

## Recognizing the Importance and Power of Recognition

**“I can live for 2 months on a good compliment.” – Mark Twain**

Everyone loves a 'pat on the back.' It makes us feel good, and often when we feel good about what we're doing or have done, we're inspired and motivated to do more of the same. Employee recognition is that 'pat on the back' (either figuratively, literally, or both) and is an expanding vision in today's workforce. Employers are recognizing that appreciation and acknowledgement are essential human needs, and when given, can have a lasting positive impact on an employee's performance and teamwork that can lead to an improved bottom line for the organization.

Employee recognition is an informal or formal acknowledgement of a person or a team's achievements, behaviour, and efforts that have supported a company's objectives and exceeded expectations. For an employee, recognition of a job well done has enormous personal value as it validates that their hard work is appreciated, and their contribution respected. Whether recognized as an individual or member of a team, everyone thrives on praise and recognition for work exceeding expectations or even a valiant effort. For an employer, when employees' self-driven efforts, initiatives, and dedication are recognized, overall job satisfaction and production rises.

Recognition gives employees a sense of pride and ownership that motivates them to maintain or improve their efforts. In addition, recognizing people for their hard work sends an extremely powerful message to the recipient, their work team, and other employees as they learn about it through the grapevine. Employee recognition is a potent management technique that delivers a return far greater than the investment.

### **The ROI of Employee Recognition**

Time can be spent designing and implementing an employee recognition program and perhaps there will be some money spent on reward items given, but a simple 'thank you' and that literal pat on the back doesn't cost anything more than a moment of time. The cost of employee recognition is quite small compared to the unquestioned benefits:

- Increased individual productivity and performance
- Greater overall employee satisfaction and gratification of work
- Increased customer satisfaction and loyalty scores
- Enhanced teamwork between employees
- Retention of quality talent and reduced turnover
- Reduced stress and absenteeism

**“The act of recognizing desired behaviour increases the repetition of the desired behaviour, and therefore productivity”**

## 5 Key Employee Recognition Strategies

Many companies now publicize about their remarkable company culture. They've learned that in order to be a customer-centric organization, they must first be an employee-centric organization. However, traditionally, employee recognition isn't at the core of many companies.

Here are the top 5 impactful practices that I have seen used to praise employees and show them that their work and efforts are valued:

1. **Spontaneous Acts of Praise:** To many, receiving a sincere and unsolicited 'thank you' has greater value than receiving something tangible. This is highly effective and easy to implement.
2. **Shine a Spotlight on It:** Specifically point out what the person is being recognized for. This is a vital key that helps to identify and reinforce the desired behaviour.
3. **Impart Information:** Tell the employee how their work has positively impacted the department or organization, and if their work reflects well on you as a team lead, let them know and thank them.
4. **Announce It Publicly:** Send a group email to the department, outlining the scope of the great work done by a specific employee. Be sure to CC upper management in the email.
5. **Celebrate:** Find external places to recognize employees. Locate where individuals or teams can be nominated to win an award for excellent work performed in their role.

There are a multitude of employee recognition programs out there and a vast array of recognition methods from the simplest praise to the complex solutions used by large corporations. Regardless, the value of employee recognition cannot be denied. If you or your organization aren't practicing employee recognition, start today. You can be the catalyst that starts the initiative. Start simply, pat your employee on the back, express how their work positively impacts the department, nominate them for a 'best of' award, and you'll find that the minimal effort produces so much more in return.

*If Mark Twain can survive for 2 months on a good compliment, imagine what it could do for your team.*

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Follow Corey on [LinkedIn](#). His focus is to deliver meaningful and measurable strategies for organizations to harness team potential and create engaging leaders. With over 20 years in the learning, development and training industry, Corey is well known for his ability to connect with any audience at any size. He has provided participant focused learn and development design and consulting, professional speaking, coaching and training for organizations - of all sizes - across North America. He has a focused results-based partnership approach to develop and deliver customized solutions that meet an organization's unique business needs and resolve their most significant issues, helping them to create a lasting competitive advantage.