

Chapman, G. and White, P. (2011). *The 5 languages of appreciation in the workplace: Empowering organizations by encouraging people*. Chicago: Northfield Pub.

I read this book as a review for one of The Nav VPs who knows an author personally. Having been familiar with Chapman's "Five Love Languages" this was a quick read since concepts were very similar. If the principles were applied, people would be encouraged and the workplace would be more pleasant. However, my less than stellar track record of loving others according to their love language does not allow me to speak to this issue from a point of strength.

The concept of the book is to motivate by appreciation. The authors have developed a test than allows the takers to assess their strength and weakness areas of appreciation, both for self and in the workplace. "We believe that people in the workplace (whether a paid or volunteer position) need to feel appreciation in order for them to enjoy their job, do their best work, and continue working over the long haul." (p. 25)

"For recognition and appreciation to be effective, they must be individualized and delivered personally." Second, *"appreciation needs to be viewed as valuable to the recipient in order to have an impact."* (p. 21) When leaders actively pursue communicating appreciation to their team members, the whole work culture improves.

- Words of Affirmation: The use of words, verbal or written, to encourage.
- Quality Time: Giving the person your undivided attention; quality conversation with empathetic dialogue.
- Acts of Service: When you help, do so in a way that it is truly valued.
- Tangible Gifts: Give a gift the receiver values.
- Physical Touch: Although there is a place for touch in the workplace it must be done in a way that does not offend or appear to be sexual abuse.

Foundational principles (p. 116):

1. There are different ways to communicate appreciation and encouragement to others.
2. Individuals tend to have preferential modes of being shown that they are appreciated and valued, with some modes of communication being more significant than others for each individual.
3. The most effective communication of appreciation and encouragement occurs when the message is sent in the language of appreciation most valued by the receiver.
4. Messages of appreciation and encouragement in languages not valued by the recipient will tend to miss the mark.

"In short, each individual has a primary language of appreciation. Speak that language and they will feel appreciated. Fail to speak that language and they will not feel appreciated." (p. 117)

How to discover one's language of appreciation? (p. 124) How do they most often express appreciation to others? What do they request most often? What have they complained about most recently?

A person's least valued language of appreciation can approximate a 'black hole' in the work setting. Once you have identified your least valued language of appreciation, we recommend you to talk with colleagues for whom this is their primary language of appreciation and learn from them.

The authors believe that, like personality, the primary language of appreciation does not change much over time, although there can be season where one is valued more highly.

Questions to explore (p. 241): How do I know when my team feels appreciated? What's the best (and most cost-effective) way to give gifts?

See: www.appreciationatwork.com There appear to be some helpful resource articles.