



Appreciation circle: Strengthening teamwork and respect

Team activity guide

Time: Approximately 10-15 minutes.

Materials needed: None.

Participants: 5-15 people (can be adapted for larger groups).

Values in Action: Teamwork, Respect, High Performance.

Outcomes: Builds a respectful, high-performing team culture by recognising each other's contributions and deepening connection.

Purpose

This activity creates space for team members to share genuine appreciation. When done regularly, it strengthens relationships, boosts morale, and encourages everyday expressions of respect and gratitude.

How to run the activity

Step 1: Form a circle (1 min)

- Have everyone stand or sit in a circle, facing one another.
- This setup helps build connection and makes the activity feel more personal.

Step 2: Quiet reflection (2 mins)

- Ask each person to take a moment to think of one thing they genuinely appreciate about the person on their **right**.
- Encourage specificity – it could relate to teamwork, attitude, effort, support, or a recent contribution.

Step 3: Share appreciation (6-8 mins)

- Go around the circle, one person at a time.
- Each person shares their appreciation with the person on their **right**.

- The recipient **listens quietly** – no need to reply. This ensures full focus is on the act of giving appreciation.

Step 4: Optional – Appreciate the other side (5 mins)

- Ask the group to shift slightly now and focus on the person on their **left**.
- Repeat the reflection and sharing process so everyone gives and receives appreciation from both sides.

Step 5: Debrief and reflect (5-7 mins)

Gather the group and invite open discussion. Here are some optional questions to guide reflection:

- *How did it feel to receive appreciation from a teammate?*
- *How did it feel to express appreciation to someone else?*
- *What impact does this kind of recognition have on teamwork and morale?*
- *How can we keep appreciation and respect alive in our day-to-day work?*

Encourage honest sharing — it helps reinforce the value of the activity.

Optional tips and variations

- **Theme your appreciation** (e.g., appreciation linked to team values or project work)
- **Create an Appreciation Wall:** After the circle, invite participants to write their message and post it in a visible space
- **Virtual option:** Use breakout rooms and chat to share appreciation messages
- **Regular ritual:** Make this a monthly or end-of-project tradition

Key takeaways

- **Stronger relationships:** Appreciation fosters trust, connection, and a sense of belonging.
- **Boosted morale:** Being recognised motivates people to keep giving their best.
- **Open communication:** Gratitude opens doors for better collaboration and understanding.

Wrap-up message

“Appreciation isn’t just for special occasions, it’s one of the most powerful ways we can strengthen our team culture every day. A simple ‘thank you’ can shift someone’s whole outlook. Let’s keep this energy going in our everyday conversations.”