

Most Frequently Asked Questions for Employee Recognition

Q. Why is employee recognition important?

A. Employee recognition not only acknowledges an employee for his or her achievements, but it also promotes employee motivation, job satisfaction, employee self-esteem and other positive outcomes.

Q. What are the key elements of a successful recognition program?

- A. A successful program...
- Creates experiences that bond employees to your organization
 - Recognizes behaviors that are aligned with your school/office goals and the organization's goals and objectives

Q. What is the difference between formal recognition and informal recognition?

A. **Formal recognition** is a structured program with defined processes for how to nominate someone for an award. Typically these programs have an award ceremony to publicly recognize employees in a formal setting. **Informal Recognition** is less structured than formal recognition. Informal recognitions typically include a low-cost celebration with mementos or refreshments, or a thank you note acknowledging someone's efforts.

Q. What is a process for delivering informal recognition to an employee?

1. Identify an opportunity to give recognition (i.e. finished a project ahead of schedule, took on a colleague's responsibilities while on vacation, etc.).
2. Describe the behavior as immediately and specifically as possible.
3. Describe the impact on you and on the organization.

Q. Why are symbolic recognitions important?

A. Symbols have lasting power and can transform your award into a meaningful, useful, lasting representation of the achievement. Choose a symbol that employees will remember (such as a gold star, a carrot, or something related to your school/office). When carefully planned and skillfully communicated, symbolism can help dedicate employees to the organization's goals and mission. Symbols can be fun ways to recognize employees' efforts.

Q. When should I use private recognition as opposed to public recognition?

A. Know your employees. While many employees appreciate public recognition, there may be a select few that are slightly more introverted and prefer not to be the center of attention. Pay attention to what drives your employees when deciding on the best approach.

Q. Should my recognition be tailored or should I do the same thing for each employee?

A. When you take time to listen and get to know an individual, what they value, and the quality of their work, you are offering a powerful form of recognition. To better focus your attention and increase the positive impact, consider using this 3-step process for individualizing recognition:



1. Identify how each individual contributes.
2. Determine personal recognition preferences.
3. Recognize unique contributions with personalized recognition.

Q. What factors should be considered when establishing a new recognition program?

A. Here's how to best implement a formal recognition program:

1. Identify your culture, the makeup of your workforce and your most pressing human needs.
2. Focus formal recognition on significant achievements and milestones. Develop communications that will link your vision and mission to individual accomplishments.
3. Select recognition awards that are appropriate for your employees, awards that provide personal, lasting value. If possible, develop a unique emblem or symbol that correlates individual achievement with your school/office's vision.
4. Gain full benefit from each award that is presented. Build excitement for the program with brochures, posters, and other promotional materials before the first award is presented. If you're a senior manager, provide training to the managers you supervise to help them make meaningful presentations.
5. Develop a program with simple administration and award fulfillment.

Q. What amounts to an effective rewards system?

A. Effective rewards system should be fair and of value to employees. Awards should recognize only results that are important to your school/office and LAUSD overall.

Q. What are some guidelines for providing recognition feedback?

A. When providing recognition feedback, use the 'ASAP Cubed' model –

- As Soon** – Timing is important; don't delay praise
- As Sincere** – Do it because you are truly appreciative
- As Specific** – Give details about the achievement
- As Personal** – Do in person (or handwritten note)
- As Positive** – Do not mix with criticism
- As Proactive** – Do not wait for perfect performance

Q. What are some of the reasons recognition programs fail?

- **Complexity** - programs become so complicated that no one troubles to participate.
- **Lack of timeliness** - approvals for the awards must be streamlined and presentations must be made within a few days or weeks of accomplishment.
- **Lack of buy-in** - everyone, including your supervisors, must genuinely believe in the program and its ultimate goals.
- **Lack of integration** - the system should be easy to understand and participate. Creating too many programs may become confusing.
- **Lack of preparation** - poor award presentations can leave employees confused as to the true meaning behind the program.

