



AN EXERCISE IN GRATITUDE

Take a moment to ask yourself:

Who inspired you to become an entrepreneur?

Who led you to discover the great game of business?


Who was it that helped you find your success?

Have you ever thanked them properly?

Thank an Entrepreneur allows you to honor that person who changed your life. Give them the thanks they deserve through a unique exercise in gratitude – and magnify that thanks in a way that will inspire a new generation of entrepreneurs.

This is an opportunity to recognize a “hero” in your life through a powerful gesture that he or she will cherish forever. By writing a letter of gratitude to this person and then sharing it with them, you can change their life – and, surprisingly, your own.

Discover how a single act of gratitude can change the lives of countless others.



THE POWER OF A 'THANK YOU' DEPENDS ON ITS METHOD OF DELIVERY

No email or phone call can equal the sincerity of meeting in person. An even deeper message of commitment and appreciation is reached when you write your hero a letter of gratitude and, wherever possible, read it to them face to face. This act will greatly move the person you seek to thank, but it will also benefit you.

This seemingly selfless act will give you an enormous sense of the gifts you have been given. Two thousand years of wisdom literature teaches us that those who count their blessings have a greater awareness of the kindness of others and, as a result, go on to live more fulfilling lives. Nurturing a strong sense of gratitude allows us to see the good in others and enables us to recognize and seize opportunities when they arise.

In the spirit of Global Entrepreneurship Week, use this as a chance to express your gratitude and increase your awareness of the gifts you have been given. In the process of saying thanks, you may just discover the secret to leading a more fulfilling life.

Nurturing a sense of gratitude may be the most powerful step you can take toward a more fulfilling life.



BUILDING A LEGACY

Do you want the next generation of potential entrepreneurs to learn about business from jaded news headlines about greedy Wall Street speculators?

Or would you rather these young minds discover the joys of owning their own businesses, using their natural abilities to build real businesses that serve customers, employees and investors and provides a fulfilling life?

Thank An Entrepreneur is part of a national campaign to honor entrepreneurial heroes whose hard work, sacrifices and creative energy are the backbone of America's freedom and prosperity.

Submitting your letter to ActonHero.org will magnify the effect of your gift, sending a clear message that even the most successful individuals can benefit from a little good advice early on. Young entrepreneurs will see firsthand examples of principled character – both in your hero and in yourself – to model their own lives after.

Sharing your gratitude letter will inspire the next generation to embark on their own entrepreneurial journeys.



MAGNIFY YOUR GIFT

From all of the gratitude letters submitted to ActonHero.org by the conclusion of Global Entrepreneurship Week (November 17 through 23), five of the celebrated individuals will be chosen as featured entrepreneurial heroes.

The Acton Foundation will create a professional video, with a \$20,000 production value, that tells the hero's story and mentions the charity with which they are actively involved. This way, the charity can use the footage to share their honorable work with the world. But most importantly, in giving this gift, you are sharing the heroism of your chosen entrepreneur with his or her children and grandchildren in a way that they will always cherish.

If this wasn't enough, your hero's story will also be published, showing countless young and aspiring entrepreneurs the importance of giving back to their communities, inspiring them to become heroes themselves.

Let your hero's good example inspire others to support the cause closest to their heart.



HOW *THANK AN ENTREPRENEUR* WORKS IN SHOWING YOUR GRATITUDE:

STEP 1: Identify someone who has helped you along your entrepreneurial journey, whom you've never properly thanked.

STEP 2: Write them a genuine letter of gratitude for their positive impact on your life, and share it with them. Ideally, you would read it to them in person. This act allows you to express your gratitude at a more meaningful level, and it will leave you with a deeper sense of the blessings and gifts in your own life .

STEP 3: Inspire a new generation of principled entrepreneurs by submitting your letter to ActonHero.org.

All letters received by November 23, 2008 (the conclusion of Global Entrepreneurship Week) will be eligible for selection as one of the five featured entrepreneurial heroes. Each one will receive a testimonial video (see previous page for description).

SAMPLE GRATITUDE LETTER

Although there's no formula on how to write a letter of gratitude, try to be genuine and specific as to how the individual has impacted your life and in what ways they are a hero to you. Letters should ideally be 300 to 600 words in length.

A sample gratitude letter is included for you on the next page.



Sample letter:

Roger,

The other day I was thinking about our relationship and the remarkable fact that we've know each other for over 20 years. When I reflect on the time that's passed – from that first day waiting in the lobby, where after a three-hour interview, you invited me to join your company, to where I am today with my own company – I have a lot to thank you for.

You've been a mentor, an advisor, and a close friend.

I don't have enough fingers to count the times you've been there for me, but the one that really stands out in my mind was during that first year with Mercury. A year into my venture, I couldn't figure out why I was supposedly making a profit but quickly running out of cash. With my family worried I was about to lose everything, one rainy night, I finally cracked and had no one to turn to. Then I remembered the good advice you gave me in college about doing what you love no matter what the circumstances. I called you; the phone rang five times, and I was about to hang up in defeat. On the sixth ring, you picked up and changed my life yet again. Needless to say, your probing questions about my customers and what it costs to serve them got me thinking about alternatives – and gave me the courage to say no to some business, so I could focus on the most probable customers. Your support gave me the clarity and perspective I needed to determine my next steps, which was the saving grace for my company.

I've always admired your grace under fire, and I've never been more inspired than by the story you told me about your second company, when your warehouse went up in flames three weeks before shipping for the Christmas season began and, trying to keep costs low, you didn't have adequate insurance. You got in your car and drove thousands of miles over the next few weeks to get your suppliers to restock you and extend you even better terms so you could salvage something from the holiday sales and save your company. Your story is a testament to your perseverance – and persuasiveness!

I am forever grateful that you saw something in me all those years ago, and even more grateful that you offered me a helping hand when I needed it most.

*Sincerest regards,
Vincent*



THE MISSION OF ACTON

The Acton Foundation for Entrepreneurial Excellence (AFEE) is designed to encourage successful and aspiring entrepreneurs to exchange ideas and insights.

AFEE's *Thank an Entrepreneur* reminds us that very few people become successful all by themselves. Almost everyone has benefited from the wisdom and guidance of another, and that should not be taken for granted.

These heroes forged their own paths and helped you do the same, while displaying character, perseverance and principles. Now it's time to say thank you, before it's too late, and pass these lessons on to the next generation.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more details about *Thank an Entrepreneur*, click here.

ActonHero.org

For more details about Global Entrepreneurship Week/USA, click here.

UnleashingIdeas.org

