

## Reengage Your Volunteer Teams by Acknowledging Team Gifts

Lee Cockerell, retired Senior Vice President of Operations for Walt Disney World Resorts, brings over four decades of experience on the front lines of some of the world's best run companies to his writing and speaking. Lee responded to the question above with this simple, yet profound thought:

### **Leaders ARE their teams.**

He went on to say that leaders should never underestimate the emotional impact they have on their team members by employing an ARE method.

***Appreciation, Recognition, Encouragement: ARE.** Together they make up a cost-free, fully sustainable fuel, one that builds self-confidence and self-esteem, boosts individual and team performance, and keeps an organization running cleanly and smoothly. ARE is more powerful than the fuels that make engines roar and space shuttles soar, because it propels human energy and motivation. And unlike costly, nonrenewable fuels like oil and gas, its supply is inexhaustible. You can give out ARE all day long, at home and at work, and wake up the next morning with a full tank. In fact, the more we use, the more there is, because every time people receive some ARE they discover more of their own internal supply and start giving away the overflow.*

- Lee Cockerell, *Creating Magic*

Unfortunately, even though we all need a little ARE, the speed of ministry and Sunday's coming mindset prevent many leaders from employing this simple, yet profound practice:

### **Reengage your volunteer teams by acknowledging team gifts.**

THE QUICK SUMMARY - [The Power of Acknowledgement](#), by Judith Umlas

The Age of Enlightenment changed the way mankind thought about life, culture, and human relationships. In her evocative new book, *The Power of Acknowledgment*, Judith W. Umlas unleashes the concept of an Age of Acknowledgment we can all help bring about.

In a time of celebrity worship and self-absorption, Judith's well-reasoned and heart-felt appeal is so counterculture as to be revolutionary. Imagine, as does the author, people acknowledging each other's humanity, accomplishments, talents, and wisdom on a continuous basis. It might just catch on. And wouldn't that be something. This 45-minute read will change your life and the life of everyone around you.

### A SIMPLE SOLUTION

There is a small but very significant action you can take every day – for no cost and little effort – that will change your world.

This action, if used regularly, can transform your team relationships, making the atmosphere vibrant, productive, and alive.

All this is possible, yet most people – even leaders – don't recognize this incredible tool or understand its power. What all of us possess, but most of us don't use often enough, is the power of **acknowledgement**.

*Principle #4: Acknowledging 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 appreciate (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!

Can you imagine this scene, which takes place every day all over the world? You have just completed a difficult and challenging job. Perhaps you've worked alone on a project that needed three people to complete it, and got it done before the scheduled timeline and under budget.

Customers and potential customers are already telling you how much easier it makes their jobs, how excited they are, and how this new product really fills a need. You report all this to your boss and all you get is a weak and distracted, "Oh, okay."

You already know what you're left with: resentment, lack of energy, and most of all (but not usually identified) sorrow. Why did you bother to put in all of the extra hours, why did you feel the deep commitment to getting the job done even with insufficient resources? "Who cares anyway?" you ask yourself.

Judith W. Umlas, [\*The Power of Acknowledgement\*](#)

## A NEXT STEP

To help you begin practicing and enhancing your acknowledgement skills, create a list of people in your daily life to consider speaking words of encouragement that show you have noticed them serving in their giftedness. Here are a few categories and suggestions for each:

**People to acknowledge in my daily life and what I could say to acknowledge the usage of their gifts:**

- Barista \_\_\_\_\_
- Check out cashier \_\_\_\_\_
- Doctor \_\_\_\_\_

- Dentist \_\_\_\_\_
- Regular delivery person  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**People in my family and what I could say to acknowledge their giftedness:**

Spouse

\_\_\_\_\_

Child(ren)

\_\_\_\_\_

Mother

\_\_\_\_\_

Father

\_\_\_\_\_

Brother/Sister

\_\_\_\_\_

Grandparents

\_\_\_\_\_

In-laws

\_\_\_\_\_

**People at work and what I could say to acknowledge their gifts:**

Boss

\_\_\_\_\_

Co-worker

\_\_\_\_\_

Co-worker

\_\_\_\_\_

Co-worker

\_\_\_\_\_

Subordinate

\_\_\_\_\_

Subordinate

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Subordinate

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Assistant

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Assistant

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Security

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Custodial

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Once you have filled these out, start finding opportunities to deliver them. They can be acknowledgments that you write, or verbally present, or they can be something quite different. As long as the acknowledgments are true and real for you, acknowledge away.

Once you start this practice, which requires paying attention to the good qualities of the people around you, you will find yourself becoming awed by their accomplishments, talents, and wisdom.

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*This is part of a weekly series posting content from one of the most innovative content sources in the church world: **SUMS Remix Book Summaries** for church leaders. SUMS Remix takes a practical problem in the church and looks at it with three solutions; and each solution is taken from a different book. As a church leader you get to scan relevant books based on practical tools and solutions to real ministry problems, not just by the cover of the book. Each post will have the edition number which shows the year and what number it is in the overall sequence. (SUMS provides 26 issues per year, delivered every other week to your inbox).*

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