

## HUMBLE LEADERSHIP

*“Love ... does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.” – I Corinthians 13*

In servant leadership, humility is shown by giving and receiving appreciation in a gracious way.

As a humble leader, you know that accomplishments are a result of a collective effort, and that expressing gratitude toward others helps to bring out the best in them. When you give praise for a job well done, you help the recipient of that praise feel good, and make it more likely that the praiseworthy behavior will be repeated.

You know that little is gained from boasting and arrogance. Gracious appreciation lets you build relationships as you share credit for what you accomplish together.

### Key Actions for Being Humble

- **Appreciate and support team members' contributions.**

**Encourage team members to look for ways to make improvements, and to serve guests and hosts better.**

When you encourage and support others' contributions, you help create emotional connections with fellow employees, and make it more likely they will take initiative to help the organization reach its goals.

Be sure to:

- Ask team members for their ideas on ways to simplify work processes or improve guest experiences.
- Invite team members to take initiative to solve problems when they arise.

**Thank team members when they share their ideas and observations.**

When we thank others for their efforts, they feel valued. And when people feel valued, they are motivated to make better efforts and contribute their best ideas.

*EXAMPLES OF WHAT TO SAY:*

- *“Thank you for contributing to our success. This is another example of how we constantly improve.”*
- *“Thanks for your ideas. I like how you think of ways to improve the guest experience.”*
- *“I appreciate your thoughts about this.”*

- **Praise others for a job well done.**

**Follow these steps for sharing praise and recognition.**

#### 1. Identify an opportunity.

Actively look for opportunities to recognize others. If you pay attention, you will uncover many contributions, both large and small.

## Key Actions for Being Humble (continued)

### • Praise others for a job well done. (continued)

#### 1. Identify an opportunity.

For example:

- Note when team members suggest ideas for making improvements or solving problems.
- Observe team members as they interact with guests and each other.
- Take note when guests or team members tell you about something an individual did that they appreciated.
- Participate in your property's program for recognizing employees' contributions.

#### 2. Approach the person at an appropriate time and place.

Don't wait too long to recognize an action or your message may not seem sincere. It is also important to think about the way the individual would appreciate hearing praise or being recognized. Sometimes praise is best shared in a private, one-on-one setting; for contributions that have a larger impact, recognizing someone publicly is appropriate.

#### 3. Describe what the person did (what you observed or learned about).

It's important that people know why they are being praised or recognized. Be sure to describe the action as specifically as possible, including when and how it took place.

*EXAMPLES OF WHAT TO SAY:*

- *"Lauren, a guest approached me yesterday to tell me what a good job you did calming down his daughter when she got lost. Thank you for exceeding guest expectations."*
- *"Jake, I know you have spent countless hours talking with everyone on the team to develop the new scheduling template."*

#### 4. Describe the impact of the person's actions.

Let the person know how their actions affected guests, the organization, and/or the team.

*EXAMPLES OF WHAT TO SAY:*

- *"Gina, the process change you suggested has cut our costs by 10 percent. Great job!"*
- *"Elliot, you went out of your way to find the Iverson's reservation, which meant a lot to them."*

#### 5. Personalize it, if appropriate.

Say thank you and describe what this person's actions meant to you.

*EXAMPLES OF WHAT TO SAY:*

- *"Pete, it means a lot to me to see the way you spend extra time talking with our younger guests. Thank you for making an emotional connection and paying attention to their needs."*
- *"Jamie, the information you gave me made it much easier for me to evaluate the situation, and I appreciate that. Thank you."*

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## Key Actions for Being Humble (continued)

- **Graciously accept praise and appreciation from others.**

**When someone is praising you, give that person your full attention.**

Listen attentively by making eye contact, nodding your head, and leaning forward.

**Acknowledge what contributes to your efforts or attributes, if appropriate.**

*EXAMPLES OF WHAT TO SAY:*

- *“I enjoy the work.”*
- *“You make my job easier by letting me know what you want.”*
- *“You set a good example for this, so your praise means a lot to me.”*
- *“It’s a team effort, and I’m grateful to be working with a super team.”*

**Avoid discounting or overstating your contribution.**

Discounting your own contribution also manages to discount the other person’s praise of it.

*EXAMPLES OF WHAT NOT TO SAY:*

- *“What I did was nothing.”*
- *“It wasn’t that great.”*
- *“Others did more than I did.”*

Overstating your contribution may make others feel that their praise was not enough; this behavior can be perceived as arrogant.

*EXAMPLES OF WHAT NOT TO SAY:*

- *“Everyone tells me how great I am at this.”*
- *“If you thought that was good, wait until you see what I do next time.”*
- *“You could be just as good as me if you tried harder.”*

**When in doubt of what to say, keep your response simple.**

*EXAMPLES OF WHAT TO SAY:*

- *“You’re welcome.”*
- *“Thank you for your kind words.”*
- *“Thank you.”*
- *“I appreciate that.”*

