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Teamwork: It Starts With Hello

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Hello. Good morning!
Goodbye, see you later. Happy birthday!
Please, and thank you.
Congratulations. Job well done!

Words like these are amazingly positive when used regularly. They can also be amazingly alienating, if you don't say them. Teamwork on a library team is built upon the connections between the team members. These small words and phrases are what create those connections on a daily basis, and without the connections, the team will fall apart.

Showing courtesy and respect to your teammates begins with good morning, and is enhanced with goodbye, see you later. The commitment to pleasantly greet your teammates signifies that you are ready to work with them that day, and opens the door to more connection and conversation. Goodbye, see you later tells your teammates that you are leaving for now, but will renew your connection with them later.

Library support staff can model the kind of behavior they would like to see in others, by being the courteous, encouraging teammates that everyone enjoys having. If we wait for others to show us respect and courtesy, it is time wasted that could be used to connect, converse and work more productively together. Take the lead in brightening someone's day!

Teamwork is built around shared experiences and there can always be a reason for a little (or big) celebration. Birthdays are a reason to have a celebration. At my library we have a monthly potluck in honor of staff with birthdays that month. It may seem small but it is a great reason to stop for a moment, share joy and food and wish someone a happy day. Celebrating an accomplishment is another reason for cake! Perhaps you just completed a major shift of your collection. Perhaps you made it to Wednesday. Celebrate! Congratulate your co-workers when they do a great job or go the extra mile. Support staff can be the engineers of celebration events that build team unity. Appreciation and kindness toward our fellow staff members are the small, yet amazingly powerful gestures that keep us serving library patrons with a smile.

Material in this article was sourced from *Think Yes for Team Players*, Multnomah County Library's internal customer service class.

