

The Spirit of the Season, Professionally and Year Round

by Robyn Davis, When I Need Help

This holiday season was great, wasn't it? I always enjoy the holidays. The friends and family, food and fun... I mean, it's nice to see everyone in such good spirits. It may be selfish, but my favorite part of the holidays is the gifts (not the getting, the giving, silly!). I love helping people – making things better for someone else makes me feel good – and it's great to be appreciated for the hard work I put into selecting those perfect presents for my favorite people. Even more than that though, I just like to see them genuinely enjoying their gifts. Couldn't we extend all of that giving, helping, and appreciating a little bit longer?



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Some people do. Guys who participate in Movember (a month dedicated to curing prostate cancer), folks who train for 5ks and other athletic competitions aimed at fundraising for a variety of charities (these are held in cities all over the country throughout the year), and even me (I donated 12 inches of my hair to Locks of Love, so I am reminded of my contribution every time I look in the mirror) enjoy the spirit of this season for more than just a few weeks.

It seems like all of this giving, helping, and appreciating is not completely uncommon for most people on a personal level, so I started thinking about the professional world too. During those special holiday weeks, there are the treats most companies send to their clients, the bonus an employee might receive from his superiors, and the well deserved vacation time most people cash in to travel somewhere tropical... not to mention the holiday parties, awards, and other public honors, but these examples all fade away as the season changes. So, I wondered, how we could extend the holiday spirit through out the year but on a professional level too...

Here is what I came up with:

1 -- One of the things I look forward to doing each year is breaking in a fresh calendar book (a little old fashioned, I realize). When I'm doing that, I scatter reminders throughout: I plan to contact my clients, I plan to appreciate my family and friends, and I plan to consider my situation. You can do this too. Open your new calendar book (or scroll to your phone's calendar app or log in to your internet calendar) and skip ahead to February. Write an inspirational quote, something you're thankful for, or block out some time to reflect. Then do the same for April, June, August... you get the idea. At least every other month, make a plan to give, help, and appreciate.

***TIP:** When you set aside time for this on a regular basis, you won't feel the stress and pressure of appreciating everyone all at once (like most people do around the holidays). As long as you make sure to appreciate everyone eventually (preferably a few times each year), the VIPs in your life will know you care.*

2 -- Many experts recommend that you write and post your goals where you can review them on a regular basis. Whether or not you follow their goal setting recommendations, as you accomplish your goals (or check important items off of your to-do list), you can celebrate your success with a prize appropriate to the situation. Then, while you are enjoying your reward, remember all of the "little people" (clients, associates, colleagues, vendors, family, friends...) who helped you get there. Call and/or send a quick note thanking them for their involvement. Not only will a small celebration encourage you to complete the next task right away for yourself, you will also be accountable to the others helping you along the way.

***TIP:** It will feel less awkward to call and tell others they helped you reach one of your goals if you explain what you are working towards up front. Don't be shy; maybe they will have something exciting to share too. Celebrating together is a great way to deepen relationships and motivate each other to succeed.*

3 -- Everyone knows it is important to give back. Can you imagine what our world would be like if people actually did it? My final suggestion is to volunteer on a regular basis (you can do this on your own or with your company). What I mean is, pick a cause and don't just send a check (although I know charities do appreciate that as well), but instead, go out and actually get your hands dirty. Some companies build houses, others host food/clothing drives, and still more organize events benefiting their local charities.

However you choose to get involved, go and feel how you are helping those less fortunate. Feeling the difference you've made can be life changing, contagious, and may inspire you to appreciate your situation and then pay it forward even further.

***TIP:** New to volunteering? Don't feel like you have to jump in with something extreme. Instead, be honest with yourself and do what you can when you can. Lending a hand to your colleagues and associates would be a great place to start: you could stay late to help someone else meet their deadline, make a coffee run for the team before that early morning staff meeting, or choose one of the less glamorous roles no one else is interested in for the next big project.*

How will you extend the holiday spirit throughout the year personally and professionally? Consider the above ideas and decide today!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Robyn Davis is an accomplished event hostess and experienced marketing consultant... she is here when you need help! Robyn has more than ten years of leadership experience and a well rounded background. Offering on-site sales and marketing support to exhibitors and pre-/post-event consulting services, Robyn is definitely not just a stereotypical "Booth Bunny."

Learn more about Robyn Davis and When I Need Help by visiting her website (<http://www.whenineedhelp.com>) today.

Published by Salesopedia
