Recognition & Appreciation

Most Dolly Parton fans can quickly recall the lyrics to “9 to 5,” and while the workforce has changed dramatically since it was released 40 years ago, the underlying sentiment remains the same. Employees want to be acknowledged and valued. Celebrating those we spend a considerable amount of time with each week is important, and how we do it is equally important. Recognition and appreciation sound similar, with subtle differences: recognition acknowledges what people do, whereas appreciation acknowledges who the person is.

How are you recognizing and appreciating others, including direct reports, colleagues, managers...even yourself?

Ask others about their preferences and share your desires and needs. Most of us are aware of and try to follow the “Golden Rule” – Do unto others as you would have done to you. The Platinum Rule – Do unto others as they would want done to them – takes it to the next level. The distinction is critical when interacting with others because what motivates one person may not motivate another.

Why is this relevant to the work we perform? Our work culture, productivity, engagement, satisfaction, etc., are influenced by those around us. We all desire to thrive at work, and building and maintaining positive relationships form the basis of our success. As the workplace transitions to a hybrid environment (yes, even at TCU), it’s important to consider inclusivity through a new approach. When team members are working at offsite locations or at alternative times, it’s essential to think creatively about how to connect with others, individually or as a team. Find formal (scheduled) and informal ways to connect and celebrate.

Recognize your own accomplishments! This can be challenging for some individuals. Suppose you struggle with celebrating your own achievements. In that case, there are ways to showcase your efforts without bragging, which is relevant to this time of year, as TCU employees have the opportunity to self-reflect in their faculty annual reports and staff self-evaluations.

Expanding the habit of recognizing and appreciating your colleagues will pay off in productivity, and more importantly, your connection with others will also grow. Before pulling out all the stops for every occasion, find ways to balance public and private praise that’s specific to individuals, when necessary, and truly inclusive if acknowledging a collective job well done!