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the employee engagement people



# How Strategic Recognition Impacts Business Results



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Bringing recognition into your employee engagement efforts is a must. Thoughtful recognition is a powerful way to show appreciation, help employees learn from each other and help your team focus on “the wins.”

When you get good at recognizing those who do their job well or go above and beyond their role, employees benefit in many ways. Strategic recognition helps create the environment for more engagement because people are getting what they crave.

When employees get what they crave in the workplace, they:

<b>1. Feel more respected</b>	"I was really working hard on that project and put in some extra time outside of work. I'm really proud that my efforts were evident to others and that they see the impact of what I do."
<b>2. Can more clearly see the purpose and importance of their work</b>	"I was surprised to get recognized for how I handled that customer interaction. I didn't realize the customer was so connected in the community. It means a lot to see how my actions might have a real impact on how someone talks about our company!"
<b>3. Build better relationships with others</b>	"It was so nice of Steve to notice the extra effort I gave in that meeting. I don't work with him a lot, but I will keep an eye out for more opportunities to help his team."

Yet, the impact of recognition is much bigger than on just the individual. Recognizing people for the work they do is part of building a strong, healthy workplace. And employee recognition is powerful. It has the potential to inspire people to adopt new ways of doing things, it helps foster a culture of appreciation and gratitude and it can also help your organization reach its desired goals and objectives. Let's take this a step further.

*Strategic recognition is when you show appreciation for a success that helped improve the employee or customer experience and that can be tied to your company's values, purpose or objectives.*

Just because we're being strategic doesn't mean we have to be boring. Rather, think about how adding a little bit more beyond the "thank you" can turn a nice message into one that has a meaningful impact on your team and your company as a whole.

Don't worry... writing the perfect strategic recognition message is easy! It only involves three steps. And once you get into the habit of doing it, you won't think twice the next time you go to acknowledge someone for doing a good job.

1

## Tell the action

It sounds simple because it is. What specific actions did the person do? Tell the story in a couple of sentences. It doesn't need to be a novel, just enough information so people who may not work with that individual every day know what happened.

Telling the action ensures that others on your team will be more informed of great work and the types of actions they can do to deliver on your company's mission, purpose and values. Being specific also makes sure that the recognition is genuine, focused on merit and doesn't feel like favoritism.



**Helpful tip:** Think about telling the story in a way that a new employee can clearly understand what they would do in a similar situation.

2

## Connect to an area of focus or company value

Employee recognition is a great opportunity to tie employee actions to your company's values, goals, mission or purpose. This helps people on your team make the connection between what they do every day with the big picture of your organization's priorities and objectives.

It's key to "walk the talk," especially as a leader. Connecting the recognition message to the values, purpose, etc., demonstrates that those important pieces of your business are top of mind for you too! As you lead by example, people on your team will adopt the practice and soon enough, that link between the values and day-to-day actions will become easier to see.

3

## Explain the impact

This step is about the result of the action. Why was it important and how did it affect your team, your customers or the company as a whole? Again, get specific - if you only report on what happened, you miss out on the appreciation piece that influences engagement and creates an inspiring moment.

While the benefit of the action may seem obvious to you, it may not be to others, especially if they are not on the same team or in the same department.



**Helpful tip:** You may even want to consider what would have been the impact if the person did not do what they did.

To truly see the strategic impact of employee recognition, it's key to embed it in your company culture. Let's use a simple analogy. Think about skipping a stone across a pond... each time the rock touches the water a series of tiny waves ripple away from the impact point.

When you recognize someone for doing their job well, the same thing happens. The initial impact (on the person you recognize) spreads as the others in your organization read about the recognition. That ripple spreads even more when your team starts to build the actions into their day-to-day work, which can have a real impact on your team's (or company's) goals and objectives.

As more people get on board with making recognition a habit – a part of your work culture (the “way we do things around here”) – the ripple effect spreads throughout the organization.

## Creating a culture of continuous recognition leads to:

<b>Increased engagement and productivity:</b>	The more employees feel the benefits above, the more likely they are to give their best efforts to support the company, creating an environment for improving employee engagement. This leads to improvements in countless areas, for example, faster problem-solving, fewer mistakes, more innovation, less stress and improved well-being to name a few.
<b>Reductions in unwanted turnover:</b>	When top performers feel that their work is appreciated, they are less likely to look elsewhere for a job. As recognition becomes an integral part of your employee engagement efforts, you'll see more and more people who are willing to stay even if offered a similar job elsewhere.
<b>Increased focus on the most important goals:</b>	When the whole team (and leaders) are talking about and acknowledging actions that made an impact by writing a strategic recognition message, employees are reminded about the goals that the company is focused on. These reminders do a lot to drive the results that are most important to the company.

The right kind of employee reward and recognition program can make a big impact. Think about how you can incorporate strategic recognition to boost and round out your company's employee engagement efforts.



**Reward Gateway offers a suite of strategic reward and recognition tools to help boost business results.**

**Connect with us to learn more:**

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