An Overview of Appreciation and Recognition for Employees

Appreciation and *Recognition* are key to fostering connectivity and maintaining a positive workplace culture. Acknowledging contributions goes a long way towards creating a positive workplace morale.

Appreciation can be defined as informal, individualized, spontaneous acknowledgment that recognizes an individual for their contribution(s). Appreciation examples can include verbal praise and writing a card to an employee or colleague.

Recognition can be defined as a formal, structured acknowledgement offered by an institution. Recognition examples can include nominating an employee or colleague for a formal award or celebrating a colleague's or employee's service milestones every five years.

Why is it Important in the Workplace?

When individuals are appreciated and recognized for their work, it not only makes them feel good about themselves, but it contributes to their overall wellbeing. Being appreciated and recognized contributes to life satisfaction, optimism, and social support. Individuals are motivated to give their best effort in their work to continue to grow in the organization. Appreciating and recognizing employees also reinforces the values of the organization and demonstrates to employees that employers value their work and effort. This in turn leads to increased satisfaction and productivity, and employees are motivated to improve or maintain their good work.

Best Practices for Employees

1. **Professional development as recognition**
   - Take advantage of the Employee Tuition Benefit
   - Access professional growth and movement opportunities through Queen's Human Resources, Learning and Development Resources
   - Review programs and courses offered through Human Resources, Organizational Development and courses offered the Learning Stream
   - Complete the Employee Recognition Profile
2. **Recognition through involvement of decision-making**
   - Offer to take part in a variety of committees (e.g., Social, Engagement, Wellbeing)
   - Take part in peer-to-peer recognition
   - Offer feedback, ideas, and suggestions to your supervisor through discussions and planning processes
3. **Recognition through team celebrations**
   - Take part in team and personal milestones (e.g., lunches, potlucks, awards, birthdays)
   - Take part in planning team celebrations

- Take part in the celebrations of both new employees and those who are leaving the team or organization
- Share recognition through cards and certificates
- Review the current Queen's University Appreciation and Recognition Awards

4. **Recognition informed by employees' interests and goals**
   - Share with your supervisor what your interests, goals and professional development aspirations are. Work with your supervisor to create a Learning Plan
   - Set your professional development goals with your supervisor. Check the Queen's HR Learning Catalogue for resources
   - Review additional resources that address work and life balance, self-care, time management, stress management, setting clear boundaries, and finding harmony between your personal and professional life, as found on the Employee Wellness Services SharePoint site

5. **Recognition through good communication**
   - Share your communication style with your supervisor
   - Request regular 1-on-1 meetings with your supervisor at least every 2-3 weeks
   - Keep open dialogue and communication with your supervisor

Additional Suggestions to Recognize and Appreciate Colleagues

- Communicate directly and clearly
- Be timely
- Be meaningful and take the initiative
- Be equitable and inclusive
- Be positive
- Make the message personal
- Be genuine, authentic, and honest in recognizing another person's work
- Choose celebrations, e.g., virtual coffee breaks or in-person events
- Choose to send a letter that recognizes a colleague's work with the organization
- Send a gift card to your colleague
- Send an email thanking a colleague
- Create a message in Microsoft Teams Praise
- Take a colleague to lunch
- Buy a colleague a cup of coffee or tea