

# This Xmas season is all about Thanksgiving, corporate style!

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This is the time of the year when CEOs send out mails highlighting company achievements, and talking about objectives and goals for the year ahead.

However, this year, leaders are doing it differently. Rather than the hard-nosed year-end wrap, they are penning gratitude notes, thanking many, as they head out for end of the year holidays. The Christmas-New Year break has become Thanksgiving, so to speak, corporate style with sentimentality pervading the mails!

Tough year

Take D Shivakumar, group executive president, corporate strategy at Aditya Birla group, who put out a mail to colleagues looking back at 2020, detailing how the chief emotion that he associated with the year was gratitude. Ask him why and he says, “It has been a very tough year. Gratitude, for surviving, for keeping a job, facing no disruptions due to Covid-19 as a team — it could have been far worse.” “I don’t think any industry will be pinpointing achievements. Most people will say thank god, we survived,” he says.

“2020 has been a tumultuous year. It is a year to clearly be grateful, not one to tote up milestones,” says Steve Correa, former CHRO of Diageo, and now an executive coach.

Are all the sentiments being expressed in CEO mails or LinkedIn blogs genuine or lip service to a trend?

Kamal Karanth, co-founder, Xpheno, and an observer of workplace dynamics says there is a real sense of gratefulness pervading corporate corridors. He describes how a leader confided about personally struggling to transform and how he was so grateful that employees took pay cuts, and lack of bonuses on the chin. “There were so many less HR issues to deal with this year — conflicts were fewer,” says Karanth.

### ‘Gratitude leave’

This year a number of companies, notably start-ups like Oyo, gave a day off as gratitude leave to staff. Also a new workplace initiative being talked about is doing gratitude interventions to reduce conflicts.

And oh yes, a start-up has already come up that sells beautiful gratitude journals. Tanvi More has founded *My Gratitude Journal of Tan's Meraki*.