

“THANK YOU”

-Bob Salvas, *Success Mail*

At this time of year, we are often reminded of the importance of these two little words. Yet, do we truly understand how important they are? What are the reasons we should be saying “thank you” more frequently?

- Spiritual- There is, of course, a spiritual reason for giving thanks. The primary purpose being to thank our Creator for all that we have in this world. The Bible says “in everything give thanks” (1 Thessalonians 5:18). The simple act of saying ‘grace’ before a meal is the most common demonstration of this.

“If the only prayer you said in your whole life was, "thank you," that would suffice.”
-*Meister Eckhart*

- Personal- Giving thanks do make you feel good but it is also seen by many as a way to open your heart and mind to the opportunities that present themselves. If you are in a thankful state of mind, it is hard to be jealous or angry or self-absorbed. Not only is a thankful person **more** open to the possibilities, they also have a more positive attitude which makes them **more** attractive to other people which actually leads to **more** opportunities.

“If a fellow isn't thankful for what he's got, he isn't likely to be thankful for what he's going to get.” -*Frank A. Clark*

(The popular ‘law of attraction’ can be mentioned here. This well-known universal law simply states that whatever you focus on, you attract. If you focus on the negative or on what you don’t have, you attract more ‘negative’ and more ‘don’t have’ into your life. Being thankful means focusing on the ‘positive’ and what we *do have* and therefore brings more of those things into our lives.)

“We can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our treasures.” -*Thornton Wilder*

- Business- Are there business reasons for giving thanks? What has all this got to do with business? A lot more than you might imagine...
 - First, do you sell face-to-face? Notice I did not ask if you are a *sales person*. If you are in business (and the same could be said of life) you are in ‘sales’. We do presentations, discuss opinions, and continually sell ourselves and our business...and our attitude shows through. In fact, only 7% of our influence with people is based on our words. 55% of our influence is who we are, how we conduct ourselves, what our attitude is...

"What you are shouting so loudly in my ears I cannot hear what you say." -*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

- Do you advertise? As a business, it is important to ‘get the word out’ but how you do that can make a big difference. Consider Joe Girard, a former car salesman who is in the Guinness Book of World Records for selling the most cars. His advertising budget consisted of sending a greeting card to every person he knew every month of the year. A seasonal greeting and the words “I like you” were usually the message inside the card. He NEVER told them about a sale or tried to entice them to buy a car.

“Appreciation beats self-promotion every time.”- *Kody Bateman*

- Do you like to keep the customers you already have? When I consult with my clients about loyalty marketing, we invariably talk about the customer experience and customer communication. The difference is the ‘customer experience’ is what happens when the customer comes to you and ‘customer communication’ is what happens when you go to the customer. So, if a customer comes to you and your place of business is dirty, the customer thinks that you don’t care enough about them to keep your place clean (you don’t appreciate them). And when they do not get a ‘thank you’ note for giving you business or you **only** send them an advertising message that you want them to buy more, they think you don’t appreciate the business they already gave you. When you consider that about 67% of the customers who will leave you do so because of a ‘feeling of indifference’ (they think you do not care), then it is obvious that these are things you need to pay attention to.

“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.”

-*William Arthur Ward*

In her book THANK YOU POWER, Deborah Norville talks about an experiment where one group of customers is sent a thank you; a second group was sent a thank you and a 20% off coupon; and a third group was given nothing. There was more repeat business from the first group (those who received just the thank you and no coupon) than either of the other two groups. The reason is simple; the coupon offer was seen as an insincere thank you- they just wanted to sell them more stuff.

Which brings me to the final point- saying THANK YOU is important but it is not enough. You have to be sincere. Just like the article I wrote recently about volunteering in your community- there are actually personal **and** business benefits, but you have to approach it with no expectation of those benefits. If you can do that, the power of THANK YOU can have dramatic effects on your life and your business.

“Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow.” -*Melody Beattie*