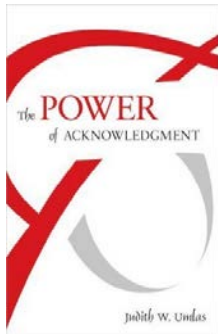


FWPMI Book Review by: Julie Farmer
"The Power of Acknowledgment"
by Judith W. Umlas

Publisher:	International Institute for Learning, Inc.
Date of Publication:	2006
Number of pages:	96 (76 excluding the Dedication, References, Etc.)
Book Club rating:	3.66

Plot Summary:



This is a very easy to read book that serves as a reminder to all Project Managers about the importance of acknowledging those around us, particularly people we work with. This book can be read in just one or two sittings and consists of the following chapters:

- Introduction
 - Getting Started
 - Harnessing the Power of Acknowledgment to Build Stronger Relationships
 - Using Acknowledgment to Neutralize Jealousy and Envy
- How Acknowledging People Produces Great Results at Work
 - Overcoming the Obstacles to Acknowledgment and Reaping the Rewards
 - The Surprising Health Benefits of Acknowledgment
 - Acknowledging the People Who Matter to You

The book discusses 7 Principles that the author has identified around the importance of acknowledging others. Each chapter in the book discusses the following principles in detail:

- Principle #1 – The world is full of people who deserve to be acknowledged
- Principle #2 – Acknowledgement builds intimacy and creates powerful interactions
- Principle #3 – Acknowledgment neutralizes, defuses, deactivates and reduces the effect of jealousy and envy
- Principle #4 – Recognizing good work leads to high energy, great feelings, high-quality performance and terrific results. Not acknowledging good work causes lethargy, resent, sorrow and withdrawal.

- Principle #5 – Truthful, heartfelt and deserved acknowledgments always make a difference, sometimes a profound one, in a person’s life and work
- Principle #6 – It is likely that acknowledgments can improve the emotional and physical health of both the giver and the receiver
- Principle #7 – Practice Different Ways of Getting Through to the People You Want to Acknowledge

In the introduction, Judith Umlas mentions that her purpose in writing this book “is to inspire you to consciously acknowledge the people around you every day – many times a day, if possible. But only acknowledge others when it’s appropriate: Acknowledgment is only meaningful when it is done honestly, with good intention and delight, and with no ulterior motive. People can smell insincerity and they will lose trust in and respect for you”. She gives many examples throughout the book on both how to acknowledge others and on the impact that you can make on others by taking time to acknowledge them.

Book Club Meeting Discussion:

The general consensus was that the book served as a good reminder of the importance of acknowledging others and that it validates some of the things that we, as Project Managers, do to recognize others (such as sending an email or note of thanks for hard work on a project).

A couple of attendees had served in the military so we discussed that Acknowledgment is very routine in the military (although it may be in a different form/style) but that it is not a given in the civilian world.

We also discussed that some people want to be publicly acknowledged/recognized and others don’t so you have to be careful about how you go about this. This is especially true with teams in other countries due to cultural differences.

Personal Comments:

Earlier this year, I read a PMI Book Club selection by Judith Umlas called “Grateful Leadership: Using the Power of Acknowledgment”. I really enjoyed that book so I was excited to see another book on the list by the same author. I think the previous book had more substance to it but I did enjoy reading “The Power of Acknowledgment” and I really enjoyed the personal examples in each chapter. I also liked the author’s simplistic approach of including 7 principles because this is something that I can easily take away and apply in my own life and with my project teams.