

Power of Recognition

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“It’s the little things” ... so short, sweet, and to the point and yet so very true. Something so simple can move the needle so much for someone and it does not take a full-blown, over-the-top recognition program to do the trick. It starts with “thank you” and increases from there. People will repeat rewarded behaviors so therefore the power of recognition is a ripple effect that you can watch blossom into loyalty, engagement, and passion.

For many, knowing the various types of recognition is where one needs to start. These options go from free to rather inexpensive especially in the big picture of why recognition is so powerful and a great tool to use with your team.

By taking the time to recognize a team member for a positive situation, behavior, and/or result, you, as the people leader, are further reinforcing that behavior or result and others on the team will see that and hopefully also take note. As a direct reinforcer, the recognition can’t be superficial. It must be honest and deserved. I tend in this area to lead with my heart because that is where I believe my true genuineness comes from and I believe my team can see that and knows it.

In my people leader role within Poling, I utilize the following options with my team:

- Simply saying “thank you” and “please.”
- An email of thanks and gratitude to the person. Individually or a mass email to the firm.
- Social media posts of thanks and gratitude.
- Personal note or card of thanks and gratitude.
- Small gift or aware of thanks and gratitude.

With recognition, it is truly the timing that counts. Timing is literally everything. One must strike while the iron is hot for full impact. The time between the action giving rise to recognition and the recognition itself must be short for maximum impact. Don’t lose the moment to waiting!

I believe that recognition needs to be delivered personally. How recognition is delivered is vital. Whether dropping by one’s desk, sending an email, or public recognition in a firm meeting, the method of delivery should depend on the recipient. Everyone looks at attention or the spotlight in a different manner. As the people leader, you need to know the best and most well received manner a team member prefers to receive recognition. Simply put, think about private recognition vs. public recognition and individual recognition vs. team recognition.

The true hard and fast benefits of recognition include better results from the team, improving productivity, creating and maintain a culture of appreciation, motivating the team, and perhaps ...

just perhaps ... retention! Team members will not want to leave an environment where they are recognized and appreciated for their results and efforts!

My personal recognition tools include:

- Poling gavel
- Individual emails with cc to the owner
- Individual emails drafted for the owner
- Mass emails from me or the owner
- Social media post (**A BIG ONE I USE**)
- Small gifts
- Thank You cards or notes
- Always remembering key dates – birthdays, holidays, Staff Appreciate Day, Nurses Week, Paralegal Day, and work anniversaries

There are wonderful articles online about the power of recognition, recognition ideas, etc. Do the research! Put in the work to find your recognition tools! Be a leader! Show your team what a real leader does!

So, to everyone who took the time to read this ...

