

So, remember to recognize your staff. Recognition helps build an emotional connection between the company and the employee. Employees who feel valued will be motivated to do their best. The benefits to the employees, your department, and the organization will certainly pay off!



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# On The Call...

A Newsletter Dedicated to Supervisors and Their Challenges

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## Recognition – A Key to Employee Engagement



The phrase “employee engagement” is often discussed within organizations. It has been well established that companies with engaged staff tend to be more successful.

One of the key components to employee engagement is recognition. Employee recognition is the act of acknowledging your employees for their contributions, whether it be exemplary

behavior, completing a project on time, good teamwork, or regular day-to-day tasks.

Employees like to be appreciated for their efforts. In fact, research has shown that one of the main reasons employees quit their jobs is that they aren’t getting enough recognition. Managers’ lack of appreciating good work can be costly to an organization.

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Here are some guidelines for making employee recognition part of your organization's or your department's culture.

**CREATE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION**

Start first by exploring what you hope to accomplish with employee recognition by answering the following questions:

- 1. What behavior(s) do we, as an organization or department, want to reinforce?
- 2. What organizational or departmental goals and objectives do we want to achieve?  
How do we reward employees or teams that meet or exceed these objectives?
- 3. What motivates individual contributors in my department?  
What motives the team(s) in my department?



**DIFFERENT FORMS OF RECOGNITION**

Consider some of these forms of recognition, which can often be provided at no or low cost to you and the organization.

- Praising an employee at a staff meeting
- Providing an employee with a gift card for Dunkin Donuts or Starbucks
- Bringing an employee with you to a meeting with your manager, thereby giving your employee exposure to higher management
- Calling an employee into your office to compliment them on a task or project well done
- Having an employee represent your department on a cross-functional committee or task force. This provides visibility for the employee to other parts of the organization.
- Sending an e-mail to your supervisor and cc'ing the employee on the great job he or she did on a project or assignment

These forms of recognition may also apply to team efforts.

**PROVIDE POSITIVE FEEDBACK**

Positive feedback is also a form of recognition. Be specific when providing the feedback. Consider the difference between the following two statements.

A) "Katia you did a great job on the Customer Retention Report."



B) "Katia you did a great job in creating a new section that includes historical customer data on the Customer Retention Report."

While Statement A will be appreciated, it is general and does not give insight to the employee as to why you feel she did a great job on the report.

Conversely, Statement B is more specific and tells Katia why you feel she did a great job on the report. Providing this more detailed feedback reinforces to Katia that you valued the historical customer data, which she may now include in other reports, if appropriate.

**REMEMBER TO RECOGNIZE EMPLOYEES WHO ARE MAKING PROGRESS**

Recognition is not reserved only for your high performing employees. Also provide recognition for struggling employees who are making progress.

For example, suppose Jorge has been having difficulty handling calls from challenging customers. You have spoken to Jorge about his need to improve in this area and coached him.

You listen in on a call with an angry customer and while there is still room for improvement, you notice he has made progress and taken into account the coaching you provided. This is a situation where you could recognize Jorge for his progress. While you still need him to know that there are still some things he needs to work on, you also want to recognize him for the improvement you noted. For struggling employees, this can boost their confidence and motivate them to continue working on improving their skills.

**BE TIMELY IN RECOGNIZING EMPLOYEES**

Some managers provide little or no recognition throughout the year and wait until the employee's performance review to recognize the employee. Once a year is not enough when it comes to recognition. Progressive managers realize that recognition should be offered throughout the year. When done in a timely fashion, this can increase employees' motivation and overall engagement.

