



# Sixty Second Insight #11: Maintaining Gratitude

by Dave Arch





The story is told of a man who lived in a house with his wife and their twelve children. The house was small for his family, but he couldn't afford a larger home. He went to see a recommended wise man who lived high atop a mountain outside the city where the man lived. Upon hearing of the man's predicament, the wise man told the man to go out to a farm and ask to borrow two pigs and a horse – bringing them into his house to live. Although the man thought it odd, he did as the wise man said and returned to see the wise man a week later.

The man told the wise man that with the horse and two pigs the house was even more crowded. The wise man replied, "Then you must go back to the farm and get a cow and two chickens – keeping them in your house too." The man thought this was odd advice but continued to trust the wise man and brought a cow and two chickens under his roof. He returned as he had promised to see the wise man in another week.

Now the man was filled with frustration about how cramped (and smelly) the house had become. The wise man then told the man to go and get two more of every animal he currently had in his house – adding them to his menagerie. The man stomped out of the wise man’s house but did as he was told – returning to vent his frustration to the wise man in another week.

“I am disappointed,” the man told the wise man. “You had come highly recommended, and you have only made my house more crowded than ever before!” Then the wise man said, “You must now go and return all the animals to the farm from which you borrowed them and come back to see me in a week.” The greatly relieved man quickly did as he was told.

Returning to the wise man the next week, the fellow said, “Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for letting me take the animals out of my house and back to the farm. I can’t believe how roomy my house now feels with just my wife and my twelve children! I’m so grateful.”

How might you leverage the lessons taught by the wise man to help tap into the motivational power of greater gratefulness in your own leadership life?

Now follows a second essay on this important subject of gratitude.

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# Finding Gratitude

What you have and don't have

What I Deserve | GRATITUDE

At the bottom half of the line above you'll see the words "What I deserve." Everyone has to answer that question for themselves. What do you deserve in life? What does life owe you? As the hash mark on the line moves lower on the line (i.e. you feel you deserve less), the greater your capacity for gratitude (i.e. the top half of the line) will be. ***Gratitude is found in the comparison of what you believe you deserve with what you've been given (or not given).*** By "not given" I'm not speaking about a Porsche, a large home, or lots of money. I'm speaking about the fact that you weren't given leukemia, cancer, or children with those conditions – assuming that to be true for sake of example. So . . . if gratitude is lacking in your life . . . check yourself on what you believe you deserve. It might be too high . . . or check your grateful list to make sure it includes those things that have NOT happened to you as well as those which have.

Making changes in either or both directions helps a leader find the gratefulness s/he needs to inspire and motivate others.

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