

THE RECOGNITION PROGRAM PLAYBOOK

From strategy to launch to long-term success — a field guide for building recognition that actually changes behavior.



1 START WITH PURPOSE

Design Recognition Around What Matters

Align recognition with organizational priorities and values.

Turn priorities into recognizable behaviors like collaboration, performance, customer service, and safety.

Employees are
4.9x
more likely to know what's expected of them when recognition aligns with organizational values.

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2 BUILD FOR ADOPTION

Prepare Managers for Success

Give managers the training and tools they need to recognize effectively.

Define goals, criteria, budget, ownership, and communication before launch.

73%
of senior leaders say their organization doesn't offer managers or leaders best-practices training for employee recognition.

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3 LAUNCH WITH MOMENTUM

Make Recognition Easy to Start

Create early opportunities for employees and leaders to participate.

Use clear communications, manager talking points, training, and recognition examples.

36%
of employees say their organization has a recognition program.

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4 MEASURE & OPTIMIZE

Look Beyond Participation

Use the data to identify gaps and improve the program.

Track participation, recognition frequency, manager involvement, reach, and alignment with goals.

Employees who received high-quality recognition were
45%
less likely to have left their organization two years later.

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