



EIGHT WAYS TO BUILD EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT

Creating a fairy-tale work environment begins with recognition. Your employees need it more than money, perks or titles. Here are eight tips regarding recognition. Remember these, and your employees may just start whistling while they work.

ACCORDING TO THE 1999 GALLUP POLL, THE FOUR ELEMENTS THAT HAVE PROVEN TO BE EFFECTIVE IN CREATING EMPLOYEE LOYALTY ARE PRAISE AND RECOGNITION, A SENSE OF CONTRIBUTION

relies on her expertise and organizational skills. Remarkably, a significant percent of high-impact performers report that they left their last job because, "No one ever asked me to stay."

1 **It is up to me.** The corporate culture or financial rewards will not make your team successful. It is up to you. Recognition is one thing that is completely in your control.

TO THE COMPANY, LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

6 **Forget cash.** Remember the saying, "Money can't buy everything?" Well, it's true.

Don't wait until you can offer an employee a raise or promotion. Real thanks is its own reward. In numerous surveys of work satisfaction, top on employees' lists is "feeling appreciated." In fact, when employees feel recognized and involved, they are much less likely to keep asking about money.

2 **Strong relationships are vital in today's economy.** Strengthening employee relationships is even more necessary as companies downsize and lay off. As your workforce shrinks and you need to do more with less, keeping quality employees becomes even more critical. As a manager, it is your job to bond your best people to your company through recognition. And you also must help direct and motivate your "core" performers.

3 **Simple rewards earn big returns.** There are some relatively simple things you can do that will earn big returns. For example, remember your employees' birthdays and work anniversaries; find out what inexpensive rewards they value (for example, tickets to a ball game or a half day off to spend time with their kids); make the most of your formal service awards with some preparation and a group presentation; walk around your department every day and talk to your people and thank them sincerely and often.

praise such as "You do great work," actually can have the opposite effect and leave your employees wondering, "Does he have any idea what I really do around here?" Specific praise links individual accomplishments to company goals. For example, "Cheryl, I noticed the way you handled that customer complaint. Great work. As you know, we value quick resolutions of problems as one of our core strategies."

4 **Make it specific.** Praise and recognition must be specific to have impact. General

5 **Ask the best to stay.** Call your best people into your office one at a time. Let that bright young college graduate know you value his fresh ideas and energy. Tell the 20-year veteran how much your team

7 **Recognize.** Recognition means most to an employee when it is sincere and spontaneous.

According to the largest study ever conducted on workplace satisfaction (Gallup, 1999), recognition should occur at least every seven days. If you wait until a year-end party or an annual review, you are waiting much too long to recognize and you probably are losing people you do not need to.

8 **Recognition works.** Neglect can be a poisoned apple. Recognition is the elixir that will spark better attitudes and performance. Jeffrey Pfeffer of Stanford University says, "The returns from managing people in ways that build high commitment ... typically are on the order of 30 to 50 percent."

Take a hard look in the mirror and ask yourself how you can recognize the fairest of them all. Learn to recognize your employees for their efforts, thank them often and reward their achievements. You can awaken them from their anger and apathy and they will fall in love with their jobs again. Chances are, you will work together happily ever after. **WQP**

About the Author
Adrian Gostick is the author of *The 24-Carrot Manager: A Remarkable Story of How a Leader Can Unleash Human Potential*. He also is director of marketing and corporate communication with the O.C. Tanner Recognition Co.
For more information on this subject, write in 1010 on the reader service card.

YOUR TOTAL WATER SOLUTION

industry leader, custom carbon block, filter housings, OEM capabilities, specialty filter cartridges, quality assurance, filtering systems, on-site testing, sediment filter cartridges... we could go on and on!

Plymouth Products

1-800-222-7558
plymouthwater.com

