

Employee Recognition Creates Positive Workplace Communities

Engaging employees requires more than directing them in what to do; they also need to receive credit for their accomplishments. Such recognition helps to improve the employee experience according to Ventana Research: Five Reasons to Use Social Recognition in Business, 2014.

The research states that recognition of employees has many more benefits than simply motivation. The recognition contributed to creating a positive employee culture where they feel:

- Encouraged to perform better
- Motivated to achieve more
- Respected and appreciated

Ventana research shows that employees who feel respected and valued in their work are likely to perform better than those who feel overlooked. The not-so-obvious key here is the word “feel.” By changing the way an employee feels about their workplace environment you also change the productivity and the performance of the people in it. As a result, recognition builds a sense of community, removes the “them vs. us” mentality and improves engagement and productivity.

Employee Recognition Improves Performance

If recognition improves performance, which yields higher productivity and more profits, the question isn't whether you should do it but how?

First, recognition must be public to achieve maximum benefit. It is the social aspect of the recognition that provides the desired result of having an employee feel encouraged and want to perform better. Think of recognition as a hole in one while playing golf. If no one is around to see it (or applaud it), it is almost as if it never happened.

Recognition is similar. Your employee produced amazing results but if leadership fails to recognize it, or applaud it in front of peers, it is almost as if it never happened.

Employee Recognition Fuels Motivation

Second, motivate through the use of internal social media. Think electronic technology. So many of your employees are already in contact via social media; connect with them on a personal level with internal electronic communication vehicles such as internal Facebook pages – then make the recognition go viral within your employee community. Hospitals have great screen saver programs on their computers that act like billboards

announcing upcoming classes, social events and mandatory certification programs. You can do something similar within your existing system to promote social recognition. Encourage others to “like” or send congrats to the employee(s) being recognized. If you can’t communicate with everyone electronically, use the old- fashioned bulletin boards and signage.

Do these often, and find ways to encourage your team through recognition.

Employee Recognition Creates an Engaged Team

Engagement is the ultimate secret weapon to improve your team’s productivity and to increase your company’s profitability. The ultimate recognition is to invite an employee to be on a team, such as a problem-solving think tank, or ask him or her to help decide what type of recognition should be chosen for social acknowledgement. When they help set up the guidelines, they become enthusiastic and engaged in seeing their own name in lights (or on the screen.)

Create something special like an “ice cream” or “cupcake” day and have management serve the employees. Or, the employee(s) being recognized might get a sundae while others get one scoop of ice cream. Be creative and develop programs that will work with your workforce.

A word of caution: while much recognition can be done electronically, the best recognition of all is to socially acknowledge an employee face-to-face. That is the ultimate form of recognition and engagement.

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