



### Mr. Chester Elton

Author of "Leading with Gratitude", Executive Coach, Leadership Development, Keynote Speaker, and Founder, #findyourgratitude Community

## The Power of Shukriya

It is great to hear that ICMA Pakistan which is a leading professional institution of management accountants in the world is coming up with an issue of its official magazine on the topic of 'Leadership and Managing People during COVID-19. I really appreciate that and am delighted to share my thoughts for publication in this issue.

For two decades, my co-author Adrian Gostick and I have studied great leaders. It will come as no surprise that the characteristics of great leaders align fully with ICMA Pakistan principles. The very objective of promoting the profession of management accounting proves common threads of gratitude within ICMA Pakistan, and are similar to those found in our interviews with countless CEO's. The common thread we found is 'appreciation' as a crucial part of the leadership style.

When we first met Alan Mulally, the CEO who famously saved the Ford Motor Company during the last great recession, he explained that he built a winning culture by appreciating and thanking his people. "Love 'em up!" is a phrase we heard him say often. He must have said it 20 times during our hour-long interview with him.

In his first town hall meeting at Ford, tens of thousands of employees watched from around the globe via satellite as Mulally appeared on stage with a shiny new Ford automobile. Instead of asking his leadership team to join him on stage, this illustrious CEO asked the employees who had vacuumed and polished the vehicle to join him. When they got to the stage, he told them how grateful he was for their care. Then he honored them by leading a round of applause heard around the world.

Alan Mulally is aware of the example he sets. And it was clear from his first town hall meeting that it wasn't his goal to elevate his power by showing how Ford leaders deferred to him. Instead, he chose to praise the lowest level employees in the room. This gesture was beautiful for those employees and sent a strong message that everyone at Ford Motor Company mattered to him.

There are many articles and books written about Mulally's miraculous turnaround of Ford. Still, very few writers have

written about his remarkable ability to use soft skills to win his people's hearts. It was the beginning of one of the most incredible turnarounds in business history, and it all started with a simple thank you.

When people have increased levels of stress, especially in a crisis such as a global pandemic, leaders should be more attuned to the power of gratitude. Never before now have people felt more isolated, alone, and forgotten. Universally, people crave to know they matter, that what they do is valued, and they make a difference every day, no matter how small. The only way they can understand their efforts are significant and appreciated is by receiving gratitude in the form of a phone call, text, or video chat thanking them for their work. We commend the leaders of ICMA Pakistan for their ongoing efforts to inspire, encourage, and educate their members.

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Many people struggle with a lack of gratitude, yet everyone we've ever met whether janitor or a billionaire wants a happy life. A misconception in life is that happiness comes from wealth, awards, or by completing a goal or task. The key to a happy life is putting gratitude at the center of everything you do. Our challenge for ICMA members is to practice gratitude every day. We encourage you to seek out opportunities to show meaningful gratitude to others. And don't forget to take it home. We've found that all of the great leaders we've studied have a gratitude practice at work and at home.

We hope you will use the power of being thankful every day to build a culture of gratitude. It isn't just a better way to lead; it is a better way to live.

For more on “Leading with Gratitude” go to <https://leadingwithgratitude.info/free-resources>

# Chester Elton is New York Times and Wall Street Journal Bestselling Author

Chester Elton is the co-author of several successful leadership books and is an in-demand speaker the world over. He is the co-author of the *New York Times* and *#1 BusinessWeek*, *Wall Street Journal* and *USA Today* bestselling books ***All In***, ***The Carrot Principle*** and ***The Best Team Wins***.

More than 1.5 million copies of his books have been sold in more than 50 countries.

In 2020, Chester released latest book and soon-to-be bestseller '***Leading with Gratitude***' which is now available everywhere.

Chester Elton is also co-founder of The Culture Works, a global training company.

