



# PETRA PEOPLE

4 STEPS TO BUILDING A 'CULTURE OF  
APPRECIATION' IN YOUR BUSINESS



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### LIFE LESSONS for BUSINESS OWNERS

For every organization that winds up becoming a wild success, there are hundreds that don't turn out as well. Entrepreneurs are all too familiar with restless nights and stressful days spent worrying about their companies. But they usually internalize their struggles, meaning that those trials and troubles—and how they overcome them—go unnoticed by the rest of us.

This is a problem, because in order to be successful we need to extract lessons from our experiences whenever possible. That's right, I said "our." As an entrepreneur, it's important to remember that you aren't the only one who has dealt with a history full of sacrifice and adversity. Everyone has a story, and it's likely not as straightforward as you may believe it to be. If you want to find success with your team, you need to dive a little deeper and discover the lessons to be learned from each individual's own struggles and achievements.

These conversations can ultimately lead to the development of an "appreciation culture"—a way of thinking in your organization that allows employees the opportunity to share their own stories.

Here are four steps to kick-start your own appreciation culture:





### **1. START WITH YOUR OWN STORY.**

Opening up to your employees about your own struggles and sacrifices is a great way to build mutual respect over shared experiences. You may find that they've encountered the same hurdles along the way. By explaining your past, not only can you begin to learn from each other, you can work on cultivating a culture of understanding and gratitude.

### **2. ENCOURAGE OPENNESS AND HONESTY.**

Your employees should know that it is okay to be open about both the personal and professional aspects of their lives. There's no need to make excuses. When employees are allowed to express themselves in an honest way, it becomes easier to form a deeper connection and embrace different perspectives.

### **3. ALLOW ERRORS.**

An "appreciation culture" starts by establishing that it's okay to make mistakes from time to time. Mistakes will happen, and employees shouldn't be punished for any failures, but rather rewarded for taking risks. If your employees understand that, then they will be empowered to explore new things, which in turn could change your business for the better. Let's be honest: No one who thinks inside the box comes up with the "big idea."

### **4. POSE QUESTIONS (AND LISTEN TO THE ANSWERS).**

This should be a no-brainer, but if you don't truly listen, people will stop opening up to you. Questions are made to be answered, so when you ask a question and choose to intently await an answer, trust builds among the team, which allows for a level of understanding that benefits everyone.

Success isn't easy, so why should we hide the challenges and struggles that it takes to attain it? By sharing your experiences with your team, and allowing your employees to share theirs as well, you can all learn from one another and build a better culture, one that livens up communication and builds relationships. And that in itself will be appreciated.

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# THE PETRA EXPERIENCE

**The Petra Experience is like a Mental Marathon of focused effort to create a specific set of priorities and a planned process to achieve them... as a team.**

## **Looking to change your business life - forever?**

The daily grind of growing a business is tough... it doesn't have to be that way. We work from our own business experiences while focusing on your business – as coach and an accountability partner. We implement the Petra Process in a way that ensures it “sticks” then we stay engaged to keep you on your path to success and less frustration. We don't want this to be just another thing you start – then it gets ignored and finally dies... let's stop that cycle in your business. The Petra Program 'clarifies' what is most important to be done – by whom, by when – **AND** creates an accountability structure to ensure **IT GETS DONE.**

*Andy Bailey is lead entrepreneur coach with business coaching firm Petra and serves as the Entrepreneur Organization's global membership director. Visit his blog at [www.petracoach.com](http://www.petracoach.com) for more business and leadership insight.*

### **PETRA COACH**

342 Cool Springs Blvd., Suite 203, Franklin, TN 37067 | 615.601.0542  
[www.petracoach.com](http://www.petracoach.com) | [www.facebook.com/petracoach](https://www.facebook.com/petracoach)

