

Archive: *Dear Workforce: What Are Some Innovative Ways to Recognize Employees' Contributions?*

Dear Workforce: What Are Some Innovative Ways to Recognize Employees' Contributions?

Ask for volunteers and let employees steer the course of the program.



Dear Workforce:

We're looking to implement a recognition program that honors various levels of employees for their contributions on a monthly basis. We don't want to imitate tired "employee-of-the-month" programs. What are some innovative strategies?

-- Creativity Wanted, director of human resources, publishing/communication/ advertising, Brooklyn, New York



Dear Creativity:

Here are some key points to consider.

1. Ask for volunteers and have your employees drive your recognition program so they feel that it's their program and not an offshoot of human resources or the larger corporation. This keeps it fresh and relevant, especially if employees have ongoing permission to make changes as they see fit.
2. Build an element of fun and spontaneity into the honor to help keep it fresh and unpredictable. At the headquarters of Kentucky Fried Chicken, for example, whoever plays a musical instrument is asked to bring it to work. This motley crew of musicians gets a list of each month's top performers and serenades them. Employees have a blast. The initiative has been so successful that a second group--a string quartet--has been started.
3. Consider customizing how individuals are honored. At ARAMARK in Philadelphia, employees have days named in their honor. The company also allows the employees who know each honoree best to decide how to celebrate that person's day. Depending on the individual, this can be quite public--such as a chauffeured ride to work by the head of the department and a standing ovation when they enter the building--or more private, such as calling the person's spouse to ask about buying him or her a special gift.
4. Avoid quotas--that is, don't limit the award to a single recipient. That leads to a stiff, formal (and boring) program. Instead, create clear criteria (perhaps around your organization's key values) and honor those people who meet them, regardless of how many there are.

[Fieldbook](#), [Neison Motivation Inc.](#), San Diego, California, April 7, 2004.

LEARN MORE: [One CEO's Perspective on the Power of Recognition](#).

The information contained in this article is intended to provide useful information on the topic covered, but should not be construed as legal advice or a legal opinion. Also remember that state laws may differ from the federal law.

[Home](#) | [Research Center](#) | [Community Center](#) | [Commerce Center](#) | [The Buzz](#)
[Benefits](#) | [HR Management](#) | [Recruiting & Staffing](#) | [Software & Tech](#) | [Training & Develop.](#) | [Legal](#)
[Current Print Issue](#) | [Print Subscription](#) | [Subscriber Help](#) | [E-Newsletters](#)
[Contact Us](#) | [Site Help](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Statement](#) | [Rights & Permissions](#) | [Advertising Info](#)



Copyright © 1995 -2006 Crain Communications Inc.
All Rights Reserved. [Terms of Use](#) [Privacy Statement](#)