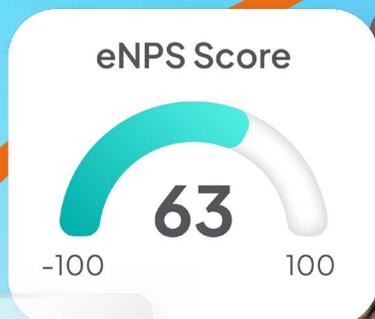


# Build a Recognition Culture

Employee Recognition That Produces Real Results for Your People & Your Organisation



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# Recognition Drives Retention & Engagement

Employee retention remains one of the biggest challenges for today's organisations. As the talent market continues to shift, leaders and HR teams must find ways to keep their best people engaged and connected to the company's mission. One of the most effective – and often underestimated – strategies is building a strong culture of recognition.

When employees feel valued, they stay longer and perform better. Research from the American Psychological Association found that 93% of employees who feel valued are motivated to do their best work, and 88% report feeling more engaged. Recognition doesn't just boost morale; it directly impacts performance, retention, and culture.

The frequency of recognition matters, too. According to Aon Hewitt, employees recognised daily experience a 35% higher engagement rate compared to those recognised only monthly. This underscores an important truth: annual awards or sporadic shout-outs aren't enough. Recognition must be consistent, authentic, and woven into the fabric of everyday work life.

## Building a Recognition Strategy

Creating a culture of recognition starts with a clear strategy that aligns with your organisation's overall goals. Ask:

What behaviours, contributions, and results most support our mission?

How can we recognise and reinforce those actions consistently?

Leadership support is essential. When managers actively give recognition, employees feel it across the organisation. Yet not all leaders are naturally comfortable with recognition. Thankfully, it's a skill that can be taught. Many organisations now train managers to recognise effectively, ensuring everyone contributes to a culture of appreciation.

A well-rounded recognition programme should include three levels of recognition. Think of them as the three legs of a stool: day-to-day, informal, and formal. Each plays a unique role in sustaining engagement and motivation.

# Recognition Drives Retention & Engagement

## The Three Levels of Recognition

### 1 DAY-TO-DAY RECOGNITION

This is the foundation of a recognition culture. It's frequent, personal, and non-monetary – simple gestures that make a big impact. Examples include:

- Thanking an employee in person for excellent work
- Sharing positive customer feedback
- Sending a quick e-card or shout-out on an online recognition wall

Time is often the biggest barrier, but a little structure helps. Some organisations provide managers with recognition toolkits (containing thank-you cards or small tokens), whilst others run initiatives like 'Thank You Thursdays' to encourage weekly appreciation moments. Small, intentional acts create lasting engagement.

### 2 INFORMAL RECOGNITION

Informal recognition is slightly more structured but still personal and flexible. It often includes peer-to-peer programmes where employees nominate colleagues for exceptional contributions or points-based reward systems tied to specific goals or wellness achievements. These programmes celebrate everyday excellence and help reinforce teamwork and accountability.

### 3 FORMAL RECOGNITION

Formal recognition marks major milestones and significant achievements – the 'Premier League' moments of an employee's career. Examples include service awards, performance-based honours, or annual excellence awards. These are the cornerstone celebrations that publicly acknowledge commitment and achievement, helping build long-term loyalty.

The most effective recognition cultures strike a balance between all three levels, ensuring appreciation happens every day, not just on special occasions.

# Recognition Drives Retention & Engagement

## Choosing the Right Awards

The award itself carries meaning; it's a tangible symbol of the organisation's appreciation. Effective awards share four key traits:

### PERSONALISED

Meaningful and relevant to the individual. Giving employees a choice in their awards can increase impact and satisfaction.

### SYMBOLIC

The award should connect to the company or achievement, such as by engraving the accomplishment or featuring the organisation's logo.

### LASTING

Physical awards or lasting tokens serve as reminders of success and appreciation.

### TIERED

Different achievements warrant different levels of recognition, from a simple thank-you note to a high-value milestone award.

This thoughtful approach ensures that every form of recognition – big or small – feels sincere and significant.

## How to Present Recognition

The way recognition is delivered matters as much as the award itself.

- Be timely: Recognition has the most impact when it's close to the accomplishment. Even for annual ceremonies, send a quick message or acknowledgement on the day of the achievement

- Be specific: Clearly describe what the employee did and how it contributed to the organisation's goals.
- Be positive: Focus entirely on the achievement (this is not the time for constructive feedback).

A meaningful presentation shows authenticity and reinforces the values the company stands for.

# Recognition Drives Retention & Engagement

## Leveraging Technology for Recognition

Technology makes it easier than ever to deliver recognition consistently and meaningfully. According to Bersin & Associates, organisations that effectively use technology in recognition programmes are three times more likely to rank in the top quartile of business performance.

Platforms like Terryberry's Be Recognised make appreciation part of daily culture. The platform's recognition wall lets employees

publicly celebrate each other, creating a peer-driven network of positivity. Leaders can view analytics and insights from a centralised dashboard, helping track recognition trends, identify high performers, and measure ROI.

When used strategically, recognition technology transforms appreciation from a sporadic gesture into a continuous driver of engagement, retention, and organisational success.

### Key Takeaway

Recognition isn't just a 'nice-to-have' – it's a business imperative. When appreciation becomes part of your organisation's DNA, employees feel connected, motivated, and committed for the long haul. The result? Higher retention, stronger engagement, and a thriving workplace culture.

# Build a Recognition Culture

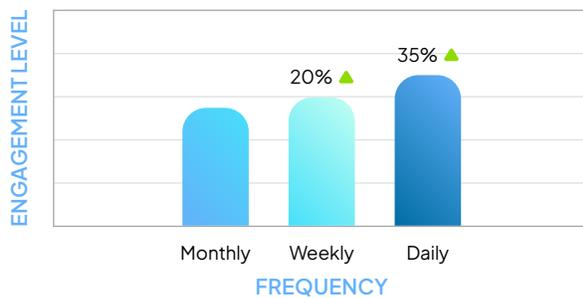


People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing – that's why we recommend it daily.

Zig Ziglar

## Recognition Drives Engagement

The more frequent, the better



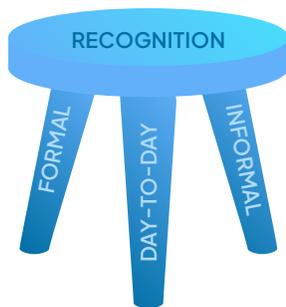
Recognition is the best way to reinforce the Attitudes, Behaviours & Contributions your organisation values most

List 3 of each that are important to your organisation

A ATTITUDES	1 _____
	2 _____
	3 _____
B BEHAVIOURS	1 _____
	2 _____
	3 _____
C CONTRIBUTIONS	1 _____
	2 _____
	3 _____

How can each of these ABCs be reinforced through recognition?

## The 3-Leg Stool Approach to Recognition



**Formal:** Awards for major achievements  
**Informal:** Casual structure, defined criteria  
**Day-to-Day:** Non-monetary appreciation

### SELF CHECK

Is your recognition programme aligned with the mission, vision, and values of your organisation?

# Idea Centre

## Real-Life Recognition Ideas from Other Business & HR Leaders

### 1 BRIGHT IDEAS

Encourage continuous improvement by rewarding employee suggestions that improve workflow processes.

### 2 PASS THE BALL

Encourage peer-to-peer recognition. Once an employee has been recognised for going above and beyond, they must 'pass the ball' by recognising a peer.

### 3 PRESIDENT'S CLUB

Induct employees who surpass a goalpost objective into an exclusive President's Club with honours.

### 4 WELCOME ABOARD AWARD

Recognise new employees upon completion of induction training.

### 5 MAKE A NOTE OF IT

Give each manager a sticky note pad with instructions to write a thank-you note per day until they've finished them. You'll be surprised by the results.

### 6 YOUR SERVICE MATTERS

Multiply the impact of service awards by making presentations to tie the milestone recognition to specific contributions made throughout the recipients' year and career.

### 7 SNAPS FOR PEER RECOGNITION

Place a 'snap cup' for employees to put in notes of recognition for coworkers. Then read them aloud during weekly staff meetings and afterwards give each other 'snaps' (snapping your fingers) for a job well done.

### 8 SHOUT-OUT BOARD

When external and internal clients compliment an employee, the praise is printed and stuck on the outside of their workstation. Then, when coworkers walk by and see the compliment, they shout out a 'great job' or 'well done'!

### 9 SUPPORT YOUR HOME TEAM

By winning the 'Taking the Team to the Top' award, each team member receives an engraved key ring, a thank-you card signed by all the administration team, and the team gets to have an executive box at the local football stadium for an upcoming match.

### 10 LOOKING FOR MORE IDEAS? VISIT [WWW.TERRYBERRY.COM/BLOG](http://WWW.TERRYBERRY.COM/BLOG)

#### ADD YOUR OWN IDEAS

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# Award Presentation Cheat Sheet

USE THIS WORKSHEET TO PREPARE YOUR COMMENTS FOR EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PRESENTATIONS

## RECIPIENT NOTES

Our Mission, Vision & Values \_\_\_\_\_

Award \_\_\_\_\_ Award Presentation Date \_\_\_\_\_

Recipient's Name \_\_\_\_\_ (Phonetic Pronunciation) \_\_\_\_\_

Exact Date of Hire \_\_\_\_\_ Original Job Title \_\_\_\_\_

Current Job Title and Responsibilities \_\_\_\_\_

Specific Contributions to the Organisation \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Funny Stories \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Children \_\_\_\_\_

Activities Away from Work \_\_\_\_\_

## PRESENTATION REMARKS

About the Award \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

About the Recipient \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Specific Contributions & How They Support the Organisation's Mission, Vision & Values \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Sample presentation remarks: 'Sally is celebrating three years of service with ABC Company. In that short time, she has made a big impact on the purchasing team. I won't forget, within the first six months of her hire, she took the initiative to revise the department training manual. She didn't just update the new procedures, she discovered and corrected outdated processes, and added screenshots to improve the usability. It's a document that still makes an impact when we bring new people on board. Over the last several months, she has worked diligently to develop a partnership with an important supplier, and we feel that this new relationship is going to help put us in a better position to serve our customers across the country. I've been really impressed with the way that Sally proactively handled this project. Thank you and congratulations, Sally.'

# Recognition Check-Up

RATE THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR ORGANISATION

1 STRONGLY DISAGREE

2 DISAGREE

3 NEUTRAL

4 AGREE

5 STRONGLY AGREE

## EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

- I feel that my organisation's mission, vision, and values are clearly communicated to employees.
- Employees in my organisation are motivated to perform at their best.
- Employees in my organisation understand what is expected and how to achieve excellence in their work.
- Employee morale is good in my organisation.
- There is open communication between management and employees in my organisation.
- Employees in my organisation feel respected and valued.
- Employees in our organisation respect and trust the management team.
- Our employees understand the opportunities they have to be recognised.
- My organisation acknowledges and appreciates employee dedication and contributions.
- When employees go above and beyond, I feel their actions are recognised in a timely and specific manner.

## PROGRAMME CHARACTERISTICS

- Structure: Formal, informal and day-to-day recognition methods are used to reinforce contributions at different levels.
- Administration: Our organisation has a system in place to effectively manage the administration details of our recognition programme.
- Participation: Both employees and managers participate in the recognition process at a satisfactory level.
- Communication: Employees understand how the recognition programme works and how they can earn recognition.
- Awards: Recipients value the awards that are given. They aspire to achieve them and are proud to receive them.
- Data: Leadership has access to recognition data to inform decisions on usage, engagement, and performance.
- Evaluation: We consistently review our recognition programme to ensure it is meeting objectives.

TOTAL

Do you have a recognition culture?  
Add up your points, then turn the page for your results.

# Recognition Check-Up

## How Did You Do?

Add up your points from the Recognition Check-Up. Do you have a recognition culture?

 <p><b>70-85</b></p> <p>Congratulations! You're on the right track. Continue to look for opportunities to wow your employees.</p>	 <p><b>50-70</b></p> <p>With a little attention, your recognition culture could have more wow factor. Your prescription: Seek out ways to engage and appreciate your workers.</p>	 <p><b>16-50</b></p> <p>Your organisation's recognition culture needs emergency resuscitation - FAST!</p>
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Bonus: Find out how your recognition programme compares with other businesses. Take the survey at [www.terryberry.com/survey](http://www.terryberry.com/survey).

Get free online recognition tools - including printable certificates, new-hire questionnaires, event checklists, and more - [here](#).

Interested in recognition training for your organisation? Check out our upcoming webinars [here](#).

Want more? Get a demo of Terryberry's platform [here!](#)

