

Family Business Magazine E-Newsletter
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1. Create a culture of appreciation. Recognizing excellence will increase your company's return on its investment, according to consultant Noelle C. Nelson, author of the upcoming book *The Power of Appreciation in Business: How an Obsession with Value Increases Performance, Productivity & Profits*, scheduled for publication this month by MindLab Publishing. Appreciation starts at the top, Nelson notes; how you value your employees, product, service and customers directly affects your profits and productivity. Here are her tips on how to create a culture of appreciation in your company:

1. Catch your employees in the act of doing something right. Appreciating and rewarding employees for good work on a spontaneous and unanticipated basis encourages continued good work and effort. Specific comments -- such as "The specs you wrote up really make a difference to X customer"-- are more effective than general "great job" comments.
2. Look at your business facility. What does it say about how you value (or fail to value) those who work for and with you? What is the condition of the work environment? The restrooms? Lunch areas? Would a new coat of paint make a dreary work area bright? How about the equipment? What needs fixing or updating? Does your reception area reflect how you value your product or service to your customers and visitors?
3. Make heroes of the men and women who work for and with you. Collect stories of work done well, of those who went the extra mile or kept their spirits up in the face of challenges. Spread the news throughout your company. Discourage negative talk and gossip about anyone or anything. Don't indulge in conversations like "the economy is terrible" or "customers are a nuisance." Don't diminish the power of appreciation by bashing others.
4. Address problems as solutions-in-the-making and spend as little time as possible finding fault. Blaming others diminishes their motivation to work well for you. Instead, educate yourself and others about how to make things better.