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**Healthy Companies** is a global management consulting and research firm dedicated to driving the CEO's Agenda.



## THE HEALTHY LEADER



### How rich are you?

The end of the iconic holiday film *It's a Wonderful Life* finds beleaguered businessman George Bailey joyously surrounded by his loving family and friends, basking in the newfound sense of gratitude he has gained with help from Clarence, his whimsical guardian angel. Harry Bailey, a hero just home from the war, raises his glass and proudly proclaims: "A toast to my big brother George...The richest man in town!"



What's your emotional health quotient? [FIND OUT](#)

Modern science affirms Hollywood fable on the transformative power of gratitude. Recent studies show that an attitude of gratitude yields improved physical health as well as increased energy, emotional resilience, alertness, enthusiasm, determination and attentiveness.\*

#### What Great Leaders Know

Great leaders know that gratitude is essential to self-motivation and to creating a positive, energizing workplace. Here are some keys to cultivating gratitude, in yourself and in others:

- *Manage your responses.* The part of your brain responsible for your emotions is faster than the part that interprets them. Practice taking a few deep breaths to give yourself time to "catch up" with your emotions, so you can choose your reaction.
- *Seek a healthy balance.* Be consciously grateful to keep negative thoughts and feelings in perspective.
- *Revel in good feelings.* If you feel good, show it! Smile. Laugh. Enjoy the positive emotion.
- *Share your gratitude.* Say thank you often, say it from the heart, and be specific. Tell people exactly what they

"I was going up in the elevator with an employee, and I asked her how she was doing. 'Good,' she replied, 'How are you doing?' When I hesitated, she said, 'Oh, come on, it's great! Everything's going so well!' She really motivated me. My mood was completely turned around."

— **Dan Vasella**

Chairman and former CEO,  
Novartis AG

did to make you feel grateful. Explain how it helped you, your team, your organization or its customers.

Read [Turning Negative Thoughts into Productive Energy](#).

**What signals will you send?**

As a leader, you set the tone. Strive to be grateful every second of every day.

**Ask yourself...**

- Do I allow myself to enjoy positive thoughts and feelings?
- Are my fears and frustrations balanced by my sense of gratitude?
- Do I encourage others to be grateful?

\* [See](#) a recap of relevant research in *Journal of Positive Psychology*.

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