

SAMPLE



Make Their Day  
**FACILITATOR'S GUIDE**



Make Their Day ..... p. 6

Leading This Program ..... p. 7

Introducing the Video ..... p. 8

Conversation Starters ..... p. 9

SAMPLE

Activities:

- 50 Ways to Make Their Day ..... p. 10
- I Appreciate You Because..... p. 12
- Bonus Discussion: Helping Others Grow..... p. 14

Follow-Up..... p. 16

A CEO had just been told that morale in the office was down. People were working hard, but they weren't feeling appreciated. "Our people don't feel valued!" he told a vice president, his voice rising. "We have to find a way to get them to feel valued! What can we do to make them feel valued?"

The VP thought for a moment. "How about if we actually value them?" he said.

There are lots of ways to make an employee's day, or month, or year. A fair salary and benefits meet their economic needs. A safe, comfortable workplace meets their physical needs. Formal awards fulfill their achievement needs. While these things are essential, they are not a substitute for the human connections that meet people's emotional needs.

That's why reward programs, in the absence of meaningful relationships, won't automatically solve morale or trust problems. Say you "get" something—an award for years of service, for example—from someone who does little to get to know you or acknowledge you. You may value the "thing" you received, but you're not likely to trust the person who dispenses it any more than you did before. Given the conflict between the message in the award and the message in the person's daily actions, you may trust them less.

So how do you Make Their Day in a way that is most meaningful? It starts with being there. Notice who people are and what they actually do. Tell them how much you appreciate something they've accomplished—or who they had to be to accomplish it—the more specific, the better. Ask their opinion and really consider it. Ask for people's ideas, put them to use and publicly give credit when you do. Encourage people, especially when they're faced with a challenge they are not sure they are capable of overcoming.

Rewards and celebrations are wonderful, and they are even more meaningful when they affirm the appreciation you are already demonstrating.

*"A candle loses none of its light by lighting another candle."*

—ANONYMOUS

The resources in this guide were designed to lead a session from one to two hours, but you can easily adapt them to create a session of any length.

## 1. Video

*Make Their Day* is seven minutes in length. Key themes include:

- Why every person wants and needs to know they are appreciated.
- How simple gestures and symbols can make people feel valued.
- When people feel heard, they feel respected.

## 2. Conversation Starters

Targeted questions, prompted by the video, help your group to begin exploring your beliefs about leadership. These questions help you to honestly assess whether the impact you are having is the impact you want to have.

## 3. Activities

Choose from several activities to help participants become engaged in their learning and take ownership of it. If you have purchased FISH! For Leaders Participant Workbooks for individual participants, we've provided page references so you can help them follow along during the session.

Example: *(If using Participant Workbook, see Workbook page 6.)*

## 4. Action Plan

John Keats said, "Nothing becomes real until it is experienced." Here your participants come up with their own plan to act on what they have learned. The actions may be simple: If you feel you haven't been connecting with your colleagues, you might decide "the first thing I'll do when I arrive in the morning is to greet every person in my area by name."

## 5. Tips

If participants are not sure what to try or need more ideas, we've provided some suggestions.

## 6. Follow-Up

After you put your ideas into action, it helps to reflect on what you learned. What worked? What didn't? What impact did it have on others? What impact did it have on you?

## Activity #1: 50 Ways to Make Their Day



Usually when we prepare for a celebration, we work hard to decorate the physical space with balloons, posters and streamers. What if we put as much effort into decorating our emotional space—with thanks, compliments and encouragement?

Ranken Jordan's staff show their appreciation for each other in many ways—a smile, a kind word, a goofy plastic fish that symbolizes their shared commitment to their patients, the monthly Big Fish award (entitling the honoree to the primo parking space for a month).

The award or honor isn't what matters most to the recipient; what matters is a colleague put the team's values into action and you cared enough to notice and acknowledge them.

### Instructions

There are countless ways to make someone's day. The only limit is your imagination. Here's an exercise to strengthen your Make Their Day muscles.

1. Divide a piece of flip chart paper into four sections.
2. Ask the group to write in each of the sections the name of a group or person that they serve as a leader. For example, in one square they may write Employees; in another, Customers; in another, Management; and so on. Other possibilities might be Students, Parents, Community, Shareholders, etc.
3. For 5-7 minutes the group will brainstorm 50 ways to make the day of the people they listed, writing their ideas in the appropriate section. They must come up with at least five ideas per category.
4. Remind the group to move quickly. Wild ideas are OK and withhold judgment of all ideas until after the brainstorm.
5. For 10-15 minutes have the groups identify their top 10 ideas overall, including at least one idea from each section, and come up with a plan to put them into action.

## Activity #2: I Appreciate You Because... *(continued)*



7. Playing off their comments, ask: “What impact would it have on your team if they regularly experienced what you just experienced?”

This exercise works best with participants who know each other well. But you can still find something good to say about people with whom you are not as close to. If the group is not close, here are some suggestions:

- Your team always performs well, and that must be due to your leadership.
- You really care about the people who work with you.
- You’ve offered some great insights that I want to use with my team.
- You make people feel comfortable.
- You really listen well.

### Action Plan

Ask participants, “What will you do to recognize the good things your team does for our customers and for each other? Write what you will do and when you will do it.”

*(If using Participant Workbook, see Workbook page 9.)*

### Tips

- It is always more meaningful to hear specific praise than the vague, all-purpose, “You’re doing a great job!” The former tells us that the praise-giver actually understands and values what they’re praising us for. Acknowledgment is especially helpful when it points out what we did and who we were “being” when we did it. For example: “I admire how calm and encouraging you were when you listened to that upset patient. You reminded me what our team’s values are all about.”
- The next time a person comes to you with a good idea, don’t just thank them. Ask, “How did you come up with that idea?” Listen carefully to their story and watch their enthusiasm grow as they share it. Showing a sincere interest in people’s thought processes, not just the results of their thoughts, recognizes them as creative—and encourages them to use their gifts even more. Don’t forget to share their story so others can offer their congratulations as well.
- Ask each team member how they prefer to be acknowledged and thanked. Do they want to be recognized privately or publicly? Stock a drawer with notes, candy, gold bars or whatever they prefer.

## Activity #3: BONUS Discussion: Helping Others Grow



Harry, a mutual funds salesman, had a problem, so he went to see Edith, his manager. She listened carefully, then asked, “What do you think?” Harry shared his thoughts while Edith kept asking questions that eventually guided him to an answer they both agreed would work.

As he walked back to his desk, Harry had a realization: He had always thought of Edith as the person who solved his problems for him. But she had actually been showing him how to solve his own problems. She had subtly helped him to become more confident and competent.

Every person has within himself or herself the capacity to move beyond what they are now. Psychologist Carl Rogers called this the “process of becoming.” When we view people as “fixed,” already shaped by their past, we confirm their view of themselves, Rogers noted. But if we see people as a “process of becoming,” they will tend to act in ways that confirm their potential.

That’s what leaders do when they encourage people to stretch past self-imposed limits, to push past their fears, to excel in ways they never thought possible. It means expecting the best from people and it can’t happen without encouragement, compassion and patience; without these qualities, a leader who pushes and harangues people is little more than a dictator.

### Questions

- What are you doing to help your team members grow? How does that help your team?
- What do I see that is possible for my team members that they may not see for themselves?

### Action Plan

Ask participants, “What will you do to help your team members grow and reach their professional potential? Write what you will do and when you will do it.”

*(If using Participant Workbook, see Workbook page 11.)*