



## PUT YOUR SPIRITUALITY TO WORK

Conversation Starters for the Workplace

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### 2.24 SPREADING THE WEALTH

“Spreading the wealth” through uplifting and encouraging words, gratitude, humility, generosity and responsibility is a “rewarding” quality that empowers our creativity at work.

**HAVE YOU EVER** been around a person who seems to “spread the wealth” – they naturally express uplifting and encouraging words, compliment people on their work, and appreciate what others have done, while often downplaying their own accomplishments? These traits all point to what we think of as the personal quality of “rewarding”, which is another aspect of being a SPIRITED person.

This “rewarding” quality has a direct impact on motivating ourselves and others to be creative and innovative in our work, even when faced with the most daunting of challenges. It instils a “can do” feeling and attitude.

Some people think they can “put on” this rewarding quality by giving praise and compliments, or even financial incentives if they are in a position to do so, but without sincere appreciation. However, rewarding must be a genuine expression that comes from within us. We have found that this quality emerges naturally when we are in touch with our spiritual roots, because being “rewarding” is actually grounded in a sense of gratitude, humility, responsibility and generosity – all of which are fostered by our spiritual nature.

Gratitude and humility work in harmony together, like two sides of a coin. Both recognize that no one person can accomplish what needs to be done at work – it’s a group effort. Janiece Webb, formerly a senior vice president with Motorola, told us how she set up such a rewarding climate:

*I think that all people are God’s people. I believe in the pure potentiality of every single being. No one gets anywhere by themselves; I am only as good as the people around me. I can only achieve our organizational goals by nurturing the people. I encourage people to believe in themselves and not let the system dictate who they are.*

*I make sure that I communicate in every meeting that anyone can speak up and say whatever they need to say to me. I tell them that I don’t have any more grand ideas than they do. I encourage them to enlighten me if I say dumb things. I remind them that we are all trying to solve this problem together.*

Responsibility and generosity are also key components of a rewarding attitude. As part of our research with spiritual-based leaders, our colleagues interviewed the Honourable President of India, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam. He spoke of his spiritual view of life this way:

*One thing I have found is that I am influenced by a certain belief, it's something like this: If God is there, who can be against?*

He told us of a time when he was Project Director for developing India's first indigenous Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV-III) – and how he experienced the “rewarding” qualities of his boss, Professor Satish Dhawan, just after their first satellite launch:

*When we were at t-minus eight seconds, the computer put the satellite on hold. After receiving expert recommendations, I bypassed the computer and manually launched the system. The first stage fired beautifully. Suddenly, during the second stage, the rocket got into a spin and the satellite fell into the Bay of Bengal, instead of going into orbit. So it was a failure.*

Mr. Kalam's boss chose to face the media himself and took responsibility for the failure:

*We could not succeed today. As the Chief of this organisation, I have decided that I have to give some more help to the scientific community in personal resources, and I am going to assist them. We will definitely succeed in a year's time.*

When the next launch was a success, Professor Dhawan generously allowed Mr. Kalam to face the media, conduct the press conference, and receive the accolades. President Kalam sums up the lesson he learned in this experience:

*Professor Dhawan took the initial failure upon himself, while in fact as Project Director I was responsible for the failure. You see, he was the real leader. That means the leader takes upon himself the responsibility for failure... and gives the credit for success to his team.*

So, ask yourself: *In what ways do I sincerely express the quality of “rewarding” through expressions of gratitude, humility, responsibility and generosity? How do these expressions empower the creative energy where I work?*

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This article is an excerpt from the book, *Put Your Spirituality to Work: Book 2 – Work as a Spiritual Practice*. To download the full book of articles, as well as additional book chapters, articles, workbooks, and research on the subject of “spirituality and human values for leadership and work”, visit our website: [www.globaldharma.org](http://www.globaldharma.org)