Recognition Training Designs

Companies are realizing that if they expect managers, supervisors, and team leaders to take the job of recognizing their employees seriously, they need to provide training in recognition skills. Such training can greatly raise awareness, develop specific skills, and help overcome obstacles regarding the use of recognition, making it easier to develop a momentum that can greatly impact the organization's chances of creating a cultural change.

Training and follow-up programs can also be invaluable in creating "breakthrough" learning, as discussed in Chapter 5, "The Recognition Cycle."

Managers can learn from one another about what recognition strategies have worked well in the organization, and they should solicit feedback about new recognition activities they are considering.

A NOTE ON TEACHING RECOGNITION

Since people learn in different ways and at different rates, a variety of approaches should be used when teaching recognition in order to maximize the potential for learning. Here are a few techniques that you will find of value in teaching the topic of recognition and its related skills.

Activities and discussion. Getting individuals involved in the topic is an effective way to get them to think about the importance or recognition. You might want to start by asking participants to think of the last time they felt appreciated or the best recognition they ever gave to or received from another employee, and to describe that experience. The resulting discussion and sharing give the group a common baseline of experience upon which to build. Group discussions can also be held to share recognition techniques that have worked for attendees in their jobs or in previous positions or organizations, or to brainstorm low-cost recognition ideas.

Research and statistics. Using motivation studies or statistics from studies such as the ones provided in this book persuasively underscores the importance of recognition, especially for more analytical participants. Motivation studies are commonly reported in the business press, and quotations can be used to make a point and give credibility to your ideas.

Stories and case studies. Often even more persuasive than research is the power of a good story. The recent knowledge-management literature provides extensive evidence of the power of storytelling for both disseminating knowledge and sustaining an organization's values. A story can be based on the trainer's own experience or one the trainer heard from an employee, manager, or in previous training. If the story is humorous, it is even better for holding the group's attention and offering a change of pace to the content. A full-blown story can serve as a case study, which adds depth of understanding to the topic. For the greatest relevance, use

case studies directly from your own organization so that trainees can readily relate to them. A video case study example can also go a long way toward showing what recognition looks like when it's an integral part of a company's culture.

Behavioral modeling. An ideal way to teach any skill, especially interpersonal skills, is to model behaviors related to that skill. When teaching recognition skills, it is important to demonstrate whenever possible what effective recognition looks like, by providing a quick, specific, and sincere informal personal praising to a participant in front of the class, or more formally by role-playing (live or on videotape) examples of good and poor recognition. Other ways of demonstrating recognition in a training setting follow.

- Use an in-class pass-around trophy such as a water gun to recognize certain behaviors (compliments of Peg Murray, trainer, Skillpath Seminars).

- Create an award out of a piece of crumpled paper and ask participants to make the award meaningful (compliments of Amelia Armitage, principal, Performance System Associates).

- Provide a certificate for participants to write something they would like to be recognized for and have a partner present the certificate to the person (compliments of Toni La Motta, author of *Recognition: The Quality Way*).

In general, although it is important to make managers, supervisors, team leaders, and, increasingly, all employees aware of the importance of recognition and to train them in the skills of providing recognition, it is even more critical to get them to personally experience the power of recognition. The classroom can be an effective environment in which to help them take the first step in practicing recognition skills and developing an action plan for using those skills once they return to the workplace.

Following are several training designs that the authors have used, which can be readily adapted for your own situation.

GENERAL RECOGNITION TRAINING OUTLINE

TOPICS	ACTIVITIES	SUGGESTIONS
Introduction	▪ **Welcome** ▪ **Objectives** ▪ **Agenda** ▪ **Participant introductions** ▪ **Expectations**	*Make sure that participants are clear about expectations. As they introduce themselves, you might want to have each participant share what he or she personally expects to get out of the program.*
Definition of terms ▪ Recognition ▪ Incentives ▪ Reinforcement ▪ Reward ▪ Etc.		
Value of recognition	**Discussion**	*Have participants share their personal experiences about how recognition has made them feel.*
Monetary versus nonmonetary recognition		*Interactive presentation*
Levels of Recognition Individual Team Organizational	**Interactive presentation**	*Ask participants to volunteer to share a recognition experience at each level.*
Recognition Quotient (RQ) ▪ Age ▪ Experience ▪ Skills/confidence ▪ Frequency of use ▪ Organizational role ▪ Available time ▪ Fear of negative consequences ▪ Others	**Interactive presentation**	*Ask participants to suggest other factors that might contribute to higher RQ (Recognition Quotient).*
Organizational Enablers ▪ Manager ▪ Organizational support ▪ Recognition culture ▪ Resources ▪ Others	**Interactive presentation**	*Ask participants to suggest other organizational enabling factors.*

Organizational Constraints	**Discussion**	*Ask participants to identify any constraints that might discourage recognition. If any constraints are identified, point out that recognition is always possible.*

Dimensions of Recognition
  ▪ Contingency
  ▪ Timing
  ▪ Frequency
  ▪ Formality
  ▪ Recognition setting and context
  ▪ Significance of the provider
  ▪ Value to the recipient
	Interactive presentation	

Recognition Cycle	**Interactive presentation**	*Discuss the Plan-Do-Review-Implement (PDRI) cycle and its implications for developing incremental and breakthrough recognition improvement.*
Getting Started with Individual Recognition	**Interactive presentation**	*Emphasize the importance of "getting started" and not "being perfect." Point out simple planning questions.*
Guidelines for Effective Recognition	**Interactive presentation**	*Focus on "ASAP" model.* *Optional: role-playing.*
Best Practices	**Interactive presentation**	*Discuss the "ten best ways."*
Getting Started with Team Recognition (optional)	**Interactive presentation**	*Discuss both in-person and virtual team recognition best practices.*
Getting Started with Organizational Recognition (optional)	**Interactive presentation**	*Emphasize that organizational recognition requires more careful planning.*
Making Time for Recognition	**Discussion**	*Focus on what can be done (opportunities) rather than what can't be done (constraints).*
Recognition Commitment	**Action planning**	*Get participants to complete the "Recognition Action Plan."*
Summary	**Discussion**	*Brainstorm major learning points.*
Evaluation	**Survey completion**	

SAMPLE FULL-DAY RECOGNITION WORKSHOP

	The following full-day training design combines elements of the two previous half-day designs and can also be delivered in separate half-day modules.
8:30–8:45	**Introduction and Overview**
8:35–8:45	**Opening activity:** The importance of energy
8:45–8:55	**Trends affecting the need for recognition**
8:55–9:10	**Activity and Sharing:** The last time you felt appreciated (Conclusion: the best recognition was simple, personal) (Provide *1001 Rewards* books to three participants who share)
9:10–9:20	**Benefits of recognition** **Bottom-line impact of recognition**
9:20–9:40	**Definitions:** ■ Recognition and reward ■ Formal/informal/day-to-day ■ Tangible/intangible ■ Extrinsic/intrinsic
9:40–10:00	**Video clip best practice:** 1001 Rewards video: The Walt Disney Dolphin Hotel*
10:00–10:15	Break
10:15–10:20	**Questions about recognition and rewards**
10:20–10:50	**Small group discussion:** Why don't we use recognition
10:50–11:00	**Two Principles of Performance Management** #1 All Performance Starts with Clear Goals #2 You Get What You Reward Three types of consequences: Positive, Negative, None
11:00–11:45	**Activity:** Three types of feedback with debrief (demonstration of the value of different types of feedback)
11:45–12:00	**Video clip best practice:** 1001 Rewards video: The Office of Personnel Management*
12:00–1:15	Lunch
1:15–1:30	**Questions & discussion:** Developing a motivation baseline

1:30–2:00	**Research overview:** 3–4 studies with Graham capstone research study: Top Motivating Techniques Reported by Employees with techniques. Conclusions: (1) Money is not the top motivator and (2) The best motivators are manager-initiated and based on performance
2:00–2:20	**Group Activity:** A nonmonetary recognition that has worked for you (group discussion and report; capture items for distribution to group)
2:20–2:30	Break
2:30–2:45	**Putting recognition into practice** **Guidelines for effective praisings**
2:45–2:55	**Activity:** Praising practice with partner
2:55–3:00	**Revisit goal list, divide into groups by topic interest**
3:00–3:30	**Group Activity:** Discussion and brainstorming of needs, report out
3:30–3:50	**Energizing Employees:** The Power of I's (with examples): ■ Interesting and important work ■ Information, communication, and feedback on performance ■ Involvement in decisions and a sense of ownership ■ Independence, autonomy, and flexibility ■ Increased opportunity for learning, growth, and responsibility
3:50–4:00	**1001 Energize video:** Motivation: Igniting Exceptional Performance (show entire video, if time permits)*
4:00–4:20	**Action planning and handout review with one thing you'll do differently** (Provide 1001 Energize books for those who share their plans)
4:20–4:30	**Summary and Close**
	*These videos are available from Nelson Motivation Inc. at 1-800-575-5521 or via the Internet at www.nelson-motivation.com

SAMPLE HALF-DAY RECOGNITION WORKSHOPS

Conducting a half-day follow-up workshop 2–3 weeks after the initial training helps build momentum and resolve obstacles.

SAMPLE A

8:30–8:45	**Introduction and Overview**
8:45–9:00	**Activity and Sharing:** The last time you felt appreciated
9:00–9:05	**Definition of Recognition**
9:05–9:25	**Types of Recognition:** formal/informal/day-to-day
9:25–9:35	**Activity:** The power of informal interaction
9:35–9:40	**Guidelines for Giving Effective Praise:** ASAP[3]
9:45–10:00	**Video clip best practice:** 1001 Rewards: How to Present a Personal Thank You video*
10:00–10:20	Break
10:20–10:35	**Discussion:** What keeps us from using recognition?
10:35–10:55	**Two Principles of Performance Management** 　　1. All Performance Starts with Clear Goals 　　2. You Get What You Reward
10:55–11:15	**Research Overview**
11:15–11:35	**Group Activity:** A recognition activity that has worked (group discussion, brainstorming and report out)
11:35–11:50	**Action Planning and Sharing**
11:50–12:00	**Summary and Close**

SAMPLE B

8:30–8:40	**Introduction and Goal-setting**
8:40–9:10	**Activity:** Group discussion and report—what worked and what did not?
9:10–9:30	**Review of the Principles of Effective Recognition and Rewards**
9:30–9:45	**Video Clip Best Practice:** 1001 Rewards: How to Praise Publicly*
9:45–10:00	Break
10:20–11:00	**Further discussion and brainstorming**
11:00–11:25	**Action Planning and Sharing**
11:25–11:30	**Summary and Close**

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