The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace

Empowering Organizations by Encouraging People

#1 NYTimes bestselling author

GARY CHAPMAN
PAUL WHITE

Includes the MBA Inventory
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A $20 VALUE!
At work, people express and receive appreciation in different ways. If you try to express appreciation in ways that aren’t meaningful to your coworkers, then they may not feel valued at all. The problem is that you’re speaking different languages. In *The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace*, Dr. Chapman and Dr. White will help you:

- Communicate meaningful appreciation to coworkers and staff—even on a limited budget
- Decrease discouragement and the risk of burnout for team members
- Reduce cynicism and create a more positive work environment
- Increase loyalty and longevity for both employees and volunteers within your organization
- Identify ways to grow your appreciation for difficult colleagues

Based on the #1 *N.Y. Times* bestseller, *The 5 Love Languages*, Dr. Chapman and Dr. White will give you practical steps to make any workplace environment more encouraging and productive. Before you know it, you will learn to speak and understand the unique languages of appreciation and feel truly valued in return.

by Dr. Gary Chapman and Dr. Paul White
Bio for Dr. Paul White

Dr. Paul White is a psychologist, author, speaker, and consultant who makes work relationships work. For the past 20 years, he’s improved numerous businesses, wealthy family estates, and non-profit organizations by helping them:

- Create positive workplace relationships and environments.
- Raise the level of job satisfaction for both employees and volunteers.
- Eliminate tension around family business issues.
- Successfully transfer families’ wealth to the next generation.
- Guide confused individuals into a satisfying career path.

Dr. White is coauthor of the upcoming book, *The Five Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace*, written with Dr. Gary Chapman (author of the #1 NY Times bestseller, *The Five Love Languages*) which is scheduled for release in August, 2011. Based on their extensive research and expertise, Dr. White and Dr. Chapman have developed a unique way for organizations to motivate employees that lead to increased job satisfaction, higher employee performance, and enhanced levels of trust.

The Director of Family Coaching and Personal Development for Navitas, Ltd., Dr. White has served many multimillionaire and high profile business families to help develop wealth transfer plans and diminish tension around business succession issues. Additionally, he is engaged by national organizations and top universities to consult with their high net worth donors.

As a speaker, Dr. White has given lectures around the world, including North America, Europe, South America, Asia, and the Caribbean. His expertise has been requested by the Milken Institute, Napa Valley Community Foundation, Houston Community Foundation, and Princeton University. He has published extensively in both journals devoted to business and wealth transfer issues such as *Worth, Journal of Financial Planning, Journal of Practical Estate Planning* as well as psychological journals like the *Journal of School Psychology, Individual Psychology,* and *Journal of Educational Research.*

Dr. White graduated Magna Cum Laude from Wheaton College, earned his Masters of Counseling from Arizona State University, and received his Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from Georgia State University, where he received the Outstanding Doctoral Student award during his final year of study. He has been married for over 30 years and is the father of four adult children. Dr. White resides in Wichita, Kansas. He relaxes by fishing, enjoying nature, and watching college basketball.
How to Reward Your Employees Without Spending a Chunk of Change

One of the biggest issues businesses, and organizations of any type, have to deal with today is the lack of financial resources. We are in a new “world” where profits are slim in the for-profit sector, contributions are down in the non-profit sector, and budgets are being reduced in the governmental sector. Virtually every organization has to “do more with less”. This is creating a tremendous amount of stress within organizations – both for managers and supervisors, as well as for front line employees and even volunteers. There are less funds available for raises, bonuses, perks that were common in the past (use of a company car; tickets to sporting events), and even company parties.

At the same time, team members are dealing with the loss of staff within their departments and they have fewer funds available for training or technical upgrades. Resources are tight all over. At the same time, their workload and responsibilities have increased. More demands + fewer resources become a perfect recipe for stress. And stress over the long haul leads to burn out and discouragement.

Communicating Meaningful & Impactful Appreciation

Here is what research shows are effective ways to communicate appreciation and encouragement to your team members, without having to spend a lot of money:

1. Make sure your communication is personal and fitted to the individual rather than utilizing general communication across the organization. The key component to effective appreciation and encouragement is the sense by the recipient that you mean what you say and that you took time to think about them personally. Conversely, we have found that a global “Thanks for a good job done” email to a wide range of people across the organization actually generates a negative response from most team members, given its impersonal nature and perceived minimal effort to complete.

2. “Speak the language” of the person whom you are trying to encourage. If the action we take to communicate appreciation to our colleagues isn’t what is important to them, we have wasted our time and effort. Communicating encouragement and appreciation which is impactful must “hit the target” for the recipient. This is why we developed the MBA Inventory – to identify each team member’s preferred languages of appreciation and to specify the actions most valued by them.
3. **The languages of appreciation people value the most don’t have to cost a lot of money.** Sure almost everyone would like a bonus or a raise – but for most organizations that is not possible. The ways that people experience appreciation in the workplace fall into five categories:

- **Words of Affirmation**
- **Quality Time**
- **Acts of Service**
- **Tangible Gifts**
- **Appropriate Physical Touch**

Most of these don’t cost anything financially (even tangible gifts don’t have to cost much). For example, some of the most cited ways employees report feeling valued include:

- Receiving a note from your supervisor complimenting you on the good job you are doing.
- A team member stopping by your office, spending a few minutes with you to see how you are doing.
- Obtaining some help from a colleague who notices you are “buried”.
- Getting a gift certificate after you have worked long hours to complete a big project (for example, to go to the movies.)
- Having your co-workers give you a “high five” after you have successfully completed an important presentation.

Each person has their own preferred “language of appreciation”. And within each language, there are specific actions that are most valued by that individual. None of these actions cost much money. But the key is to be able to use the right action with the right person, at the right time, and with a genuine spirit of appreciation. Then your actions will “hit the target” and be effective in encouraging those with whom you work.

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**PAUL E. WHITE, Ph.D.,** is a licensed psychologist who has specialized in working with businesses, families and organizations for over 20 years. He may be reached at (316) 681-4431 or at his website, [www.drpaulwhite.com](http://www.drpaulwhite.com).
Potential Interview Questions

Problems:

- What are some of the biggest problems that you see facing companies and organizations today?
- Why do so many people feel unappreciated at work? Do people really not care or are we doing something wrong?

Solution:

- You say the key is for people to communicate appreciation in ways that are meaningful to their colleagues. How do you know what language and actions are important to them?
- What if the budget is tight? Is it possible to reward employees without spending a lot of money?

Results / Success Story:

- What are the practical results that applying the languages of appreciation will provide to leaders and their organizations?
- Can you give a practical example of a situation where applying the 5 languages of appreciation has made a significant impact on an organization?

Frequently Asked Questions:

- How do the 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace relate to the 5 Love Languages? Aren’t they the same for people?
- Aren’t appreciation & encouragement too “touchy feely” for some workplace groups (like the traditional “tough guy” industries like construction or manufacturing)?
- How does physical touch work as a language of appreciation in the workplace? Most companies spend a lot of time & money on sexual harassment training. Isn’t this going in the wrong direction?
- The idea of giving tangible gifts in the workplace seems awkward to me. Can this really work in work-based relationships?
- Some people enjoy their work and feel good about their relationships. Can the 5 languages of appreciation help them (or is this just for those who are frustrated with their work)?
- What about nonprofit organizations (or churches & ministries)? How do the languages of appreciation apply to people who work in these settings?
- Aren’t there ways that communicating appreciation can ‘backfire’? How do you keep that from happening?
- What if you don’t really value one of your colleagues? What should you do then?