

“It’ is not how much we give but what we put into the giving”.

-Mother Teresa, Nobel Peace prize winner

“There are only two ways of spreading light-to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.”

-Edith Wharton, novelist

“It is not enough to merely believe in recognition. You also have to BEHAVE like you believe in it.”

-Eric Harvey, author

“ It’s time for us all to stand and cheer for the do’er, the achiever– the one who recognizes the challenge and does something about it!”

-Vince Lombardi, Hall of Fame football coach

People may not remember exactly what you did or what you said, but they will always remember how you made them feel.”

-Author unknown

“Recognition is more powerful than any motivator. Research shows that, more often than not, cash bonuses get spent on bills and perks are soon forgotten, but recognition becomes a memory that is relived time and time again , continually building high performance.”

-Michael P. Connors, Chairman & CEO, VNU Media, Measures & Information



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Executive
Learning &
Mentoring

50
No
Low Cost
Recognition
Ideas

50 No/Low Cost Recognition Ideas

1. Ask her to be a mentor to a new hire.
2. Have a monthly breakfast meeting in an outside location. Invite your team, share ideas and recognize at least one person.
3. Put up a bulletin board in your department and post letters of thanks from customers (internal and external).
4. Deliver candy or other snacks to your troops on a certain day every week. Take the opportunity to learn what your people are working on and recognize their good behavior.
5. Interview your people and capture their wisdom.
6. Compile the quotes and stories in a booklet and hand it out to new hires.
7. Create a homemade funny trophy that is appropriate to what is being recognized. 
8. Allow a person to work at home for a day (or even half a day).
9. Give the person an extra long lunch break, either immediately or in voucher form.
10. Flowers sent to work or home.
11. A special message to say thank you or recognize an accomplishment-it can be a letter, poem, rebus, song.
12. Have a picnic, either indoors or out in honor of the person.
13. Create a banner strung across the work area to publicize a contribution or accomplishment (can be for an individual or a group). 
14. Send a letter of praise to her spouse/family (this is probably the most powerful, untapped recognition we've seen).
15. A large calendar can be posted. Call it the celebration calendar and use Post-Its and written notes of recognition tacked onto specific dates to honor contributions made by team members.
16. Honor employee sub-groups in your department with their own day or week (e.g., Student Worker Week, Custodian Week) and present them with flowers, candy, breakfast, etc. during that time.
17. Recognize highly-skilled employees with increased responsibility that will develop new skills that may be helpful for advancement.
18. Celebrate a promotion with an item that will be useful to an employee in a new position; for example, a new supervisor might like a new day planner.
19. Announce employees' achievements in team or staff meetings, group email, departmental bulletin boards, or other public venues.
20. Greet employees every morning, reinforcing the message "I'm glad you're here."
21. Pass around an office trophy to the employee of the week.
22. Give the person the choice of the next project/assignment to work on.
23. Say, "Thank you."
24. Volunteer to do his least favorite task.
25. Submit information about your employee's achievement to the editor of your department newsletter.
26. Remember their special days (birthdays, anniversaries, etc.) and write a message in a card. 
27. Gather co workers to sing a lighthearted rendition of a song such as, "You Light Up My Life," "We Are the Champions," etc.
28. Have a department break in honor of her.
29. Give him a standing ovation from the entire team.
30. Wash her car.
31. Give her tickets to a ball game.
32. Give him a book from his favorite author.
33. Let her park in your parking space for a week.
34. Give out traveling awards like a rubber chicken or other fun item.
35. Organize a department-wide water-gun fight in the parking lot in her honor (on a casual day).
36. Bring him a cup of coffee or favorite morning beverage.
37. Buy lunch for her and three or four coworkers of her choice.
38. Give him golf lessons.
39. Give him movie tickets.
40. Give her the latest book that relates to her career.
41. Give him a box of his favorite chocolate bars or other candy.
42. Provide "Lunch on me" coupons.
43. Recognize the importance of a new employee with a large Welcome! poster.
44. Send a handwritten note of praise (not a "thanks for all you do" letter, but a note with specific praise.)
45. Give him a subscription to his favorite magazine (not just business-related).
46. Have a recognition box in your office. When someone does something outstanding, let him choose a reward out of the box-everything from a free lunch to an oil change.
47. Create a yearbook for your team with pictures and stories of accomplishments during the year.
48. Put together a scrapbook of memories for an employee who is celebrating a milestone anniversary. Give each person on the team a blank page to fill out with stories or pictures of their experiences with that employee. Then, after the public recognition moment, the individual has not only a treasured award from the company but something from her coworkers that captures *their* feelings.
49. Copy senior management on your thank-you note to the employee, to advise them of an employee's efforts/accomplishments. 
50. Present a Life Saver Award (packs of Life Saver candies and a gift certificate) to an employee who pitched in during an emergency or staff shortage.

Sources:

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