

## Ideas for Recognizing Groups & Individuals

from *A Carrot A Day* book by Gostick & Elton

### Group Recognition:

- Recognize a group effort in your organization's newsletter.
- After the completion of a big project, gather your team for a celebration within your personal means.
- Assign confidence in a small group of employees by assigning an important task in front of the whole group in a meeting. Let everyone know how confident you are that this group of employees can get the job done.
- When your staff is picking up the slack while you are on vacation, if it is within your personal means, you may consider bringing them back a little something they'll enjoy. Ex. – apples from Washington, chocolates, etc.
- Get employees energized in the morning and greet everyone personally.
- Ask for their opinions on projects you're working on or important decisions you're making.
- Think of your employees as a family not just a team. Family has a sense of belonging and is much stronger as it pertains to tasks and responsibilities.
- Praise your boss. A sincere note of thanks or even verbal praise will go a long way towards letting her see how valuable recognition is. This will in turn do wonders for your team by letting her know that she is seen in a positive light by her employees.
- Ask your boss (or someone even higher up) to write a thank you letter to each employee who put forth a lot of effort to get a task accomplished.
- Create a Hall of Fame displaying employees' accomplishments. (Again be specific.)
- Give formal recognition by giving at least a certificate for performance and service once a year. Highlight milestones (5, 10, 15, etc., years of service) and outstanding performance. Gather everyone and invite your boss. Give a small speech to every employee and tell specifically what they accomplished. Allow employees to nominate others for performance and ask the lead employees of your group to help you decide who will be recognized.
- Create a unique award that travels from person to person. You can use all sorts of odd things like stuffed animals, rubber chickens, or other items. For instance the person who has the rubber chicken this week was the most flexible the week before.
- Reward groups of employees instead of just the best. Reward a three- or four-person team that completes a special project, achieves an accident-free record, develops a new process or some other way advances the organization's goals.
- Treat your employees to a guest speaker at your next staff meeting. Bring in someone they would like to learn from or can be motivated by. It's a wonderful team-building experience.



**Individual Recognition:**

- If you park near your building but your employees park further away, trade your spot for a week with someone you'd like to recognize.
- Tell your employees to stop what they're doing and huddle up. Then give praise to an employee.
- Give your employee a hand-written thank you note.
- Give someone a few words of praise in a staff meeting.
- Don't let an employee's birthday pass you by. Be sure to recognize everyone's birthday (unless they do not celebrate) by taking them to lunch, bringing them a cup a coffee or even just a birthday card.
- Recognize the birthdays of employees' family members with a simple birthday card or even just a reminder to the employee. "Hey, I understand it's Billy's birthday on Sunday..." This shows you care about the person.
- Take an employee along with you to your next senior management meeting. Speak about the projects the employee is working on and her contributions to your team's success.
- Send an email to your boss praising a great employee. Don't forget to cc the employee.
- Give an employee a standing ovation. Explain the great things the person has done and then start the applause.
- Enter your employees' work anniversaries of when they joined your group into your calendar and be sure to give them at least a thank you card for their service.
- Form a recognition band by asking employees to play kazoos, bongos and other noisemakers while marching over to the person's cubicle or office to deliver praise.
- LISTEN when employees express concerns.
- Pay attention when they have new ideas and reward innovation. Creativity is just as important as achievements.
- Perform a random act of kindness by taking someone's calls or picking up a little of their extra work.
- If you have a loudspeaker at work, announce a great accomplishment over the loudspeaker. Make it suspenseful by pausing before you give the person's name.
- Schedule a one-on-one meeting with an employee and focus only on the positive things the employee does. Resist the urge to talk about areas of improvement.
- When recognizing someone's retirement, invite his family to the celebration. You can ask those family members to say a few words.
- Recognize one person a week. This way you're not alienating anyone. This *reinforces* good behaviors. Make sure you recognize specific behaviors.
- Create an A-B-C-D award to be given to a person who goes Above and Beyond the Call of Duty.

