



# Have You Made Someone Smile? Building a Culture of Appreciation Through Creative Thinking

Singapore Healthcare  
Management 2021



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<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>COVID-19 has caused our staff to experience various degrees of burnout and anxieties as our battle progresses into weeks and months with prolonged safe distancing measures that minimizes staff interaction with one another.</p> <p><i>Have You Made Someone Smile</i> is a ground up initiative for staff by staff launched in May 2020 in the midst of our battle against COVID-19. It is an intended gesture of appreciation at the workplace along the line of graciousness, generosity, love and kindness. It is a form of peer support with staff nudging one another to go on in our fight against COVID-19.</p>	<p><b>METHOD</b></p> <p>Launch of Initiative: Raising Staff Awareness</p> <p>Proliferation of gratitude &amp; Appreciation</p> <p>Measurement of Gratitude</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In April 2020, a small team of like-minded and passionate individuals across different staff domains banded together to create a staff platform through art therapy by creating original work of art with motivational quote to encourage the SHP Family.</li> <li>Supported by senior management, CEO launched the art pieces that were re-packaged as Staff Appreciation Postcards to be delivered to the 8 different polyclinics &amp; SHP Head Office for staff to pen personal encouraging notes for fellow colleagues.</li> <li>Other than posting the art pieces on the generic SHP Family email sent to all staff, the art pieces are also uploaded on SHP Family Workplace by Facebook.</li> <li>CEO set another challenge for the team to come up with a uniquely SHP collection of art pieces.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The staff liked the initiative as multiple submissions of art pieces by staff across the polyclinics were received with similar intent of wanting to spur fellow colleagues to go on in the battle against COVID-19.</li> <li>With the growing art pieces submitted by staff and as ideas build on ideas, the team takes an interest in not just the art pieces but also developed an interest in the individual artists behind the works of art. Who are our artists in their private moments? What are they passionate about? How do they practise gratitude on a daily basis? How would they like to encourage the SHP Family to be grateful daily?</li> <li>Importantly, how to display the art pieces with limited physical space, show case our in-house talents and which platforms or mediums to explore in proliferating staff appreciation and gratitude in the workplace.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After one year of the launch of <i>Have You Made Someone Smile</i>, SHP Senior Management supported the team's idea to measure the effectiveness of the initiative.</li> <li>Using an adaptation of the established Gratitude Questionnaire (GQ-6) whereby it assesses a person's gratitude disposition, an evidence-based approach that relates to optimism, life satisfaction, hope, spirituality and religiousness, forgiveness, empathy and pro-social behaviour, and negatively related to depression, anxiety, materialism and envy, the SHP Employee Gratitude Survey was rolled out to all staff.</li> </ul>
<p><b>OBJECTIVE</b></p> <p>The purpose of the staff initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foster appreciation for one another through artistic expressions through personally-penned note by our in-house artists to the SHP Family;</li> <li>Adopt art as a form of therapy for creative engagement, inspiring and enhancing mental health in managing issues such as burnout, depression and anxiety as a result of prolonged safe distancing;</li> <li>Re-ignite Compassion (Core Value) so that staff will re-discover the purpose and meaning of work with a renewed sense of fulfilment as a healthcare worker in the battle against COVID-19.</li> </ul>		

**RESULT**

Proliferation of gratitude and appreciation across SHP Family:

- SHP Virtual Art Gallery Exhibition**  
The creation of SHP virtual art gallery featuring collections of art pieces of our talents where all SingHealth staff can view original works of art by the artists and the uplifting messages dedicated to the SHP Family.
- Appreciating Individual Talents**  
Staff appreciation comes in the form of recognition during the "new normal", of which, individual talents experimented with vlogging and blogging through the sharing of their passion, what gratitude meant and how these talented individuals encourage the SHP Family to practise gratitude at work. In return, a dedicated electronic platform has been created to recognize and appreciate these talents.
- In-house Video Production of Staff appreciation**  
The convergence of passionate individuals within the Learning & Development team with a shared belief to inculcate appreciation at SHP brings about the birth of a series of videos, *Appreciation @ Workplace*. Using animation software to communicate staff appreciation, bite-size videos have been developed to share the different ways that staff appreciation can take place i.e. devoted time, words of encouragement, appropriate physical touch, acts of kindness and art of gifting.
- New Hires' Induction**  
Staff appreciation is part of the new hires' induction programme, of which, the Senior Management's presence plays a key welcoming role in ingraining core values and advocating various messages and their own experience of staff appreciation and gratitude.
- Building of New Polyclinics**  
SHP is building new polyclinics as part of the national plans to boost the primary care infrastructure. As an essential element to bring like-minded staff together of different experience and background in order to strengthen working relationships in a new polyclinic, key people programmes such as Trust Building and Staff Appreciation are reinforced through facilitated staff sessions to build desired working norms and behaviours.
- SHP Employee Gratitude Survey**  
After more than one year of the launch of the initiative, *Have You Made Someone Smile* has been rolled out, a SHP Employee Gratitude Survey was rolled out for a period of 2 weeks from 26 March 2021 to 8 April 2021.

The purpose of the survey was intended to assess the attitude of appreciation within SHP.

The survey questions have been adapted using the established Gratitude Questionnaire, GQ-6 which is a measure of the disposition to experience gratitude. Based on the 5-point likert scale anchor, the questions which staff responded to are as follows:

- I have a lot to be thankful for
- If I had to list everything that I felt grateful for, it would be a very long list
- When I look at the world, I see much to be grateful for
- I am grateful to many different people
- I often feel grateful

The 5-point likert scale to the questions:

- None of the time
- Some of the time
- Half of the time
- Most of the time
- All of the time

A total of 259 staff have responded to the survey, which represents about 20% of the SHP staff population across the different staff categories i.e. Medical, Nursing, Allied Health, Admin & Ancillary. The survey results show that the positive emotion scored by the respondents is 3.96 (based on weighted average score) i.e. majority of the staff respondents "feel grateful to many different people" under the likert scale anchor.

In the survey, the staff respondents also highlight what they like most of the initiative whereby options such as the following were provided and the respondents can choose more than one option:

- It helps to change my mindset about gratitude
- It fosters gratitude
- It ignites feelings of gratitude
- It enhances positivity in the workplace
- I like the artwork contributed by our SHP colleagues
- I like the messages that goes with the artwork
- The messages are uplifting
- The messages are thought provoking
- The messages help me to reflect how to make a Better Workplace for a Better SHP

The top 3 selections by staff respondents of what they like most: 1. It enhances positivity in the workplace; 2. I like the artwork contributed by our SHP colleagues; 3. It fosters gratitude

**Appreciating Individual Talents**

**Recognising Pioneer SHP In-House Contributors**

**BLOGGING by In-House Contributors**

**In-house Video Production of Staff Appreciation**

**Appreciation @ Workplace**  
An In-house video production by SHP-HR

**New Hires' Induction**  
Welcome to SHP Family

**SHP Employee Gratitude Survey**

**CONCLUSION**

Culture is an integral part of an organization as it affects nearly every aspect of the employee life cycle from attracting and recruiting talents to improving employee engagement. It is the backbone that drives a happy workforce and enhances meaning and purpose of work. Without a positive work culture where staff feel appreciated and valued by fellow colleagues or supervisors, employees will struggle to find the real value in their work and leads to negative emotions or consequences.

The initiative may be in its infancy stage towards building a culture of appreciation in SHP in encouraging the positive emotion of feeling gratitude and expression appreciation at work. Given time, the desired behavioural norms can be even more visible and widespread. Going forward, the plan is to integrate appreciation and gratitude with mental and social wellness. The goal of the organization is to build a unique and positive culture that enhances the talent, diversity and happiness of our workforce in SHP.