

The Significance Principle

by Les Carter and Jim Underwood

- ✦ The basic, driving force of human behavior is the desire for acceptance, understanding, appreciation, and recognition. The need for significance is such a powerful aspect of our personality that it motivates us to identify with success and just as powerfully motivates us to avoid failure and conflict.
- ✦ A winning relationship is one in which all parties win.

Characteristics of Significance Builders

1. A calm, confident demeanor
2. Recognizing when others are stressed and responding helpfully
3. Being patient
4. Paying sincere compliments
5. Openly sharing gladness over someone else's success
6. Remembering simple preferences of others
7. Taking time to slow down and talk about personal matters
8. Using an even tone of voice during a confrontation
9. Enjoying a reputation as steady and reliable
10. Regularly commenting on what is right and good
11. Being willing to solicit input during decision-making times
12. Expressing tenderness naturally, saying the words "I appreciate you" sincerely
13. Admitting when you're wrong, without excessive shame
14. Being a genuine encourager, a positive presence
15. Knowing when to speak and when to be silent
16. Committing to the ethical treatment of others

The Significance Paradox

The way to find your own significance is to actively recognize the significance of others

- ✦ Only when we recognize the value of others are they able to share their value with us.
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Fifteen Ways to Mess Up Company Morale

1. Do nothing to establish a friendly rapport with others
2. Focus on what is wrong with others
3. Be preoccupied with your own responsibilities
4. Never give an unrestricted compliment. Use words like “except for” and “but”
5. Compare people with one another (or yourself) in a negative manner
6. When someone mentions a personal success, “one-up” them with something you’ve done better
7. If someone disagrees with one of your ideas, be sure you make them understand how stupid their idea is
8. Interrupt people before they complete a thought or an idea
9. Never admit a mistake, regardless of how obvious it was
10. Hold others to a set of impossibly high standards
11. Allow others’ bad moods to affect your attitude
12. If you don’t understand what someone is saying, make it clear that he or she is really off base
13. Never change your opinion about anything; it’s a sign of weakness
14. Expect a payback if you do something nice for someone else
15. Let your rules be more important than relationships

Fifteen Ways to Build Company Morale

1. Be the first to smile when you meet someone
 2. Focus on what is good in others
 3. Have a positive preoccupation with what others want to accomplish
 4. Learn to regularly recognize others
 5. See each person as unique, not as someone to be compared against others
 6. When someone mentions a personal success, celebrate with them
 7. Encourage those who disagree with your ideas, and demonstrate your sincerity by taking action on their good ideas
 8. Learn to listen; always listen *past* where they finished
 9. Never fail to admit a mistake if you committed it
 10. Demonstrate your standards by living them out before others
 11. Choose to express a good attitude regardless of those around you
 12. If you don’t understand something, admit it and take advantage of the opportunity to learn
 13. Be willing to change your opinion, just as you would like others to do the same
 14. Never do anything nice merely to receive a payback
 15. Maintain your ethics and your character, without being a rigid rule-keeper
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