A Guide to Appreciating & Recognizing Staff

Self Learning Guide

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IT’S UP TO YOU!

You've Got the Power

Believe it or not, recognition for a job well done, even more than money, is the top motivator of employee performance. That’s why as a manager, you have the potential power to inspire your staff to amazingly high levels of performance. And very often, all it takes is your thoughtful, personal and sincere appreciation.

There are a lot of ideas in this toolkit. Some are simple – like taping a thank-you note to someone’s desk.

First, the Basics

Your positive words, actions and the environment you create can be instrumental in bringing out the best in your staff.

Here are some tips to consider on how to PRAISE your staff:

Personal

- Who are you giving this to?
- What are their interests?

Relevant

- What are you recognizing/rewarding?
- Is there some unique recognition opportunity?

Appreciated

- What kind of recognition/reward does the individual (or group) value? Ask them how they are best motivated. Some will prefer public recognition, others want it in private. Praise them for doing things they value, for using their strengths.
- Go out of your way.

Informed

- Know what happened and who should be recognized!
- Be timely! Reward staff as soon as possible after the desired behaviour or achievement.

Sincere

- Only say what you mean.
- Communicate specifically: the attitudes and behaviours which are being recognized.
- Nuture the relationship you have with others so that you genuinely care.
- Don’t fake it!!

Expressed

- Be sure to express your appreciation even if it may appear obvious.
Know the Myths

The following are some common myths related to recognizing employees.

**Myth: Money is the best and only incentive.**

**Fact:** Low budgets need not diminish recognition efforts; in fact, employees cite non-monetary recognition as a longer lasting impact than monetary rewards.

A Gallup survey found that individuals who receive regular recognition and praise:

- increase their individual productivity
- increase engagement among their colleagues
- are more likely to stay with their organization
- receive higher loyalty and satisfaction scores from customers
- have better safety records and fewer accidents on the job . . .

**Myth: Incentive programs are easy to administer.**

**Fact:** There are many advantages and disadvantages of a points-based system. They require extensive recordkeeping and a redemption system. Many full-service incentive companies provide their clients with incentive tracking and point's redemption systems that are designed to reduce this recordkeeping burden.

**Myth: Staff know themselves when they have done a good job.**

**Fact:** Recognition is powerful, effective and inexpensive and it is used too little in business. Praise your staff as often as you can to directors, to their peers and your colleagues, and in fact offer praise as often as possible where praise is due. Recognize effort, involvement, ethical behaviour and commitment. Be specific and detailed in your praise, choose a particular thing and mention this when you give recognition.

A Rewarding Style

**Characteristics of Rewarding Managers:**

- Know their staff
- Are approachable
- Keep informed of department activities
- Prepared to award
- Get out of their office and see what is going on
- Practice it!

“Tell people up front that you are going to let them know how they are doing.

Praise people immediately.

Tell people what they did right – be specific.

Tell people how good you feel about what they did right and how it helps the organization and the other people who work there.

Encourage them to do more of the same.”

- Kenneth Blanchard & Spencer Johnson, Adapted from The One Minute Manager
Inexpensive & Creative Ways to Appreciate Employees

The following are some suggested ways to praise and appreciate your staff.

😊 Post a thank-you note on the employee's or team member's office door.

😊 Have your director call an employee or team member to thank him or her for a job well done, or have the same person visit the employee at his or her workplace.

😊 Greet employees and colleagues by name when you pass their desks or pass them in the hall.

😊 When discussing an employee's or a group's ideas with other people, peers, or higher management, make sure you give credit.

😊 Acknowledge individual achievements by using people’s names when preparing status reports.

😊 Ask five people in your department to go up to the person sometime during the day and say "{Your name} asked me to thank you for [the task or achievement]. Good job!"

😊 Have lunch or coffee with an employee or a group of employees you don't normally see.

😊 Make a thank you card by hand.

😊 Make work Fun! Lunch outings for the entire group as an everyone-pays-his-own-way event. The value is in the going, so encourage but don't force anyone who isn't comfortable going with the group.

😊 Share verbal accolades. Don't forget to forward voice mail messages that compliment a team member's work.

😊 Ask a person to teach or share his accomplishment with others as a way of recognizing the person's ability and role.

😊 Ask a person for advice or her opinion; this demonstrates respect.

😊 Recognize an individual's accomplishments in front of peers -- yours or theirs.

😊 Practice positive nonverbal behaviours that demonstrate appreciation.

😊 Make a large calendar that can be posted. Call it the "celebration calendar" and use Post-Its and written notes of recognition tacked onto specific dates to honour contributions made by team members.

😊 Give a shiny new penny for a thought that has been shared.

😊 Ask your boss to attend a meeting with your employees during which you thank individuals and groups for their specific contributions.

😊 Pop in at the first meeting of a special project team and express your appreciation for their involvement.

😊 Provide a lunch for project teams once they have made interim findings. Express your appreciation.

😊 Send a letter to all team members at the conclusion of a project, thanking them for their participation.

😊 Recognize employee's personal needs and challenges.

😊 Smile. It's contagious.

“Good treatment of workers results in similar treatment of customers.”
- Todd Englander, Incentive
Resources

**Internet Resources**


- “Factors in Employee Motivation/Satisfaction” differentiates between “entitlements” and motivation factors [http://www.sbs.eku.edu/PSY/FALKENBE/motive.htm](http://www.sbs.eku.edu/PSY/FALKENBE/motive.htm)


- “Guide to Managing Human Resources” Recognition and Reward Program [http://hrweb.berkeley.edu/guide/appendg.htm](http://hrweb.berkeley.edu/guide/appendg.htm)

**Books**


