

# Positive Recognition: Whose Job Is It?

**Special Area:** Administration

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## I. ABSTRACT

There are high points in all of our lives and most of them have come about through encouragement from someone else. This session will focus on how important it is for the principal or administrator to give positive recognition. Participants will learn simple, yet powerful techniques, strategies, practical "how to's", creative ideas and a few things to remember - all designed to help principals and administrators do an even better job of recognizing others.

## II. OVERVIEW

- A. Administrative Issues to be addressed:
  - 1. Positive Reinforcement
  - 2. Motivational Strategies
  - 3. Common Courtesy
  - 4. Appreciation
  - 5. Recognition

## III. PRESENTATION OUTLINE/

- A. Attached

## IV. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- A. Recognition:
  - 1. *180 Ways to Walk the Recognition Talk* by Eric Harvey
  - 2. *Esteem Builders* by Dr. Michele Borba
  - 3. *1001 Ways to Reward Employees* by Bob Nelson
  - 4. *1001 Ways to Energize Employees* by Bob Nelson
- B. Principal
  - 1. *What to Look for in a Classroom* by Alfie Kohn
  - 2. *What Every Principal Should Know About Teaching Reading* by Marie Carbo
  - 3. *Classrooms That Work, They Can All Read and Write* by Patricia M Cunningham and Richard L. Allington
  - 4. *How To Be An Effective Teacher, The First Days of School* by Harry Wong
  - 5. *Classroom Instruction that Works* by Robert Marzano, Debra Pickering, Jane Pollock
  - 6. *The Principal's Guide to Raising Reading Achievement* by Elaine K Mc Ewan
  - 7. *Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do* by: National Association of Elementary School Principals
- C. Administration
  - 1. *How to Think Like a CEO, The 22 Vital Traits You Need to Be The Person at the Top* by D.A.Bento
  - 2. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen R. Covey
  - 3. *Who Moved My Cheese?* by Spencer Johnson, M.D.

4. *The Skillful Leader Confronting Mediocre Teaching* by Alexander Platt, Caroline Tripp, Wayne Ogden
5. *All I Really Need To Know I Learned in Kindergarten* by Robert Fulghun
6. *Living the 7 Habits The Courage to Change* by Stephen R. Covey
7. *First Break All The Rules* by Marcus Buckingham, Curt Coffman
8. *What It Takes 10 Capacities for Initiating and Sustaining School Improvement* by Northeast and Island Regional Education Laboratory
9. *10 Traits of Highly Effective Teachers* by Elaine K. McEwan

## **A timeless subject...**

*the 1700's*

**“A soldier will fight long and hard for a bit of colored ribbon.”**

Napoleon Bonaparte

*the 1800's*

**“I can live for two months on one good compliment!”**

Mark Twain

*the 1900's*

**“Everyone has an invisible sign hanging from their neck saying: Make me feel IMPORTANT!”**

Mary Kay Ash

*the 2000's*

**“I've always been a sucker for attention!”**

Cuba Gooding, Jr.

**According to a survey by Robert Half International Inc.,**

**As many as 25% of good employees who quit their jobs cite a *lack of appreciation* as their reason.**

## **RECOGNITION:**

1. fosters job satisfaction
2. builds self-esteem
3. reinforces desired performance

## **IT SUPPORTS:**

1. quality
2. strengthens trust and loyalty
3. shapes a magnetic culture

**ATTRACTS** and keeps the **VERY BEST PEOPLE.**

# RECOGNITION IS ABOUT:

1. Acknowledging Good Results
2. Reinforcing Positive Performance
3. Shaping an Environment in which **Contributions** are **Noticed** and **Appreciated**.

**WHAT GOES AROUND  
COMES AROUND!**

# TOP 10 EXCUSES FOR NOT GIVING RECOGNITION:

1. “I don’t know how.”
2. “I don’t have time.”
3. “People don’t care about it all that much.”
4. “It’s not MY job!”
5. “I don’t believe in rewarding people for just doing their job.”
6. “It becomes meaningless if done too much.”
7. “I’m very limited in what I can do.”
8. “Sometimes it’s awkward and uncomfortable.”
9. “People will think they’ve made it and stop working.”
10. “I don’t get it. Why should I give it?”

**Dear Boss:**

**Okay, maybe I've been known to say: "I don't want any pats on the back--just put it in my check." Well, don't believe it. It's a crock! Regardless of how I act, I do care a lot about what you and others think of me and what I do. Recognition is important to me; that's why I wear award pins and belt buckles; that's why I display trophies at home; that's why I hang certificates on my wall.**

**Believe it or not, I'm looking for more from this job than just a paycheck. There's got to be more, 'cause I'm sure not going to get rich on what I make! What do I want? I want to feel good about myself and the work I do; I want to feel like I'm an important part of this organization; and I tend to gauge my self-worth by others' perceptions--including yours.**

**I don't expect you to see me as a top-notch performer all the time. No one is. I do expect to occasionally be recognized for my efforts and contributions. The more you recognize my good work, the more good work I want to do. That's human nature.**

**I know you're often so busy you probably don't think about recognizing me. Maybe you sometimes figure that you don't get recognition yourself, so why should you give it to others; but if you'll just make a greater effort to let me know you appreciate me, I'll do my best to return the favor. I promise I won't complain about receiving too much praise!**

**Every Employee**

**Outstanding leaders  
go out of their way  
to boost the self-esteem  
of their personnel.**

**If people believe in themselves,  
it's amazing  
what they can accomplish.**

**Sam Walton**

THERE ARE AS MANY WAYS  
TO RECOGNIZE  
PEOPLE AS THERE ARE  
PEOPLE TO RECOGNIZE.

YOU JUST HAVE TO USE YOUR  
BRAIN TO FIND THEM.

NEXT TIME YOU THINK YOU'VE  
EXHAUSTED THE  
POSSIBILITIES.

THINK AGAIN...AND AGAIN!

**There are high spots  
in all of our lives  
and most of them  
have come about through  
encouragement  
from someone else.**

**I do not care how great,  
how famous or successful  
A man or woman may be,  
each hungers for  
APPLAUSE.**

**George M. Adams**

**There are two things  
people  
Want more than  
sex and money  
Recognition  
and Praise!**

**Eric Harvey**

# **A Note to Every Employee**

**Dear Employee:**

**I admit it-- I need to do a better job of giving you the recognition you deserve. I DO appreciate your efforts and contributions, and I'll work harder at showing it more often.**

**As I work on that, maybe you could look for an occasional opportunity to recognize ME! After all, bosses want and need recognition, too. And we usually get even less than employees do.**

**Like you, I want to feel good about myself and what I do-- and YOU can help. Remember that recognizing your boss is not about "kissing up," it is about extending the same courtesy you wish to receive yourself.**

**Every Administrator**

# Recognition Checklist

**Make sure the recognition you provide is:**

## **1. TIMELY**

Don't wait. Give recognition as soon as possible after the good performance takes place. Praise tends to lose its effectiveness with passing time.

## **2. SPECIFIC**

Tell the person exactly what they did that was good. A mere "nice job" really doesn't say all that much. Being specific lets the person know what behaviors to repeat in the future.

## **3. SINCERE**

Insincere praise is usually worse than none at all. Be honest and open. Tell the person what their performance means to you personally.

## **4. INDIVIDUAL**

Focus on individuals rather than groups. Fact is, not all team members contribute equally.

## **5. PERSONAL**

Adjust the style and method of your recognition to the receiver. Some people like public praise, some prefer private discussions. Give "different strokes to different folks." Not sure what they prefer? Ask!

## **6. PROPORTIONAL**

Match the amount and intensity of recognition to the achievement. Going overboard for small stuff will make people question your motives.

# *Getting started*

Select three ideas or action items that you wish to personally adopt. Circle the number of each item you selected and review the ideas or actions frequently. When you have completed one of the ideas or actions, put an X on the circled item and before you know it you will have tried many ideas or actions and you'll be well on your way to...

## **Walking the Recognition Talk.**

**1. REMEMBER THAT GIMMICKS, GADGETS, AND GIVEAWAYS** can make your recognition efforts fun and memorable. But nothing (I mean NOTHING!) can replace a good, old-fashioned, sincere, look-them-in-the-eye-and-say “thank-you.”

**2. LEND AN EAR!** Looking for a really low-cost way to recognize others? Try *listening* to them! Listening is one of the most under-utilized recognition activities in the world. (And one of the most under-developed skills!) But it can have a big impact. Whether a person is a peer, boss etc., listening to them sends the message that you care—and that they are important!

**3. GET PHYSICAL!** Make a habit of using positive, non-verbal recognition gestures like “thumbs up” or “high fives.” These simple actions not only recognize others, but also spread contagious enthusiasm throughout the workplace.

**4. HERE'S A LESSON FROM HUMAN NATURE 101** to remember and apply in your dealings with everyone in your organization: Behaviors that get reinforced get repeated. You can take THAT to the bank!

**5. HERE'S A QUESTION TO ASK YOUR STAFF.** “When you do a good job, how do you like to be recognized?” You’ll not only learn about what motivates people, but you’ll also begin establishing that everyone needs to do a good job. This great “double hit” technique really is effective.

**6. KNOW THEM AS PEOPLE!** Find Out what’s important to the folks you work with. This shows that you’re interested in who they are in life rather than just what they are at work! That’s recognition at its most basic level!

**7. BE ACCESSIBLE!** Make time for the people you work with – especially those that work for you. The more attention you pay, the more important they’ll feel.

**8. HELP THEM GROW!** Work with people to develop their talents and enhance their skills. When you put time, energy, and resources into others development, you not only recognize their potential, but you also “set them up” for future success.

**9 .START TO DEVELOP AN “ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE”** by creating a written list of performances and behaviors deserving of recognition. Write down everything you can think of that deserves notice. Add to the list periodically. Most important, keep an eye out for people who do things that are on your list and recognize them! Here are a few recognition opportunities to get your list started:

- a. Long-term positive performance, like perfect attendance, turning in lesson plans on time, etc.
- b. Exceeding expectations.
- c. Volunteering for a tough assignment.
- d. Helping others in the organization meet their goals.
- e. Going ‘above and beyond’ for students
- f. Keeping a cool head under pressure.

**10. HERE'S A BIGGIE: FOCUS!** Make a list of all people who work with or for you. Then go through your list and identify the last time you gave recognition to each person—and for what. You should remember your last praising of most of the people on the list. If not, *You’re probably not doing it enough!*

**11. LOOKING TO ENCOURAGE recognition and build a culture of appreciation? *Try giving recognition for giving recognition!***

**12. MAKE IT SINCERE!** Probably the number one characteristic of good recognition is sincerity. Most people will be able to tell when you really mean what you say and when you're "just going through the motions." And if you ask folks, they'll usually agree that insincere recognition is worse than none at all.

**13. DON'T FORGET YOUR PEERS!** How often do you recognize your co-workers? If not all that often, why not? Why not thank people for carrying their share of the load? Why not show appreciation when others make your group look good?

**YOU EARN THE RIGHT TO EXPECT RECOGNITION BY GIVING!  
IT'S THAT SIMPLE.**

**14. BE SURE TO GIVE RECOGNITION TO YOUR "MIDDLE STARS"** – those day-in and day-out solid performers who keep the business going. They represent the vast majority of your organization – and a huge recognition opportunity zone. Avoid the trap of giving most of your attention to "super stars" (exceptional performers) and "fallen stars" (those with performance problems).

**15. CHECK YOUR FACTS!** Make sure people truly deserve praise before you give it. The only thing worse than insincere recognition is unearned recognition--especially when it's seen by others who know what's really going on.

**16. WRITE THE WORD "RECOGNITION" in your calendar/day planning system at some regular interval. Make this word your trigger to quickly think of people who deserve praise. Then, immediately go thank them for their positive performance. Trust me, if you make an effort to look, you'll never run out of people to praise.**

**17. GIVE OUT "CERTIFICATES OF RECOGNITION."**

**18. WRITE THEM UP!** Community editors of local newspapers are always looking for interesting stories. Why not let them write about the achievements of people in your work group?

**19. ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE YOU!** Seize every opportunity to introduce people in your work group to visitors, etc. The message to your co-workers is “You’re important- -I want people to meet you.

**20. TELL SOMEONE HOW PROUD YOU ARE** to work with them.

**21. POST THE RESULTS!** Use charts, graphs, and posters to visually display positive group performance. Place them in common areas for everyone to see. And make sure each team member’s name is included somewhere on each posting.

**22. Add “SHAMELESS BRAGGING”** as a short agenda item to all staff or team meetings. Encourage participants to brag about someone who has had a positive impact on students, school ,other staff members, etc.

**23. NOTIFY THE FAMILY!** Send a letter or card to the person’s family describing his/her performance and the positive impact it has on the organization. A great closing could be: “We’re very proud of Barbara—you should be, too.

**24. STANDING OVATION!** Give people a standing ovation.

**25. RECOGNIZE YOUR POSITIVE PERFORMERS** by asking them to be trainer or mentors.

**26. Get a LEG up on recognition:**

**Look them in the eye.**

**Explain specifically what they did well.**

**Give them a great big “Thank You!”**

**27. HELP OTHERS DEVELOP A RECOGNITION MIND—SET.** Display a large calendar with important dates noted such as employment anniversaries, birthdays, etc.

**28. HAVE A PICNIC!** Do not wait for official company parties or gatherings. Organize informal events to recognize team efforts and boost team spirit.

**29. TAKE A PEER OUT FOR A ROOT BEER!**

**30. SCHEDULE AN “AGENDA--LESS” meeting 2-3 times a year.** Make it time to visit, take a deep breath, talk about what’s on your mind. You’ll demonstrate that you care, and, you’ll encourage communication that leads to a high-trust environment.

**31. ALWAYS SEND A NOTE OF CONGRATULATIONS,** when a co-worker is being recognized for an achievement.

**32. SHARE YOUR SUCCESS!** Recognize the people who contribute to whatever you are recognized for.

**33. Keep A CAMERA ON HAND** to record special events and special people. Post the pictures in a common area. And when it’s time to take them down put in a scrapbook for all to enjoy.

**34. HERE’S AN OFTEN OVERLOOKED WAY OF RECOGNIZING GOOD PERFORMERS:** Address the problems of POOR performers! Letting others get away with sub-par behavior is a slap in the face to the majority of those who carry their share of the load--and more.

**35. LEND A HAND!** Do things to make life easier for your staff. Make sure there is always paper for the copy machines, take their duties, go teach a lesson in their classroom. Give teachers time to catch up, take a deep breath, and a few minutes free time.

**36. DUTY FREE LUNCH!**

**IN TODAY’S FAST-PACED WORLD, FREE TIME IS LIKE GOLD!**

**37. BUY** mugs, pencils, treasure chests, new teacher chairs, erasers for chalk boards, pencil sharpeners, pens, totes, posters, magazines or anything else.

**38. BRING TREATS, SNACKS.**

**39. PRINT BUSINESS CARDS for all of your staff.**

**40. LET TEACHERS KNOW THE POSITIVE COMMENTS you've heard about them.**

**41. PERIODICALLY PLACE AN INEXPENSIVE TREAT in each staff member's mail box with a note attached. Some examples:**

- 1. Package of lifesavers: "You've been a lifesaver."**
- 2. Fifth Avenue candy bar: "You're the tops."**
- 3. Three Musketeers bar: "we're all for one and one for all-thanks for the teamwork."**
- 4. Payday candy bar: "You do not need to wait for payday to know you're worth your weight in gold."**
- 5. Hershey's Kiss: "Thanks!"**
- 6. Mr. Goodbar candy bar: "Thanks for the good work."**
- 7. Long-stemmed carnation: "Your sweet nature has a powerful effect."**

**42. TAKE TIME FOR FUN: Every once in a while create events just for fun. Hat Day, Mixed Up Sock Day, do facials, or any event that is fun.**

**43. SET THE TONE FIRST: Greet you staff each morning and tell them you are glad they are here. It's also good for everyone to greet students and visitors.**

**"GOOD THOUGHTS not delivered mean SQUAT"**

**What motivates us to go above and beyond  
the normal job,  
is being appreciated by  
our **BOSS!****

**“The best thing you can say to your workers is  
“You are valuable,  
you are my most important asset.”**

**The highest compliments leaders can  
receive  
are those that are given by  
the people  
who work for them.**