

# The Appreciation Power Pack

**A research-based appreciation formula that busy leaders use to boost retention, productivity, and engagement.**

Includes ready-to-use strategies with practical examples that take minutes, not hours.

**SHIFTING  
THE ENERGY**

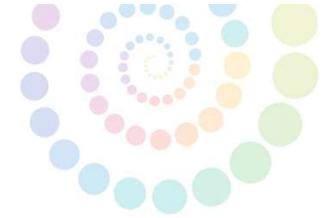


How Love Leads Remarkable Teams  
JESSICA WALTER

A companion guide to *Shifting the Energy*, the playbook for leading high-performing teams in the post-pandemic era.



# Appreciation Energizes High Performance



When used consistently and delivered sincerely, appreciation fuels high performance by helping employees **feel valued, respected, impactful, and confident** – all the emotions required for fueling high engagement and high-quality work that benefits the employee as well as the business.

Appreciation is also a powerful form of **feedback**. It reinforces what right looks like and the behaviors we want to see more of within our teams – making it essential for success in **shaping culture** and **managing change**.

## BUSINESS ADVANTAGES

- Appreciation is a top driver of **retention, productivity, collaboration, communication, involvement, and engagement** (*Gallup, 2023; Gartner, 2024; Workpossible, 2024*)
- Well-appreciated employees are more likely to be high-performers who drive better outcomes, including **customer service, quality, productivity, and innovation** (*Gallup, 2023 and 2024; Walter, 2024; Workhuman, 2023*)
- Employees who feel appreciated are **45% less likely to leave**. (*Gallup and Workhuman, 2024*)

## EMPLOYEE ADVANTAGES

- About 7 in 10 employees say a simple “thank you” would boost their **morale and motivation** in a significant way (*Korn Ferry, 2021*)
- More than half of employees consider appreciation to be a factor in their **“dream day” at work** (*Workpossible, 2024*)
- Appreciation triggers neurochemicals that **recharge energy** and **prevent burnout** (*Gartner, 2024; Walter, 2024*)

## 3 Ways to Use Appreciation to Energize Your Team

# Tap into the 60-Second Gratitude Formula

1

Unlike formal recognition, appreciation is more personal and conversational. It's a short and simple way to show employees you're grateful for the impact they're making and you're glad to have them on the team.

Here's the simple formula for knowing how to express appreciation:

**Challenge Faced + Help Provided + Who It Helped = Impact Made**

This formula moves beyond simple "good job" feedback to show employees exactly what they did, why it mattered, and who benefited from their efforts. This makes the appreciation feel more genuine and helps employees understand the value they bring to the organization.

### *Example 1 (Operations / Initiative)*

"Thank you for jumping in to troubleshoot the software outage when the scheduling system crashed yesterday afternoon.

It really helped the entire service team by keeping patient appointments on track and avoiding cancellations."

### *Example 2 (Sales / Customer Service)*

"Thank you for stepping up to present the proposal when our lead account manager was unexpectedly out.

It really helped our client and our company by keeping the deal moving and reinforcing our reliability."

### *Example 3 (IT / Problem-Solving)*

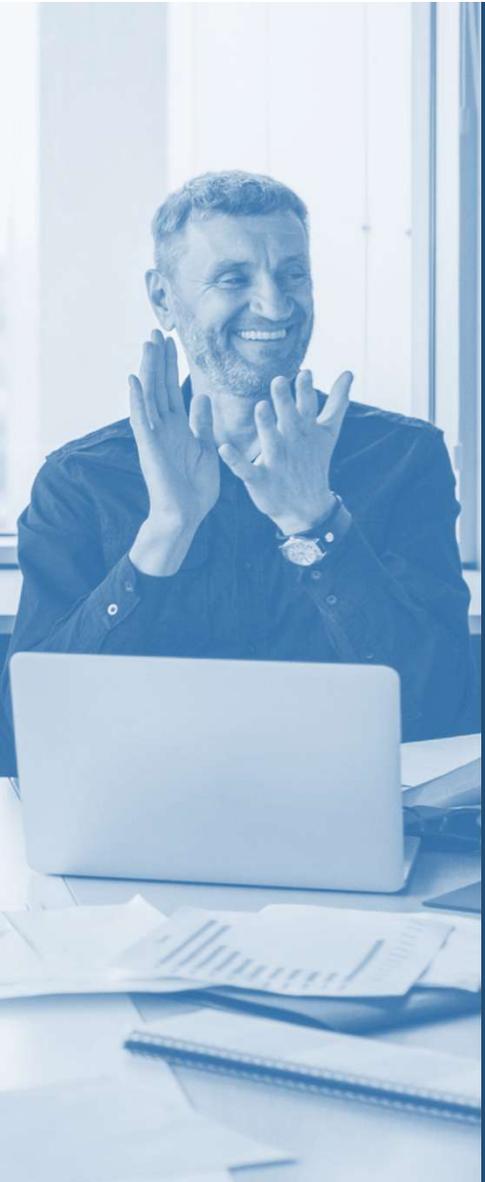
"Thank you for identifying that software glitch when our system kept crashing during peak hours.

It really helped our entire department by preventing hours of lost productivity and ensuring we could serve customers without delays."

### *Example 4 (Finance / Team Collaboration)*

"Thank you for welcoming our new analyst and walking her through the reporting process during this busy quarter.

It really helped her confidence and the finance team by shortening her learning curve and easing the workload for everyone."



## Make It Part of Your Routine

2

Build appreciation into the rhythm of your week so it's natural, not an afterthought, and makes it easier to maintain a consistent flow of energizing gratitude to your team.

### Recurring Meetings

Allocate the first few minutes of 1:1s or team meetings to acknowledge and thank employees for the recent ways they made an impact.

Save your notes. Those conversational thank-yous come in handy during performance reviews and coaching conversations. They can also help with deciding who should receive formal recognition or awards.

### Habit Stacking

Find one daily or weekly activity that can be a reminder to express appreciation to someone you see along the way or via a written note. Use the 60-Second Gratitude Formula on the previous page for inspiration.

Activity examples: Getting coffee, walking to a meeting, or preparing your list of priorities for the following day or week.

## Seek Insight from Other Levels

3

One of the most powerful and memorable ways to make someone feel appreciated and valuable to you is to ask them for their input – even if you can't implement every idea.

Examples:

- Invite employees to help you gather potential solutions to a common challenge.
- Ask employees at least two ranks below yours to teach you a process, system, or tool.
- Shadow a front-line employee or mid-level leader for a day to learn from them.

### Worried you might let them down if you can't implement the suggestions you receive?

Try saying it like this:

"I'm in the process of learning more about \_\_\_\_\_, and I'd love to hear your thoughts. I can't promise I'll be able to implement everything I hear, but I'm eager to see things from multiple perspectives."

# For Your Inspiration

Here are some of my favorite examples of leaders' clever expressions of appreciation.

## Lemonade Award

The leader of a customer service team presented lemonade packets to employees who “turned lemons into lemonade.” Each lemonade award came with a thank-you card and a short message using the 60-Second Gratitude Formula. A copy of the message went into the employee’s file as a reminder for career conversations and performance reviews.

Alternatives include presenting a Hot Wheels toy car for “driving the project to the finish line” and brightly colored shoelaces for “tying up loose ends.”

## AI-Enhanced Birthday Message

A Vice President at a large snack food company used AI-generated images to craft thoughtful emails on employees’ birthdays. The images captured the person’s most impactful accomplishments – both professionally and personally. The email was sent to the widest distribution of the employees’ colleagues, including people from project teams they worked with outside their division.

## Blackout Poetry

The Creative Director for a team of writers used pages of magazine articles to create artful thank-you messages by using a dark marker to blackout areas of text to reveal only the words of the thank-you message.



# Applying Your Appreciation Power Pack

Small acts of appreciation, repeated consistently, shift the energy of an entire culture. Here's a suggestion for next steps:

1. **Think of one team member** who recently made an impact – even in a small way.
2. **Decide how you'd like to thank them.** It could be a written message, a conversation, a token of appreciation, or another method unique to you or your team's culture.
3. **Now consider how you could make appreciation a habit.** Is it a 15-minute block on your calendar each week, a standing agenda item for your 1:1s or team meetings, or something specific to your routine, culture, or leadership style?

*Thank you for being courageous enough to leverage the power of appreciation. We're all navigating some of the most tumultuous times in recent business history, but appreciation is a powerful method for infusing the energy and optimism human beings require to reach and maintain higher levels of performance. Thanks to you, we're shifting the energy one person, one team, and one organization at a time.*



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