



*“Make a difference in someone’s life. Say please and thank you. Take time to connect.”*

Thanks! A powerful word used too seldom.

Thanksgiving, originally a harvest festival, has been celebrated since George Washington issued a proclamation in 1789. In arguably the most difficult time in our country’s history, Abraham Lincoln recognized the need to take stock of all the blessings afforded to the people of the United States and declared Thanksgiving Day a National Holiday.

With our lives as busy as they are, it is hard to slow down to smell the roses, let alone thank all the people we need to thank for the roles they play in our lives. We are blessed to work in an industry that is awash with hardworking, honest people who are dedicated to keeping our economy moving by getting goods to every nook and cranny of our world.

During Thanksgiving this year, consider starting a new tradition in your family or circle of friends. Donate time to charity, visit someone in need of companionship or find some other way to be a blessing to others. Or start an initiative at your place of work that recognizes the people that you spend so much of your life with.

Someone wiser than me recognized that the gift of giving is much more satisfying than the gift of receiving.

I will share one small thing I started several years ago. I began giving each of my children \$20 on Thanksgiving Day and asking them to find some way to help another person between then and Christmas. Over the Christmas Holiday I ask them to share their stories of what they did. Initially there was purchasing of gift cards to hand to someone and donations to a charity, but I’ve kept challenging them to be more involved with the

gift and interact with the person they are gifting.

Last year, one of my daughters took two homeless women that were frequently near her office to lunch. She obviously went over the budget I provided but she had a great time and touched the lives of two people in a real way. The boyfriend of one of my other daughters bought a small care package for a middle-aged man of Mideastern decent that worked in the foodservice area of his dorm. The package led to sharing lunch together that day and a friendship that lasted until his moveout day from the dorm when the man requested a photo of the two of them that he could share with his family.

My two previous columns threw out challenges so I may as well keep up the push. Make a difference in someone’s life. Say please and thank you. Take time to connect. Share more than a “good morning” with the clerk at the convenience store. We work with great people in this industry, let’s be difference makers. Let’s be recognized as an industry that gives back and that is a positive force in people’s lives. **TM**

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