negative self-talk which can thwart your highest expression of character and competence and bring your critical emotional energy reserves to a dangerously low point.

If you need help in mastering and implementing any of the skills and tactics mentioned, I'm here for you! Please visit the Call-A-Coach section of my web site for more information.

About the author:

Dr. Mac shares with business owners the practical knowledge and insights he gained as a small company CEO. He founded Sycamore Ranch, Inc. when 27 and as CEO led his partners and a staff of 100 for 16 years in developing and operating the 50 acre recreational facility. Years later, he integrated what he learned from his Doctoral program at USC with his practical business experiences and began consulting. For four decades Mac's coached business owners in mastering and applying "how to" leadership and managerial skills for: Hiring and retaining only the top ten percent producers; Optimally deploying and supervising staff to maximize their personal motivation; Developing high integrity leadership teams; Facilitating mutual performance accountability and peer coaching processes; and, Integrating his Intentional Business Integrity Process into their company operations. Mac has served leaders in manufacturing and high tech companies; accounting, banking and insurance enterprises;

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