

<http://theturnaroundauthority.com/tag/dr-noelle-nelson/>

Any Time of Year is Good to Express Appreciation

December 21, 2012 | by [Lee N. Katz, The Turnaround Authority](#)

I know a CEO of a large security services company who began a tradition when his company was first founded. Every year he wrote a card to each employee during the holidays, expressing his appreciation for that person's contribution to the success of his company.

As the company grew larger and larger, he kept up the tradition. He had to start earlier in the year, and may have enlisted others to address the envelopes, but he never quit writing those cards.



I'm sure some of you are shaking your head already. "Why should I thank them for doing their jobs?" you may be thinking. Or, "We thank all our employees twice a month. It's called a paycheck." Or you may think that no one thanks you, so why should you be bothered to thank others?

It's true that criticism is much more prevalent in the workplace than appreciation. It's partly human nature to point out the negative and leave positive actions unrecognized. And a lot of managers don't believe in showing gratitude or just feel awkward about it.

Jack Welch is the former Chairman and CEO of General Electric, now an author and founder of the Jack Welch Management Institute. One of the tenets of his leadership philosophy is "Lead by Energizing Others, not Managing by Authority."

He believes in making people passionate about their jobs and prefers inspiration to intimidation. Part of this leadership lesson includes letting others know exactly how their efforts are helping the organization and sending handwritten thank-you notes to colleagues and customers.

There are even sound business reasons for doing so. Ones that contribute to your bottom line.

In a [recent article](#) in the Wall Street Journal online about showing appreciation at the office, it was reported that more than half of human-resource managers say showing appreciation for workers cuts turnover, and 49 percent believe it increases profit.

Dr. Noelle Nelson, a consultant and clinical psychologist, wrote a book called “Make More Money by Making Your Employees Happy.” In the book, she cites a study from the survey research consultancy Jackson Organization, (since acquired by Healthstream, Inc.), that shows, “Companies that effectively appreciate employee value enjoy a return on equity and assets more than *triple* that experienced by firms that don’t. When looking at *Fortune’s* ’100 Best Companies to Work For,’ stock prices rose an average of 14 percent per year from 1998-2005, compared to 6 percent for the overall market.”

Increased profit, less turnover and a more pleasant, positive work environment. All from showing employees a little appreciation.

One way to express appreciation is with a personal handwritten note sent to the employee’s home address. In the note, cite a few of that person’s contributions over the past year.

If that isn’t possible, at least consider rewarding all the employees at your company. Take an example from Apple. In 2011, the new CEO, Tim Cook, gave all the employees paid vacation during Thanksgiving. In a memo he wrote, “In recognition of the hard work you’ve put in this year, we’re going to take some extra time off for Thanksgiving. We will shut down with pay on November 21, 22 and 23 so our teams can spend the entire week with their families and friends.”

You may not be able to shut your entire office for three days to show your appreciation, but consider an afternoon off or treat the office to lunch one day, any time of year.

In fact, any gestures of appreciation you make at times other than holidays often get more attention.

Joey Reiman, CEO and founder of [BrightHouse](#), gives all his employees March 4 off every year. He calls it, “the day to March Forth on our dreams.”

Voltaire was probably not talking about company profits with this quote, but it is appropriate in an office setting too: “Appreciation is a wonderful thing. It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well.”