

Embrace Thanksgiving and Take 5 to Celebrate Your Talents

Rita's Career Corner ...With Rita B. Allen

Everywhere we turn, there seems to be a lot of focus on difficulties, challenges, pressures, demands and basically a lot of negative news. There certainly are many serious problems and events that have occurred with real consequences and hardships to many people. All of us face different kinds of issues and challenges. The one thing I've learned in life is we are actually stronger and wiser for having these experiences. Amidst all of the negatives, however, why not emphasize and focus on the positives because there are many! When it comes to our careers, we will yield better results if we leverage our talents and capitalize on the areas that we excel. Celebrate your talents!

- ***StrengthsFinder 2.0 by Tom Rath*** is a book that helps you find your strengths. It supports all the positive psychology theories that say focus on your talents, those areas you excel, your strengths rather than areas of deficiencies. In fact, Gallup studies indicate that “people who *do* have the opportunity to focus on their strengths every day are *six times as likely to be engaged in their jobs* and more than *three times as likely to report having an excellent quality of life in general.*” Once you identify your strengths, leverage them in everything you do! Learn your areas of strength, your true talents and invest your energy in developing those strengths instead of correcting deficiencies. Leverage your strengths in everything you do – embrace your talents and further develop them, capitalize on them even as you push yourself in different ways and directions to grow in new areas.

As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday, I am reminded of the following quote that I stumbled across a couple of years ago and have posted on my office bulletin board as a daily reminder:

“I am too blessed to be stressed, and I am too anointed to be disappointed.” ~ Author unknown

During these challenging times, there are so many abundances we are blessed for which to be thankful. Celebrate these abundances – recognize your strengths and leverage them in everything you do personally and professionally. Optimism and gratefulness are part of the celebration process. As you get ready for Thanksgiving, embrace the thankful spirit in your career and carry it through beyond the Thanksgiving season! Be grateful for the talents you have been blessed with, your successes and celebrate them!

Over the ten next days, take 5 minutes every day to discover a new level of satisfaction and contentment sprinkled with lots of optimism and gratefulness by doing the following:

Take 5 and Celebrate your Talents

- Acknowledge successes – big or small
- Celebrate accomplishments – step back and take time to enjoy
- Express gratitude – be happy for the experience and the reward
- Recognize victories – as they occur, relish in the moment
- Reach out to others – thank the people who played a role in helping
- Accept challenges - see obstacles as opportunities for learning and growth
- Stay positive – attitude is everything, look at the cup as half full rather than half empty
- Smile and laugh – best stress releasers and energy boosters

Remember Thanksgiving is about being grateful for all that we have and rejoicing in thankfulness.

So as we get ready for another year to wrap up and begin a new year, make every day like Thanksgiving. Be grateful for your strengths, leverage your talents, and rejoice in thankfulness every day of your career. Take 5 to celebrate your talents and have a more fulfilling career and a happy quality of life. Don't waste energy on the negative things that occur every day and/or on the actions of people which you cannot control. *Benjamin Franklin said it best:*

“Life is ten percent what you make it and ninety percent how you take it!”

Many wishes for a very happy Thanksgiving and beyond to all! Be sure to take 5 to celebrate your talents and be thankful for all of the positives in your life and career. Don't ever forget, we're *'too blessed to be stressed'*!

Ask Rita...

Question: I work with a colleague who is a real “Debbie Downer” and always dwells on the worst case scenario of every situation and contributes to creating a lot of unnecessary drama on our team. I have tried to be empathetic and supportive but now am feeling the negativity influencing me and my teammates to a point where it is impacting our performance. How do I break this pattern?

Answer: There is nothing worse than working with someone who lacks the ability to see the upside of things and only focuses on the negative. Your efforts to be empathetic and supportive emphasize your collaborative spirit and team orientation. At some point, it is up to your colleague to step up and be accountable for their behavior and the kind of negativity it is adding to the team. You cannot control or change your colleague's behavior or way of thinking, all you can control is how you react to it. Perhaps the best way to break the pattern is to no longer enable that kind of behavior and instead role model positive behaviors as the norm and expectations for everyone on the team. In addition, highlight your colleague's strengths. Emphasize their talents and celebrate them together which will not only improve performance but enhance it. Allow him/her to feel good about their role and see the value they offer. As situations arise and if negativity begins, stop it

before it begins by diverting the conversation only in positive directions with a focus on solutions. I realize this will be difficult and likely quite exhausting, however, eventually it will create a new standard within the team that will only encourage and exemplify positivity with a focus on results, collaboration and team work.

Send your questions to: [Rita B. Allen](#)

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