RECOGNITION & REWARDS

Recognizing Employees

Your employees may spend as much as one-third of their lives at work. If they do not find the experience rewarding or are not recognized for making an important and valuable contribution to the company, why would they stay? Employee recognition is a leadership practice that helps create a more engaging work environment and turns owners into employers of choice while creating success for employees and the business alike.

Recognition can come in many forms:

1. **Flexible Work Arrangements.** Allow for flexibility in work schedules. Consider a hybrid work model between office/work from home. Respect your employees' personal needs to provide a work/life balance, where possible, and it will allow them to be more productive and loyal.

2. **Socialization Opportunities.** Organize group activities and frequent team meetings or a quick daily or weekly check-in, either in person or virtual. This improves overall morale and increases their ability to work together as one team.

3. **Professional Development.** Offer opportunities for career advancement, training, or peer mentoring both internally and externally. Provide employees with challenging work, skill-building assignments, or problems to be resolved. By offering them a chance to build their careers, they will remain loyal and gain a high sense of job satisfaction.

4. **Verbal or Written recognition** for work accomplishments. Don't wait and communicate immediately if you see great work being done. Send a company-wide email from a company executive, department head, or recognize with a monthly recognition spotlight

5. **Monetary reward.** Salary/merit increase and bonus/incentives to employees who meet or exceed performance standards. Gifts to recognize employees

Creative Ways to Appreciate Employees

Recognition does not need to take the form of a cash award or cost the employer a great deal of money. For many employees, cash rewards do not have long-lasting impacts, and some find it an impersonal means of recognition.

Alternatively, personalized gifts and verbal recognition may be a more enduring means of rewarding employees and are often a source of staff motivation and pride.

Each employee is a unique individual, so they will be motivated differently. The most effective recognition programs incorporate these differences, offering multiple forms of rewards, all designed to reflect the vision and culture of the organization.

Lasting recognition that energizes employees can be as simple as bringing in doughnuts one day to the office, sending a short thank you email or a handwritten note. Organize lunch to be delivered to employees who work from home or invite staff for an informal gathering. A simple thank you to staff at the end of the day or at a staff meeting costs nothing but builds trust and inspires loyalty.

Creating a Customized Recognition Strategy

To retain great employees and keep them engaged, actively and creatively seek out ways to make work fun, enjoyable and, above all, rewarding. In addition to some of the informal ideas outlined above, recognition programs can also be formal, such as an award for customer service within a business or an industry association award.   See Tips for Creating an Effective Recognition Program