



Leadership Competency: **RECOGNIZES PERFORMANCE**

**“People may take a job for more money,
but they often leave it for more recognition.”**

Bob Nelson

Defining Characteristics

- Recognizes performance that goes beyond job description.
- Aligns this recognition with the personal and professional aspirations of the individual whenever possible.
- Acknowledges the sense of personal achievement and accomplishment.
- Uses a variety of means to recognize outstanding performance, with increased pay being only one of a number of means for recognition.
- Acknowledges not only outstanding work, but also noticeable improvements, reinforcing positive behavioral change.
- Provides timely positive feedback, not just at the end of a lengthy project.

Practice Activities

Be SPECIFIC about what s/he did well, not just “Good Work!”

Compliment an employee to a senior manager in earshot of the person being recognized.

In a staff meeting, make a habit of thanking an individual publicly for some outstanding effort or results they achieved the prior week.

Walk around and catch an employee doing something right (or demonstrated improvement). Recognize them for it on the spot.

Find out what is considered a meaningful reward for each employee and make every effort to reward him or her in ways that are important to them.

Give them a “Plum” assignments.

Nominate the person for a special committee.

Praise in front of peers and upper management.

Praise one-on-one for those who do not like or want public recognition.

Send a complimentary note about the employee to a senior manager and blind copy the person.

Provide small, immediate rewards, like movie tickets, restaurant gift cards, etc. after an unusually big effort or success.

Donate money to a cause they believe in.

Recognize team effort through team celebrations.

See your employees in action catch them doing something right.

Consider generational differences in recognizing employees. What works for a Baby Boomer may not be the way a Gen X or Gen Yer wants to be recognized.

Recommended Reading

Bowen, R. Brayon, Recognizing and Rewarding Employees, McGraw-Hill, 2000

Hale, Judith. The Performance Consultant’s Fieldbook: Tools and Techniques for Improving Organizations and People (Essential Knowledge Resource), Pfeiffer, 2007

Hertzberg, Fred. “One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees?” Harvard Business School 1992-93 Catalog of Teaching Materials. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing Division, 1993; (#87507, p.158).

Klubnick, Jaon P, Rewarding and Recognizing Employees: Ideas for Individuals, Teams, and Managers, McGraw-Hill, 2000.

Kouzes, James M. and Barry Z. Posner. Encouraging the Heart: A Leader’s Guide to Rewards and Recognizing Others. San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishing, 1998.

Nelson, Bob, The 1001 Rewards & Recognition Fieldbook, Workman Publishing Co., 2005