



Leading with Encouragement

In his book, *The Five Love Languages*, Gary Chapman describes ways that people give and receive love. He has adapted his principles for use with adults, children, singles, and families.

The ideas are worth considering in a work setting as well. Chapman details the five “languages” as follows:

1. **Words of Affirmation:** Verbal appreciation speaks powerfully to some people.

How to do it: reinforce a difficult decision, affirm progress on a project, acknowledge perspective on a topic, send a note of appreciation to an employee’s home, make a banner to celebrate an accomplishment.

2. **Quality Time:** This is more than just proximity to a person—it’s about focusing your attention on them.

How to do it: Make a point of connecting with each employee for 5 minutes each week, choose an employee occasionally to take on a 10 min. walk around campus and check in with them about their life.

3. **Acts of Service:** Sometimes simple chores can be a true expression of caring. Just as Jesus washed His disciples’ feet, doing humble work is a powerful expression of care.

How to do it: Be willing to help with a difficult task, give a car wash certificate, pitch in and help when the department is understaffed.

4. **Receiving Gifts:** Some people respond well to visual symbols of care. Gifts don’t need to come frequently and they needn’t be expensive, but gifts cause some people to feel more happy and secure.

How to do it: Leave a candy in the employee’s mailbox, pick flowers on the way to work to give away, surprise someone with a Coldstone certificate.

5. **Physical Touch:** OK, let’s face it: this one may be better left for families. However, massages are offered for some employees here at work. Encourage your clinical staff to take advantage of this service.

Most importantly, however, discover how your employees like to be cared for—and then find ways to do those things. This takes creativity and a willingness to adapt to various personalities. But if you make a point to vary your encouragement, you will likely speak the language of every employee at some time.

Gallup C04 Focus Groups

We asked employees what the following statement from the Gallup survey means to them. “*The institution cares about my spiritual well-being.*”

Following are some of their responses:

- The mission will be clearly stated and referenced often by leadership and administration
- There will be freedom to express one’s personal spiritual journey
- There will be monetary investment in things that support spiritual health
- There will be support for personal needs such as crisis counseling, massage, classes on health, & stress management, etc.
- There will be prayer at meetings

The Lord be exalted, who delights in the wellbeing of His servant. Psalm 35:27

Bulletin Board Idea

When I say “Good morning”, I mean to say:

G-od
O-ffers us His
O-utstanding
D-evotion to
M-ake us
O-bedient &
R-eady for a
N-ew day with Him.
I-nspire others please, &
N-ever forget
G-od loves you! . .



A Worship Thought

Charles Plumb was a US Navy jet pilot in Vietnam. After 75 combat missions, his plane was destroyed by a surface-to-air missile. Plumb ejected and parachuted into enemy hands. He was captured and spent 6 years in a communist Vietnamese prison. He survived the ordeal and now lectures on lessons learned from that experience.

Now, Plumb asks his audience, “Who’s packing your parachute?”

One day, when Plumb and his wife were sitting in a restaurant, a man at another table came up and said, “You’re Plumb! You flew jet fighters in Vietnam from the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk. You were shot down!”

“How in the world did you know that?” asked Plumb. “I packed your parachute,” the man replied.

Plumb gasped in surprise and gratitude. The man pumped his hand and said, “I guess it worked!”

Simple Solutions

This section of the newsletter contains ideas that a manager can use to nurture employees’ spiritual health.

- Establish a department prayer list or prayer box.
- Utilize Prayer Notes for employees who are facing difficult issues. (Prayer Notes are available from Employee Spiritual Care, x48406)
- Post a thought for the day or a text for the day on a bulletin board or prominent wall.
- Encourage staff to attend Health and Faith Forums. The next one, titled *The Power of Simple Presence*, is April 9 at noon in Wong Kerlee.

Use your head to handle yourself; your heart to handle others.
 Author unknown

Plumb assured him, “It sure did. If your chute hadn’t worked, I wouldn’t be here today.”

Plumb couldn’t sleep that night, thinking about that man. He says, “I kept wondering what he might have looked like in a Navy uniform: a white hat, a bib in the back, and bell-bottom trousers. I wonder how many times I might have seen him and not even said good morning, how are you or anything because, you see, I was a fighter pilot and he was just a sailor.”

Plumb thought of the man hours the sailor had spent on a long wooden table in the bowels of the ship, carefully weaving the shrouds and folding the silks of each chute, holding in his hands each time the fate of someone he didn’t know.

Now, Plumb asks his audience, “Who’s packing your parachute?” Everyone has someone who provides what they need to make it through the day. Plumb also points out that he needed many kinds of parachutes when his plane was shot down over enemy territory—he needed his physical parachute, his mental parachute, his emotional parachute, and his spiritual parachute. He called on all these supports before reaching safety.

