

Factors to Consider in the Establishment of a Program

Adapted by Chester Elton and Adrian Gostick's *Managing with Carrots*, 2001

Before you establish a program to tangibly reward staff on an informal, ongoing basis, consider these issues:

- 1. Determine why you want to establish a recognition program. You may want to reward some (or all) of the following:**
 - Time, work, or money-saving ideas
 - Ongoing or one-time customer compliments for service/satisfaction
 - Solution to a difficult problem
 - Outstanding one-time achievements
 - Outstanding attendance
 - General ongoing contributions that you'd just like to acknowledge
 - Improvement of any kind in an employee's efforts
- 2. If you don't know about employee attitudes about such a program, find out.**
 - Would it be positively received?
 - Will you need to overcome cynicism or mistrust of such a program?
 - You might want to conduct a short written survey of your employees and ensure that they can submit it anonymously, and/or you may invite feedback from volunteers in a focus group.
 - One of the attitudes you may uncover is a pervasive belief that only "the usual" employees will receive any sort of recognition. It's a good idea when you are looking at a recognition program to look at why there may be such a perception.
 - Are those who are recognized frequently truly high performers, or are they perhaps the ones who always seem to receive the "high profile" assignments – and can those types of assignments be given to others in the unit?
- 3. You may want to get employees involved in the program by forming a volunteer workgroup with the specific charge of program development and implementation.**
- 4. Determine how often awards could be given and who would decide to whom awards would go.** (For example, "peer-to-peer" recognition could be done at any time and frequently; perpetual awards could be passed around once per quarter or every six months; thank you notes could be given whenever they seem appropriate.)
- 5. Determine who could give or nominate someone for an award, i.e., peers, staff to supervisors, supervisors, or managers only.** Your survey could include a question of how employees might think the program would work most effectively.
- 6. Determine whether the awards would/could be private, public, or a combination and how frequently they could be given.**
- 7. Make sure you can make it part of your workplace culture and inject some fun into the process.**
- 8. Determine what type of awards to give.** LAUSD Ethics office and the Office of the General Counsel may specifically define the types of tangible items that are allowable as rewards, so check with them first. (**"Employee recognition awards are meant to be occasional; therefore must be presented to an employee on an infrequent basis...provided within an established recognition program and based on objective criteria"**).

