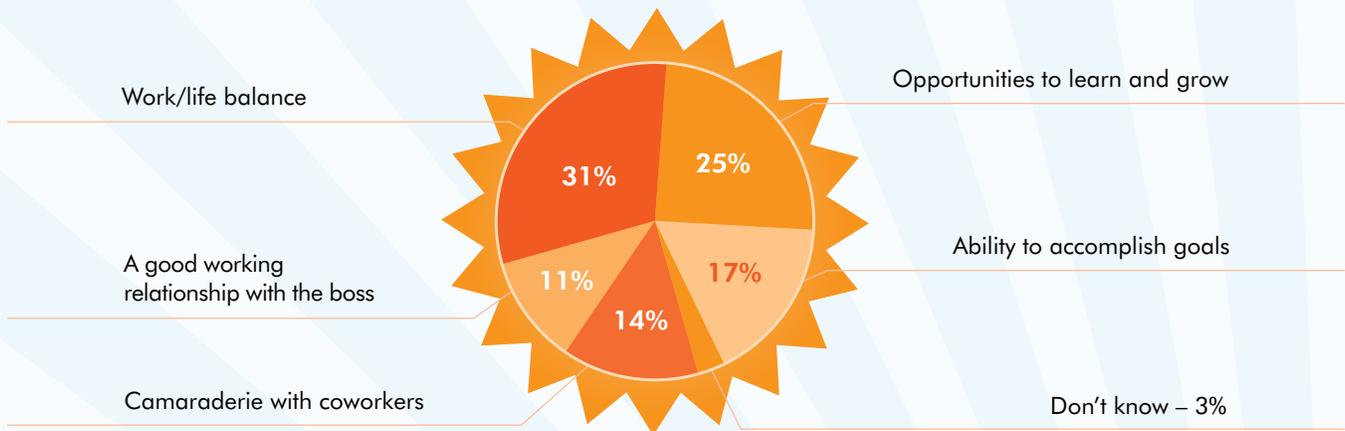


30 CREATIVE IDEAS for Boosting Morale and Retention in a Recovering Economy

As the economy improves, executives are expressing increased optimism. In fact, in a recent OfficeTeam survey, nine in 10 human resources managers interviewed said they are confident in their companies' growth potential. Likewise, workers are feeling better about their own career prospects. For managers, these positive developments also come with challenges: How can they reward top performers and prevent them from seeking out greener pastures? How can they ensure promising professionals stay motivated and satisfied in their jobs?

One simple answer is recognition. Employees who believe their work is valued are more likely to remain loyal and often are more productive. Although there is no one-size-fits-all approach for recognizing a job well done, OfficeTeam has compiled 30 creative suggestions for you. Share these ideas with other managers, and start a dialogue with your staff about the forms of recognition they value most.

"Aside from salary, which one of the following aspects of your job is most tied to your satisfaction?"



Source: OfficeTeam survey of 614 workers in North America. Responses do not total 100 percent due to rounding.



Praise

1. Regularly thank employees verbally for a job well done.
2. Acknowledge outstanding team members at a staff meeting so the feedback is public.
3. Make someone on your team “employee of the month” if he or she consistently goes above and beyond the call of duty.
4. Take the time to give specific praise on projects, focusing on what the employee did especially well versus what could have been done better.
5. Ask a senior executive to recognize the work of individuals or teams at a company forum attended by all employees.
6. Share a message sent by a customer or other stakeholder lauding the work of a fellow employee.
7. Feature stand-out employees in the company newsletter.
8. Prepare a handwritten thank-you note acknowledging someone’s great work.
9. Keep reminders of all the contributions your employee has made so you have that information handy and can refer to it during performance reviews.
10. Don’t stop at telling individuals their work was excellent – also point out how it will help the company, or assist clients and customers.



Rewards

1. Encourage your staff to become active in professional associations and reimburse them for membership dues.
2. Take your direct reports to lunch to discuss their career goals, as well as department objectives.
3. Encourage your staff members to attend a professional conference or seminar – and reimburse them for the travel and registration fees.
4. Reimburse your office staff for the cost of exams required to attain professional certifications.
5. Organize activities to celebrate holidays or special events, such as work anniversaries.
6. Bring in treats like bagels or donuts for the team to enjoy.
7. Explore telecommuting, flex time or other work options that provide employees with more control over their schedules.
8. Celebrate the completion of projects with team lunches or outings.
9. Provide on-site services, such as dry cleaning, car washes or other things that can help your staff be more efficient.
10. Offer gift cards for coffee or the movies to employees who go above and beyond on a project.



Growth Opportunities

1. Ask those on your team to take on a tough problem or a new challenge beyond their normal responsibilities.
2. Empower your employees to make their own decisions and have more control over their work.
3. Ask team members to give a presentation at a staff or company meeting.
4. Encourage employees to learn new software, use new technologies, or expand their skills and knowledge in other ways.
5. Ask for your team's input on departmental issues or a new business opportunity.
6. Ask each professional about his or her career aspirations, and outline specific steps needed to take to achieve those goals.
7. Match high-potential employees with experienced mentors.
8. Encourage employees to submit ideas for improving processes or projects and reward the best ideas.
9. Invest in leadership training for your company's next generation of managers.
10. Have a policy of promoting from within, and make sure staff members know there's a path to growth in your organization.



CHECK OUT our video blooper series, **RECOGNITION GONE WRONG** (www.officeteam.com/recognition), which showcases workplace recognition ideas that really missed the mark.



TIPS for Recognizing Administrative Professionals

Our recognition ideas apply to staff at all levels in your organization. Following are some additional tips specific to acknowledging the administrative professionals on your team, who often are the “unsung heroes” of an organization:

- ★ Celebrate your assistant’s achievements in front of colleagues during Administrative Professionals Week® (www.iaap-hq.org/events/apw), held annually the last full week of April.
- ★ Nominate staff for internal and external achievement awards. For example, the *Administrative Excellence Award* (www.officeteamaward.com), sponsored by OfficeTeam, recognizes outstanding support staff.
- ★ Implement a solution throughout the department that your assistant recommended and give him or her credit.
- ★ Give administrative personnel a subscription to an industry trade publication, such as *OfficePro* or *Executive Secretary*.
- ★ Help more experienced administrative staff build supervisory skills by asking them to mentor newer office support staff.
- ★ Encourage administrative professionals who attend a professional conference to share what they’ve learned with their colleagues.
- ★ Give your office support staff business cards.

“What effect, if any, does receiving recognition have on your work performance?”



Source: OfficeTeam and IAAP survey of 549 administrative professionals in North America.

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