

McLean, Koehler, Sparks & Hammond

Certified Public Accountants/Business Consultants

Thanksgiving in the Workplace – Remembering Small Blessings

The concept of Thanksgiving in the workplace isn't new, but it can be a challenging exercise. It's complicated. Some years are high water marks for productivity and fiscal accomplishment. Other years...well, we're just happy they're behind us. As we draw near the end of a year that was marked by natural disasters, a war overseas and an increasingly polarized political arena, let's be thankful for the little things that make up the fabric of our day-to-day work life. While we're all thankful for the major projects that went well, the new customers we brought in or the lucrative business deals we pulled off – it's often the small, everyday blessings that impact our work lives the most.

You may ask how or why anyone would think of work-related issues in the same vein as Thanksgiving. After all, work is often where we *have* to be, rather than where we *want* to be. Though we are living in a time and place where personal choice is emphasized in how we earn our livelihoods, most of us are spending more and more time at work.

It's easy to overlook the systems and processes that keep our work day running smoothly. The lights come on every day, the computer screen comes alive when we press the switch, our calls come through and our mail is delivered. We all take these things for granted. But what about the people side of the equation?

There are blessings out there – there are relationships that add more to our work day than we realize:

- The member of our department who always comes through in a pinch.
- The reliable front line support people who never drop the ball.
- The IT professionals who keep our computers running and never blame us when we accidentally delete a file.
- The coworker who always finds the bright side of any disaster, and then takes the time to make us laugh about it.
- The mentor who expects more of us than we expect of ourselves.

Recently a group of our professional colleagues participated in an informal poll on "Thanksgiving in the Workplace." Below are some of the small blessings they shared with us:

- I'm thankful for the quick response and smile I get whenever I ask for help.
- I can always rely on my team for backup if they have experience with something I don't. We rely on each other. They're always there for me.
- My manager always has time for me when I have questions – even repeat questions!
- Our company trusts us to do the right thing – that means a lot to me.
- I'm thankful for the dedication of our employees – I see it over and over again. You can't teach that. It's part of who they are.
- I'm thankful that my work is treated as an important contribution. I can see that my work is important to others.
- I'm thankful our organization understands the importance of technology and is committed to providing employees with the right tools.
- I'm thankful for the supportive relationships of my coworkers. They believe in me and my capabilities.
- I'm thankful for the professional people in my office. They do a great job of taking care of our clients and have an excellent system in place to assure accuracy. I depend on them!

- I appreciate the support and assistance I have received since joining our company. I feel welcome here.
- I'm very grateful for our professional administrative staff. They have a positive, can-do attitude and are creative problems solvers!
- I'm thankful for my coworkers who delight in spreading good news – rather than dwelling on the negative.
- I'm thankful for colleagues who return my calls promptly, as if I were their most important customer.
- I'm thankful for a group of coworkers who may choose to disagree strongly on certain issues, but have the ability to put differences aside and remain teammates at the end of the day.

The people who share our workplace make up the corporate culture and work environment we all experience on a daily basis. Each one of them contributes to the whole. Some in public ways. Some in quiet ways. The small blessings they provide are all around us. We need only take the time to look – and listen. Happy Thanksgiving!

McLean, Koehler, Sparks & Hammond helps owners and business leaders become more successful by providing innovative financial, technology and management solutions for every stage of their organizations' life cycle. MKS&H's organizational consulting division, Tandem Partners, specializes in people strategies that drive business results. For more information on this article or MKS&H, please contact Margaret Wilson at 410-296-6200 or via email: margaret@mksh.com.

© 2005 Tandem Partners. Permission to use, copy and distribute this document and related graphics is hereby granted, provided that the above copyright notice appears in all copies and both the copyright notice and permission notice appear. All other rights reserved.

McLean, Koehler, Sparks & Hammond

11311 McCormick Road, Suite 100
Hunt Valley, MD 21031
410.296.6200

www.mksh.com

70 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 100
Frederick, MD 21702
301.662.2400