



CHANGE TOOLKIT

Tool: Reward and Recognition

Used in:
IMPLEMENT
Also good for:
PLAN

My Notes

What is it?

Employee recognition is not just a nice thing to do for people. Employee recognition is a communication tool that reinforces and rewards the most important outcomes people create for your service. When you recognise people effectively, you reinforce the actions and behaviours you most want to see people repeat. An effective employee recognition system can be simple, immediate, and powerfully reinforcing.

Why use it in a change process?

Change is hard and everyone involved will struggle at some point or another. Providing recognition to say "thank you" for their efforts and to encourage more of the actions and thinking you believe will make your change programme successful will significantly contribute to the pace and quality of change that is achieved. People who feel appreciated are more positive about themselves and their ability to continue to contribute to making change happen.

It is particularly valuable during the Implement stage of change, because people will be gaining a lot of new skills and getting used to applying these in the new context. It is a time when people can be struggling and need additional recognition of the steps they are taking to encourage them not to slip back into old ways. Reward and recognition is also a useful tool to employ during the Plan stage where motivation sometimes dips as it helps to provide a sense of progress and keep attention focussed on the outcome. Also remember that it is valuable to remember to mark achievements throughout the change process.

What do I need to do?

1. Establish a way to identify when an individual and a team have made real progress.
2. Take regular time to talk about what is going well and why.
3. Provide credit where credit is due. Here is the tricky part, try not to flatter, over celebrate, or be too clichéd. Try and be authentic. Many times just mentioning the specific success and a small piece of why it was successful is the perfect amount.
4. Consider the individual or team involved. What would they appreciate? There are many ways of both rewarding and recognising others, and what works for one person will not necessarily work for someone else, so you'll need to consider each individual case. Some ideas are provided below:

The personal touch

Take time to personally acknowledge efforts by presenting an "on-the-spot" award at the office, taking them out to lunch or sending a handwritten note to their home. Be clear about whether you are thanking the person involved or congratulating them.

Formal recognition

Acknowledge special accomplishments and top performers in front of colleagues – these can be from different parts of the organisation. You could:

- Publicly thank them for their contribution, noting what they have done and why it was so significant
- Present a certificate or small gift if it fits with your local culture and budgets permit
- Start a "Wall of Fame" or "Dream Team" portfolio in your office. Place photos, names and the achievements of participants on the wall or in an album.

Team celebrations

When the change programme hits a milestone or program objective, it's time to do something special for everyone. You could:

- Treat everyone to an old fashioned cake and ice cream celebration
- Place a big banner on the entrance to the office
- Create a "Look what's happened since we first started our change programme" scrapbook. Take photographs and keep a record of programme milestones, participant achievements, and group functions.
- Host a celebration party, inviting participants and their guests to celebrate their success – this doesn't have to be lavish as most people understand service and personal budget constraints.