

INSPIRE

On Leadership

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Small nuggets, big difference

Organizations want results. Employees want fulfillment.

Both are achievable.

Small gestures, let's call them nuggets, make a big difference for employees. When your employees are fulfilled, the benefits are palpable. Most of all, organizations get the results they need.

It's true that the little things are the big things for your employees. Let's take a look at five small nuggets that will make a big difference.

Have a welcoming nature. Welcome your employees to their day, every morning, by name. Not a morning person? Doesn't matter. Your employees deserve a friendly greeting. Welcoming also applies to new employees joining your team. Be ready for them. Make time for them on their first day. Tell them you're glad to have them on board.

Catch people doing things right...and tell them. This is such a big one. Too many leaders are focused on what's wrong. They employ the "leave alone zap" method. This means leaving employees alone with they're doing the right things and zapping them when something is not as it should be. Acknowledgment of the good things is a must. This can be as simple as "I can count on your every day. You're here, you're engaged, you're productive...doing the things we need from you. Thank you." If I hear one more leader say, "That's what their paycheck is for...."

Be curious when things don't go well. How often do things not go well? Every. Single. Day. Step one is to have your mind in the right place about this. Expect that things will not go as expected. Unless you're dealing with a chronic underperformer, employees deserve to be able to share the story. My absolute favorite question for a leader to have in his or her toolbox is "What happened?" "You missed the deadline. What happened?" "You lost your temper in the meeting today. What happened?"

Manage your emotions. This is critical. Human beings remember moments of disrespectful treatment for a long time. If you are an aggressive person or a passive aggressive person toward your employees get a handle on this. Use your words, not your emotions.

Care about people. Life is difficult. Every day, employees face challenges at work and in their personal lives. Be in tune to the needs of your employees, and demonstrate to them that you care. People matter.

Each of these could be considered a small nugget, most of them leaning toward positivity in someone else's day. Make no mistake about the big difference these things make in the human experience.

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