The Value of Workplace Appreciation... in a "Changing Environment"

Barbara Soto, Ed. D. - Administrator, Special Education
Division of Student Programs & Services
San Diego County Office of Education

Agree/Disagree

"Most people don't feel appreciated at work."

#1 reason most Americans leave their job is that they don't feel appreciated at work.

State of the American Workplace (2017), Gallup, Inc.
Qualifications:
- Conflict/Mediation Certification
- ACSA Equity Trainer of Trainers
- Certified Trainer in 5 Languages of Appreciation
- Workforce Boards

PERSONAL BIASES/LENS:
- Female
- Caucasian
- Generation X
- Educator
  - Teacher
  - Special Ed
  - Principal
  - Administrator

"Why"

AGENDA & OBJECTIVES

Part 1:
★ Self Reflection
★ ACEs

Part 2:
★ Generational Relevance
★ Human Resources Lane

Part 3:
★ Compassion Fatigue

Part 4:
★ The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace

Objectives:
- Complete the ACEs survey.
- Recognize workplace challenges in the next or education.
- Recognize Compassion Fatigue.
- Discover your Workplace Appreciation Language.
"Personal" Travel Baggage

"...plants cannot move when the environment changes. They are at the mercy of the climate and the gardener because they are rooted in place. Even though it appears that many plants are quite tolerant of change, they sometimes do not show adverse effects until long after the event. For example, tree roots are often damaged or killed by suffocation during building projects or flooding. An established tree may still have strength to leaf out and may appear to thrive for several years. But in its weakened state, the bee is more likely to slow down, become infested or simple decline."

(Trinklein, D. University of Missouri)

ACEs STUDY

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Resources:

Teacher Workforce

- 88.5% White
- 8.5% Hispanic
- 2.5% Black
- 2.5% Asian
- 1.5% Two or more races
- 0.4% American Indian/Alaska Native
- 0.3% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

76.5% Female
23.5% Male

Teacher Workforce

"...more teachers will retire between 2010 and 2020 than in any other decade since the end of World War II."

"...5% decline over the last decade in teacher education enrollments..."

Learning Policy Institute

Regular Ed Teacher turnover rate is 8%.
- Special Education Teacher turnover rate is 23%

In California, over 35% of SpEd teachers, who were teaching in 2014, will retire by 2024.
- In some counties, it's as high as 60%
Learning Policy Institute

Why teachers quit:

- Inadequate preparation
- Lack of support for new teachers
- Inadequate supports
- Challenging working conditions
  - Challenges with school culture, climate and/or leadership
- Dissatisfaction with compensation
- Better career opportunities
- Personal Reasons
- Lack of Respect
- Overwhelming stress

"Cost of Caring"

PART 3

Do you "see" your employees?
Theoretical Trauma Terms

Professional Burnout
- Vicarious Trauma
- Secondary Traumatic Stress
- Secondary Victimization
- Compassion Fatigue

Educators at Higher Risk
- Home Hospital Educators
- School Counselors & MH Counselors
- Special Education:
  - ED
  - Autism
  - DD
- Who else at your site?
**Does anyone care?**

- Student A
- Student B
- Student C

---

**Teacher Stress**

---

**Environmental Damage**

- Lack of connectedness with the mission of the organization; performance declines.
- Become discouraged; willingness to persevere through difficulties will diminish
- Complain about their work, colleagues, and supervisor
- Dislike coming to work; attendance may become inconsistent
- Consider leaving the organization and start to search for other employment opportunities
Statistics on Teacher Stress

- When describing stress in their own words, 65% of educators say that their work is always or often stressful and near 50% say that they don't have the same enthusiasm at the start of teaching.
- A study that measured stress and coping levels found that educators with both low levels of stress and high coping abilities were extremely rare: 7% of all teachers.
- Another poll revealed that half of teachers agree with the following statement: "The stress and disappointment involved with teaching at my school is really tough." Unfortunately, this trend is only increasing in both severity and frequency.
- A 2017 survey revealed that 58% of educators characterized their mental health as "less good" for at least a week out of the last month, which is up 14% from just 2015.


Research Says

Researcher Greenspan suggests teachers feel pressure from (3) three main areas:

- Student behavioral problems
- Standardized testing
- Unsupportive School Leadership

Teachers' reason for leaving a school is unhappiness with school administration, distrustful surfaces which causes more suffering in the daily work at the school.

Source: [https://educationworld.org/tips/teachudentrue/teachereffectivetips.html](https://educationworld.org/tips/teachudentrue/teachereffectivetips.html)

Teacher Stress Affects Students

Univ. of British Columbia (2016). Tracked the levels of stress hormones of more than 400 elementary students in different classes. Results: Teachers who reported higher levels of stress had students with higher levels of the stress hormone cortisol each morning. Implications: Classroom tensions could be "contagious".

Research by Miller, Memmle, & Willott (2000) confirmed that excessive teacher absences are linked to student underachievement.

"Recent studies report teachers experience the same amount of stress seen in other high-demand professions such as nursing and law enforcement."

Occupational Risk

Certain occupational groups tend to be more at risk from workplace violence. These occupations include:

- Healthcare employees or those who dispense pharmaceuticals
- Veterinary Practitioners
- Police, Security, or Correctional Officers
- Social Services employees, including crisis intervention & Counseling Services
- Teachers/Educational Professionals
- Municipal Housing Inspectors
- Retail Employees
- Sellers of Alcohol (sale, or consumption on the premises)
- Taxi or Transit Drivers

Workplace Violence

Workplace violence is violence or the threat of violence against workers. It can occur at or outside the workplace and can range from threats and verbal abuse to physical assaults and homicide, one of the leading causes of job-related deaths. However it manifests itself, workplace violence is a growing concern for employers and employees nationwide. (OSHA, 2002)

Violence Directed Against Educators

Information on the rate and scope of teacher victimization is critical for:

- Increasing awareness
- Developing effective supports and interventions
- Promoting positive school/classroom climate
- Student Learning
- Recruitment and Retention of highly qualified teachers
Figure 2: Factors Teachers Report as Being Very Important for Leaving Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfaction</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/personal reasons</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retirement</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To pursue another job</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial reasons</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Respondents had the option to select more than one reason for leaving.

---

Reducing Attrition

Employees stay when they are:
- Paid well
- Mentored
- Challenged
- Promoted
- Involved
- Appreciated
- Valued
- On a mission
- Empowered
- Trusted

Source: https://www.teachers.org.uk/how-to/attract-and-retain-qualified-teachers

---

Self-Care

Meeting Format(s)

Mindset

"We don't see things as they are, we see things as we are."

- Anish Jinh

MBA INVENTORY

Motivating by Appreciation

[Image of motivational icons]
**Words of Affirmation**

- Verbal: Using words (oral or written)
- Affirming: calling attention to what you see
- Types:
  - Personal, one-on-one
  - Praise in front of others
  - Written communication
  - Public affirmation
- Key Components for Effective Verbal Praise:
  - Catch the person doing what you value
  - Call attention to it
  - Describe the behavior vs. a global "Thanks"
- Focus on character as well as behavior:
  - Integrity, honesty
  - Trustworthiness, reliability

---

**Emails & Social Media**

---

**Quality Time**

- Different types of "Time" within your team:
  - Working side-by-side
  - Brief meetings
  - Team meetings, discussing plans & making decisions
  - Attending training sessions together
  - Chit-chatting throughout day
  - Hanging out together outside of work
- Different types of quality time:
  - Focused attention
  - Companionship (being there)
  - Shared experiences
  - Personal connection through listening & sharing
"Dreamwork makes the Team Work"

Aspects:
- "Don't tell me you are; show me"
- Lost character quality in our culture: Serving others
- Not related to position or authority

Key Components:
- Ask first
- Voluntary service
- Cheerful attitude
- Doing it their way
- Finish the task

Key aspect: "Handling is a situation where it is not your responsibility to help"

Tangible Gifts

- Tangible gifts - diminishing in today's world: Why?
  - The prevalence of entertainments, taken gifts
  - The difficulty of finding the right gift for the right person
  - Often the "things" people want are quite expensive
- Keys:
  - Make sure the recipient appreciates tangible gifts
  - Investigate and discover what types of gifts the person enjoys
  - Gifts: focus on experiences vs. things
  - Items: movie tickets, tickets to sporting events, gift certificates for healthy items (fitness, Starbucks)
What are your work "gifts" you give or like to receive?

Appropriate Physical Touch
- RARELY a permitted highest language in the workplace
- Area of concern for Human Resources Directors
- Appropriate Physical Touch
- IF you notice, occur at the time in the workplace

Usually spontaneous and celebratory:
- High Fives
- Fist Bump
- Put on the back
- Hand Shakes

1. Not everyone feels appreciated in the same way.
2. Learn each person’s language of appreciation.
3. People truly want to be valued by their supervisors and colleagues.
4. Communicate authentic appreciation with your team.
5. Use strategies in Leadership development.
The Expanded version is available in the following industry specific options:

- General Work Setting Version
- Government Service/Military Version
- Long Distance Version
- Ministry/Not For Profit Version
- Medical Version
- School Version

Specific Survey Assessments

PLEASE USE THE "GOODIES" TO SHOW SOMEONE YOU VALUE THEM AND THEIR HARD WORK IS NOTICED!

Thank You