

Gratitude and Generosity: Key Findings

The Fund Raising School (TFRS)
Quarterly Webinar
February 9, 2023

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Emotions



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Gratitude



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“The root of joy is gratefulness.”

– David Steindl-Rast



“Be thankful for what you have; you’ll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don’t have, you will never, ever have enough.”

– Oprah Winfrey



“Be grateful... It’s the only totally reliable get-rich-quick scheme.”

– Ben Stein



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Benefits of Gratitude

- Better able to cope with stress
- Better able to achieve goals
- Greater self-esteem
- Better sleep quality
- Prolonged enjoyment of pleasurable experiences
- Greater resilience
- **Greater generosity towards others**
- Fewer depressive symptoms

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Gratitude and Generosity

A “thank you” toward a benefactor elicits more help from them in the future

– Usually compared to a “no gratitude” condition

Carey, Clitque, Leighton, & Milton (1976). Clark (1975). Clark, Northrop, & Barkshire (1988). Converse & Fishbach (2012). Crano & Sivacek (1982). Dwyer (2015). Goldman, Seever, & Seever (1982). Panagopoulos (2011). Raggio & Folse (2009). Rind & Bordia (1995). Williams & Bartlett (2014).

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Undervaluing Gratitude

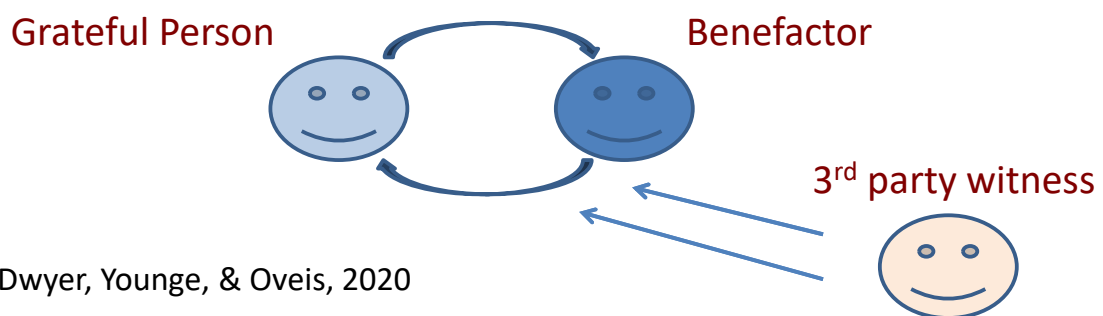
- Expressers misunderstand the consequences of showing appreciation
- As a result, they don't express gratitude that often

Kumar & Epley, 2018

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Undervaluing Gratitude

Gratitude in Groups



Algoe, Dwyer, Younger, & Oveis, 2020

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Expressing Gratitude Effectively

- Quality of gratitude expressions matter
- Self-focused vs. Other-focused
- Putting the “You” in “Thank You”



Algoe, Kurtz, & Hilaire, 2016

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Texting Experiment: Expressions of Gratitude

OTHER-PRAISING

- [FirstName], this is [Student], a senior at App reaching out to thank you for your recent donation. **You went out of your way to support Appalachian during this critical time, and we want you to know how much we appreciate you. To put it simply, you rock! :)**

SELF-BENEFIT

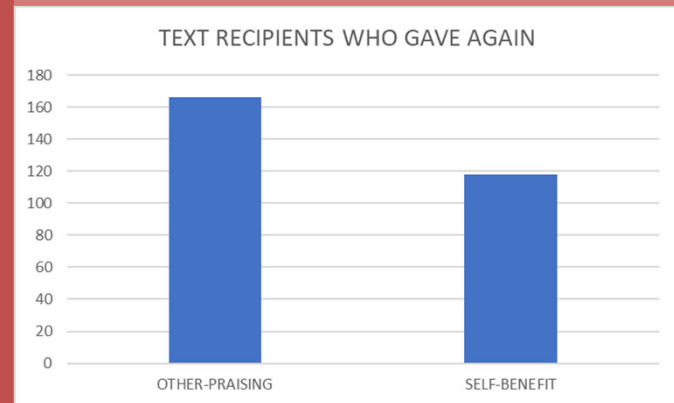
- [FirstName], this is [Student], a senior at App reaching out to thank you for your recent donation. **Your gift is making a direct impact by supporting critical needs at Appalachian. As a current student, I want to thank you for making a difference in my college experience! :)**

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Results

WHICH SCRIPT MATTERED?

- We found a significant advantage of the Other-Praising script.
 - Those who received the Other-Praising script were more likely to give a subsequent gift.
- The giving amount, however, was not significantly higher than the self-benefit script.



Dwyer & Vaz

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Expressing Gratitude is Good

But is this really *always* true?

“Thanks in advance” was nominated for banishment from the English language

(Associated Press, 2011)



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Experiment

Independent Variable:

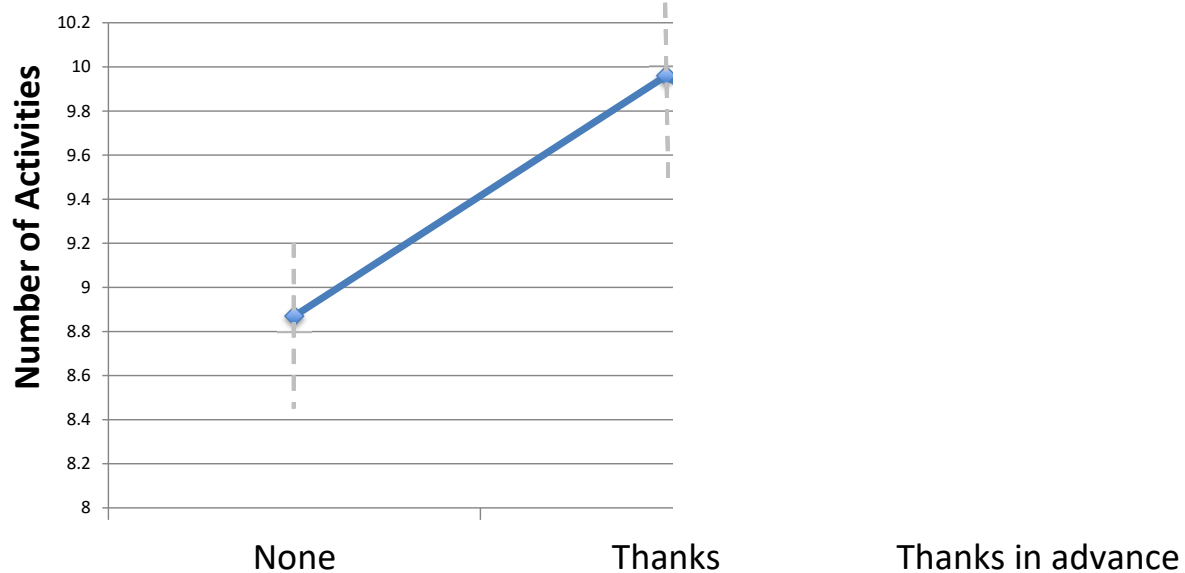
- “Thanks”
- “Thanks in advance for your help”
- no gratitude expression

Dependent Variable: # voluntary activities willing to perform

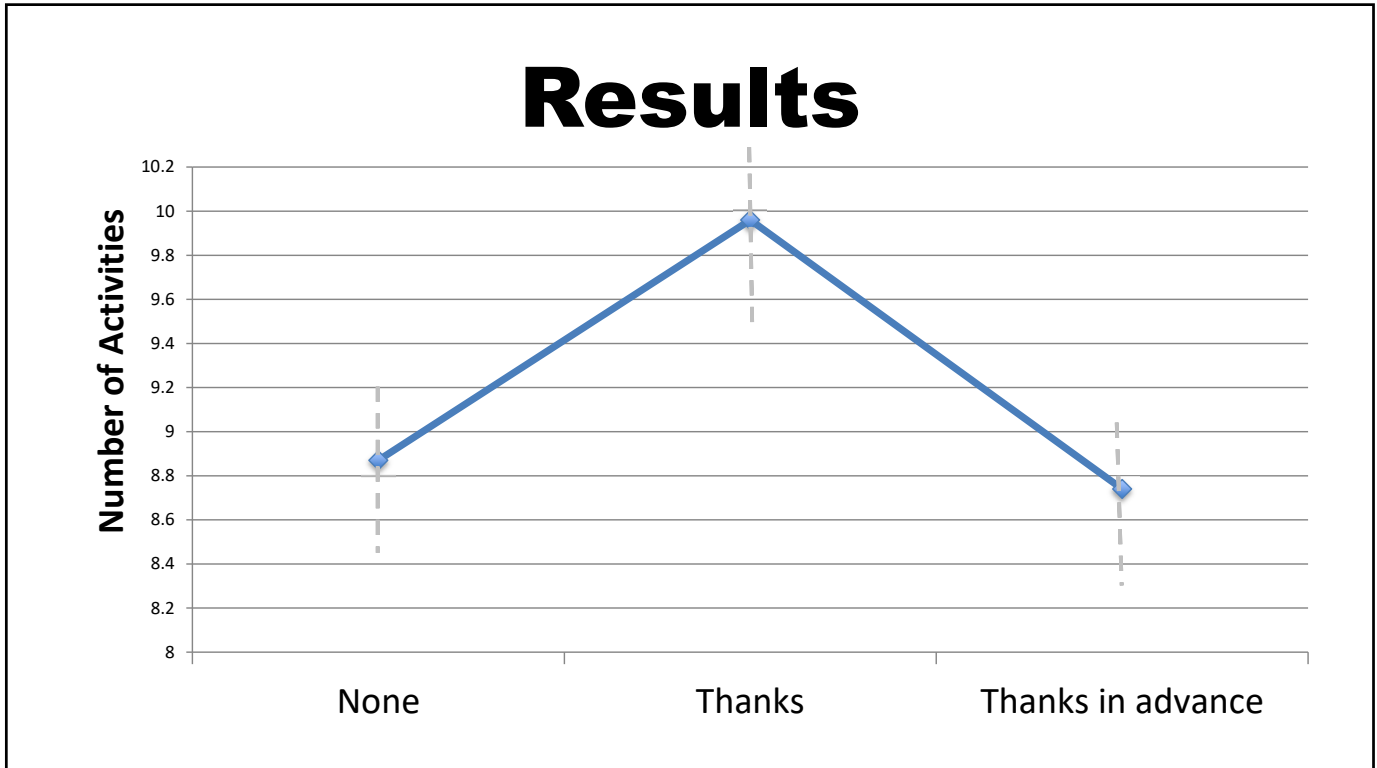
Dwyer, 2015

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Results



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Thanks, But No Thanks?

- Gratitude expressions don't always help and can sometimes even backfire
- The role of persuasion awareness
- Implications for persuasive communication

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