

Achieving Results

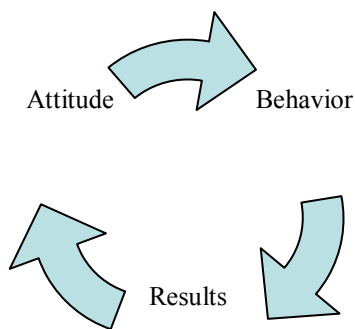
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Attitude of Gratitude

In this season of Thanksgiving and Christmas, in between the cooking and cleaning, feasting and football, we gather as family and friends to give thanks for our many blessings. I love this holiday season – every minute of it. But to be honest, sometimes I get so caught up in the “tactical” elements, the shopping, decorating, cooking and clean-up, that I fail to acknowledge the people in my life for whom I’m truly thankful.

Our work life can be like that as well. We get so caught up in executing the details that we fail to truly value our customers, employees, business partners and other stakeholders. Without these important relationships, our businesses would cease to exist.



Knowing that your attitudes impact your behaviors, which in turn impact your results, imagine how an attitude of gratitude could make a positive change in your business results. Perhaps now is the time to reflect on the relationships that are central to your business success and assess how well your actions reflect an attitude of gratitude.

Grateful for your customers

Henry Ford said, “It is not the employer who pays the wages. Employers only handle the money. It is the customer who pays the wages.”

Even though you and I know this to be true, you have likely been the victim of poor customer service because someone didn’t behave as if you were the one who paid their paycheck.

If your organization is on the giving end of less than stellar customer service, it is time to make

*Thankfulness is the beginning of gratitude.
Gratitude is the completion of thankfulness.
Thankfulness may consist merely of words.
Gratitude is shown in acts.
~ Henri Frederic Amiel*

an attitude adjustment. Imagine what a difference it would make if every person demonstrated an attitude of gratitude in the service they provided to your customers. Picture your employees not



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Most people understand the impact attitudes can have on behavior and results. In fact, studies show that 85% of our success is dependent on attitude and only 15% on skills and knowledge. Yet, 95% of all corporate training dollars are spent on skills and knowledge! If you want to make a significant investment in improving your bottom line, make an investment in improving your attitude and the attitudes of your employees.

Black Diamond Associates can help. We work with successful individuals and organizations who want to achieve the next level of success. Give us a call.

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only speaking the words “thank you” but truly meaning them. Imagine how different it would be if service were provided by people who acknowledged that customers have a choice of who to do business with and truly appreciated that the customer had chosen them!

What about customers who complain about your product or service? Are you grateful they took the time to let you know how you can improve? Most don't, you know. Most unhappy customers only share their bad experience with their friends, family and potentially 12 million strangers online. Then, when they take their business elsewhere, you never know about it.

A customer is the most important visitor on our premises. He is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him. He is not an interruption in our work. He is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider in our business. He is part of it. We are not doing him a favor by serving him. He is doing us a favor by giving us an opportunity to do so.
~ Mahatma Gandhi

Bill Gates said “Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning.” A customer who complains is a potential loyal customer - depending on your attitude toward them and how you choose to respond. Be grateful, encourage and reward your customers for speaking up and letting you know where you've failed them. Your business can only become stronger as a result.

Grateful for your employees

I once worked with a client who felt that the only gratitude he needed to show his employees was the paycheck he gave them at the end of the week. It is no wonder he was dealing with significant morale problems that were impacting the bottom line. While this example may be extreme, all too often the relationship between employer and employee is not much more than an exchange of pay for service and the cost is high turnover and low morale.

The heart and soul of any organization is its people. Because your relationship with your employees significantly impacts your company's relationship with your customers, Stephen R. Covey suggests you should “Always treat your employees exactly as you want them to treat your best customers.” That means putting on an attitude of gratitude for the unique contributions each individual makes.

When it comes to life the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude.
~ Gilbert K Chesterton

Sometimes it's not easy to behave in a grateful manner when an employee's line of thinking, behavioral style or perspective is different than yours. When differences are appreciated and diversity is welcomed and valued, the conflict that naturally arises can work to make a business stronger. Alternatively when they are not, tension rises and disputes can become destructive. Choose an attitude of gratitude and your results will reflect the benefits.

Grateful for other partners and stakeholders

Alfred North Whitehead once said, “No one who achieves success does so without acknowledging the help of others. The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude.” There are two key words in this quote: acknowledge and gratitude.

Acknowledging how your business partners, suppliers, vendors, industry associations, investors, board members, friends and family members play a role in your success is the critical first step. It is all too easy to take for granted the important role they play in your success. As the old adage says “Absence makes the heart grow fonder.” Taking a moment to consider how you would succeed without them, may awaken the sense of gratitude that is deserved.

A successful man is one who can lay a firm foundation with the bricks others have thrown at him.
~ David Brinkley

Coming full circle

Our attitudes are the greatest indicator of our success. Positive attitudes lead to positive behaviors that yield positive results. The opposite is also true. If you want to make a difference in your results, start with your attitudes. If you put into habit an attitude of gratitude, imagine the positive change it would make to your organization's results – and wouldn't that be something to be grateful for!