



Why This World Gratitude Day May Be the Most Important Ever

AND HOW TO CELEBRATE AT YOUR WORKPLACE

workhuman*



Employees have overcome enormous challenges over the past year – and now they’re facing a whole slew of new ones. Heading back to the office, either full-time or as part of a hybrid environment, means adjusting to revamped schedules, adapting to updated protocols, and deliberating once again about issues of work-life balance.

Put that all together and perhaps it’s no surprise that a recent Monster poll found 95% of workers are considering changing jobs.

Looking ahead over the next few weeks, do you feel your company is doing enough to ease the stress of these transitions? Is there more you could do to ensure your employees are as happy and productive as possible?

World Gratitude Day on September 21 represents an ideal opportunity to engage with employees, alleviate their angst, and reinforce your appreciation for all they are doing to make your company successful.

What is World Gratitude Day?

World Gratitude Day has been growing in popularity ever since 1965 when Sri Chinmoy first proposed it as a way to celebrate thankfulness. Sri, who was director of the United Nations Meditation Group, was honored in a ceremony at the United Nations Headquarters in 1977, and that's when the date of September 21 was officially designated as World Gratitude Day. Since then, what was once just an annual observance has evolved into a dynamic, international movement, offering people around the world a formalized occasion to pause and appreciate all they are thankful for.



Why is gratitude so essential in today's workplace?

In March, Workhuman polled more than 3,000 U.S. workers about how they were feeling after one year of the global pandemic. The results showed that many employees are burned out, stressed, and lonely. Across industries and employee groups:

48%

somewhat or strongly agree they've **experienced burnout.**

61%

have experienced **elevated stress levels.**

32%

somewhat or strongly agree they've felt **lonely at work.**

Can gratitude help alleviate negative sentiments like these? Yes, research suggests it can. In study after study, actively practicing gratitude has been shown to improve personal happiness – for both the giver and the receiver. That's because conveying and receiving appreciation creates bonds that satisfy deeply ingrained needs for attachment and belonging. Interestingly, only 51% of those we polled said they've been thanked at work in the last month.



If ever there was a time to step up expressing gratitude and recognition, it's now. Your employees will benefit and the business overall is likely to as well. Other research we've done shows just how valuable recognition can be in uncertain times. It can:

Strengthen trust in the face of change. Workers recognized in the last month at companies that have been through disruptive business change are 2x as likely to trust their leadership team.

Buffer against stress. Workers recognized within the last 30 days reported the lowest levels of stress.

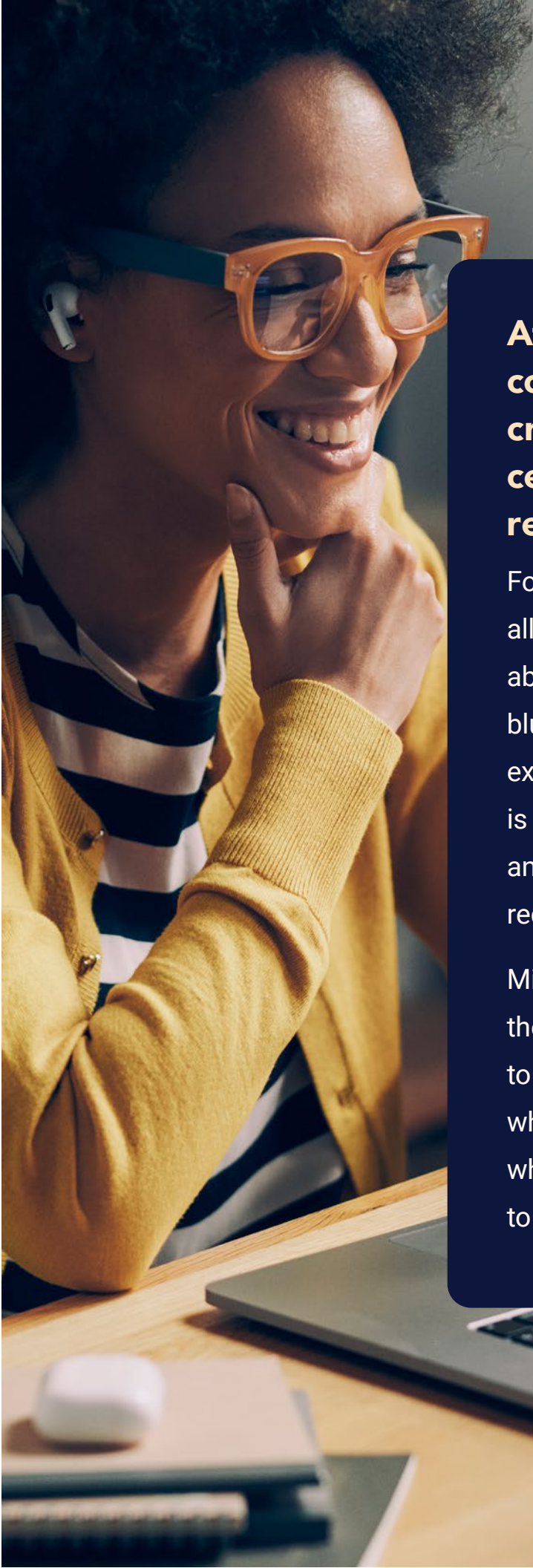
Tie to greater employee productivity. Consultants exceed their billable hour targets when they are more frequently recognized.

And the list goes on and on.



How to celebrate gratitude

Having a recognition program is a critical first step in creating a culture of gratitude and a workplace that will prove resilient in the face of change. This year's World Gratitude Day on September 21 represents a unique opportunity to demonstrate your appreciation and promote recognition above and beyond what happens at your company every day.



At Workhuman[®], we are continually amazed by the creative ways our customers celebrate gratitude and recognition at their companies.

For example, in its monthly newsletter to all employees, Merck includes an update about its recognition program Inspire. This blurb may tie to events at the company, or to external events more globally, but the goal is to always talk about using recognition and how easy it is for Merck employees to recognize their peers in the moment.

Minto Group has also innovated throughout the pandemic, using its recognition program to differentiate and acknowledge employees who continued to work in the public domain while the remainder of the company was able to work remotely.

As we return to the office and gear up for World Gratitude Day, what can you do to deepen organization-wide feelings of belonging?

[Download the Workhuman World Gratitude Day Toolkit](#) for more ideas and resources to drive engagement and connection outside or within your recognition platform.

Thank you for reading and for helping to spread more gratitude worldwide. You can share your moment of gratitude on social media with the hashtags #WorldGratitudeDay, #Workhuman, and #SparkWorldGratitude for a chance to be featured on our page.



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