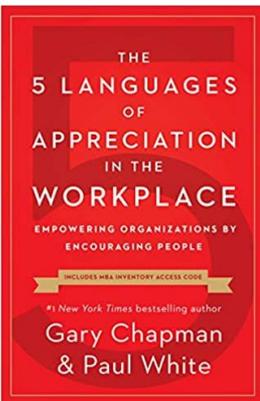


# TAKE TIME TO KŌRERO

MĀ TE KŌRERO, KA ORA

Mental Health  
Awareness Week  
27 Sept – 3 Oct 2021

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## The 5 languages of appreciation in the workplace: Empowering organizations by encouraging people

Chapman, G., & White, P. (2019). Northfield Publishing.

You appreciate your employees, right? But do they feel appreciated by you?

*The 5 languages of appreciation in the workplace* is written by the author of *The 5 Love Languages*, Gary Chapman, and Paul White, a psychologist, author, speaker and consultant. Together they have adapted the 5 love languages model into 5 appreciation languages to help empower organisations and their people.

In 2009 Chapman and White started researching how the 5 love languages might apply to the workplace, looking at work-based relationships and focusing on appreciation. The concept of appreciation is key to creating positive workplace environments, by understanding how each employee can feel appreciated. Appreciation in the workplace communicates a sense of value for the work someone has completed or the characteristics they show, therefore increasing employee engagement.

Anyone can make a difference in the workplace regardless of their position, but do we know how to? The book describes how we can identify our own and others' appreciation language, how to demonstrate authentic appreciation and make the appreciation we express personal to the individual.

The languages of appreciation are Words of Affirmation, Quality Time, Acts of Service, Tangible Gifts and Physical Touch. The book breaks down each of these languages and has real-life work scenarios to illustrate each one, plus tips on personalising each. The examples are a fantastic way to see how these can play out in the workplace, and also help recognise when the intention was there but it did not hit the mark.

As someone who is aware of the concept of the 5 love languages, I was intrigued to see how these translated into appreciation languages, particularly for the workplace context. I found the concepts fascinating as they were professionally written and easily digestible. The examples with each appreciation language of how to make it personal to an employee or team member really opened my eyes to how we can easily misinterpret an employee's needs, or even our own.

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There is a good focus on leadership, which is helpful for leaders or managers to reflect on if we are communicating and appreciating in the best way for our employees. The book discusses the miscommunication between managers and employees when it comes to appreciation. There are some useful tips on how to communicate in the same language and to help create deeper understanding of one another. Motivation by appreciation is a strong theme through the book. Knowing what makes your employees tick and understanding how to appreciate them in a way that will not seem tokenistic, but really hits the mark, can be challenging. This is a useful guide for having these conversations effectively.

Other key points explored in this guide include the difference between appreciation and recognition, how to find your blind spot with your least valued language and how appreciation works in different settings. In this latest edition there is also a chapter on remote workers and virtual teams.

This book is highly applicable, as communicating appreciation to your employees is a powerful tool for increasing employee engagement and creating a positive work environment. Meaningful conversations that makes us feel appreciated creates higher engagement and instils a sense of value in us as leaders, managers and employees.

**Reviewed by Lucy Boomer, People & Organisational Development Manager,  
Mental Health Foundation**

The Mental Health Foundation's Information Service brings you reviews as part of the Good Reads feature for Mental Health Awareness Week. To view more go to <https://mhaw.nz/>