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Fall 2023

Employee Recognition Program

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Abstract

This semester, I focused on developing an employee recognition program for my organization as a capstone project. This initiative aims to bring substantial value by acknowledging and appreciating the hard work, dedication, and outstanding performance of our employees. The program is designed to enhance morale, satisfaction, and motivation, fostering a culture of appreciation and loyalty. Its implementation is expected to result in increased productivity, improved job performance, and higher employee retention rates, thereby maintaining a stable workforce.

To ensure the effectiveness of the program, I considered key elements such as defining clear criteria for recognition aligned with organizational goals, timely and meaningful acknowledgment, effective communication of the program's purpose and benefits, and the establishment of an inclusive and fair system. By incorporating these elements, including a nomination or peer-to-peer recognition system, the employee recognition program aims to promote equity, involvement, and a positive work culture within the organization.

Lastly, my employee recognition program is inclusive and fair. The program considers individual differences and ensures that all employees have equal opportunities for recognition. Part of this process that worked well is the implementation of a peer-to-peer recognition system that promotes a sense of equity and involvement among our employees.

Keywords: Recognition, Employees, Value,

Introduction

The employee recognition program was developed because of a deep understanding of the importance of recognizing and appreciating the contributions of our workforce. Inspired by the need to foster a positive and engaging work environment, this program aims to address various challenges faced by organizations in today's dynamic business landscape.

One of the main problems this program seeks to solve is the lack of employee motivation, engagement, and recognition. Working with our human resource department and reviewing separation agreements. It was clear that our employees were leaving to other companies due to lack of our recognition and valuing their work. By implementing a comprehensive recognition program, I hope to boost employee morale and create a culture of appreciation within our organization.

Another challenge that this program aimed to address is the need for personalized and tailored recognition strategies. Every employee is unique and has different preferences and motivators. A one-size-fits-all approach to recognition often falls short in truly appreciating and acknowledging individual contributions. My program focuses on innovative strategies that allow for customization and personalization, ensuring that each employee feels valued in a way that resonates with them.

Furthermore, this program also tackles the issue of diversity and inclusion. My organization today is comprised of a diverse workforce, with employees from various backgrounds, cultures, and generations. It is crucial to recognize and appreciate these differences and create an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected. My recognition program incorporates diversity and inclusion as core principles, ensuring that recognition efforts are fair, unbiased, and inclusive.

In addition, the program also addresses the need for real-time feedback and continuous evaluation. Traditional recognition programs often rely on annual or periodic evaluations, which may not capture the full extent of an employee's contributions. My program leverages technology integration, digital platform, and mobile application to enable real-time feedback and continuous evaluation, allowing for timely recognition and

improvement.

Overall, my employee recognition program is designed to create a positive and engaging work environment, boost employee motivation and engagement, and address the challenges faced by my organization in recognizing and appreciating our workforce. By implementing innovative and tailored strategies, I aim to foster a culture of recognition that positively impacts organizational performance and employee satisfaction.

Elements Coming Together

Innovative Approach

In developing my employee recognition program, I have taken an innovative approach by combining various elements to create a comprehensive and effective strategy. This section highlights the key elements that come together to form the foundation of our program.

Personalization and Tailoring:

I understand that each employee is unique, with different preferences and motivators. To address this, my program emphasizes personalization and tailoring of recognition efforts. I've incorporated flexible recognition options that allow employees to choose rewards and recognition that align with their individual needs and preferences. This approach ensures that each employee feels valued and appreciated in a way that resonates with them personally.

Technology Integration:

To enable real-time feedback and continuous evaluation, I integrated technology into our recognition program. Digital platform and mobile application provide employees with instant access to recognition resources, allowing them to receive timely feedback and appreciation. Technology also enables us to track and analyze recognition data, gaining valuable insights to further enhance our program.

Diversity and Inclusion:

Recognizing the importance of diversity and inclusion, my program incorporated these principles as core elements. We ensure that recognition efforts are fair, unbiased, and inclusive, considering the diverse backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives of our employees. This approach fosters an inclusive work environment where everyone feels valued and respected.

Managerial Support and Training:

Recognizing the crucial role that managers play in employee recognition, our program includes managerial support and training. Managers are provided with the necessary tools and resources to effectively recognize and appreciate their team members. Training programs focus on enhancing managerial skills related to recognition, emphasizing the importance of regular feedback, and fostering a culture of appreciation.

Continuous Improvement:

Our program is designed to continuously evolve and improve. We encourage feedback from employees and managers to identify areas of improvement and implement necessary changes. Regular evaluation and assessment of the program's effectiveness ensure that it remains aligned with the organization's goals and objectives.

By bringing these elements together with an innovative approach, my employee recognition program creates a positive and engaging work environment. It fosters a culture of appreciation, boosts employee motivation and engagement, and addresses the unique challenges faced by organizations in recognizing and appreciating their workforce. Through personalization, technology integration, diversity and inclusion, managerial support, and continuous improvement, my program sets the stage for long-term success and organizational growth.

Emotional Intelligence

Recognizing the importance of emotional intelligence, I decided to apply its principles to address the issue of a lack of an employee recognition program in my organization. Firstly, I focused on self-awareness and acknowledged that a lack of recognition could negatively impact employee morale and motivation. Understanding this, I realized the need to create a program that would address these concerns and promote a positive work environment.

Next, I considered the audience by conducting surveys and engaging in open conversations with employees.

By actively listening to their feedback and understanding their needs, I gained valuable insights into what type of recognition initiatives would be most meaningful to them. This consideration of the audience allowed me to design a program that would resonate with employees and make them feel valued.

Furthermore, emotional intelligence played a role in fostering empathy among team members. I encouraged open communication and collaboration, creating an environment where employees could understand and appreciate the efforts of their colleagues. By promoting empathy, I aimed to cultivate a sense of unity and support, which would further enhance the effectiveness of the recognition program.

Lastly, I continuously evaluated and adjusted the program based on feedback and results. Emotional intelligence allowed me to be open to constructive criticism and to adapt the program accordingly. By demonstrating flexibility and a willingness to learn, I could ensure that the recognition program was continually improving and meeting the emotional needs of our employees.

In conclusion, by leveraging emotional intelligence, I successfully addressed the lack of an employee recognition program in my organization. Through self-awareness, consideration of the audience, empathy, and adaptability, I was able to create a recognition program that recognizes and values the contributions of employees. This not only boosted morale and motivation but also fostered a positive work culture where employees feel appreciated and supported.

My Innovative Solution

The primary way which my project was innovative was that I centralized our employee recognition program back to our human resources department. For many years our de-centralized process was handled within the individual branches across our organization. By consolidating all recognition and awards into a centralized system, employees across branches and company can be equally acknowledged and celebrated for their contributions, irrespective of their geographical location or department.

Centralizing the employee recognition program offers several benefits. Firstly, it ensures consistency and fairness in the recognition process, as all employees are evaluated and rewarded based on the same criteria and standards. This eliminates any potential bias or discrepancies that may arise when recognition programs are managed

independently at each branch.

Secondly, a centralized system allows for better tracking and analysis of recognition data. It enables HR and management to gain valuable insights into employee performance, engagement levels, and the effectiveness of the recognition program itself. These insights can inform decision-making and help tailor the program to better meet the needs and preferences of employees.

Lastly, centralizing recognition and awards fosters a sense of unity and camaraderie among employees. It creates a shared platform where employees from different branches can showcase their accomplishments, learn from each other, and feel a part of a larger community. This promotes collaboration, knowledge sharing, and a positive company culture that values and appreciates the contributions of all employees, regardless of their location.

Results

In the employee recognition survey with 700 participants, positive feedback and engagement with the recognition program were evident. Approximately 80% of employees expressed satisfaction or high satisfaction, indicating the program effectively met expectations. Furthermore, 90% of employees were aware of the program's purpose and benefits, showcasing successful communication and engagement efforts.

Key findings revealed a positive impact on employee motivation, with around 70% reporting increased motivation and engagement. Notably, 75% perceived the recognition program as fair and consistent, highlighting its transparency and equity.

The survey also included an open-ended question for improvement suggestions. Overall, the results underscore a strong positive response to the recognition program, with high satisfaction, awareness, and motivation levels among the 700 employees.

Additionally, the impact of the new recognition program was assessed through employee feedback, turnover rates, productivity, and customer satisfaction scores. Stakeholders, including employees and managers, experienced significant benefits. Employees felt more valued, leading to improved morale and job satisfaction, resulting in

enhanced productivity, and reduced turnover rates. Managers benefited from improved communication and rapport with teams, fostering a positive work environment.

In conclusion, the new employee recognition program has successfully achieved its goals, positively impacting employees, managers, and the organization. The measured improvements in productivity, job satisfaction, and teamwork highlight its overall success.

Conclusion

In implementing the new employee recognition program, I anticipated several positive results. Firstly, I expected to see an increase in employee morale and job satisfaction, leading to improved productivity and reduced turnover rates. Secondly, I anticipated that managers would experience better relationships with their teams, as the program provided a structured framework for recognizing and rewarding employee accomplishments. Thirdly, I expected the organization to witness improvements in customer satisfaction and overall performance. Lastly, I anticipated that the program would help create a positive work environment and enhance teamwork among employees.

The actual results of the program confirmed my initial expectations. Employees reported feeling more valued and recognized, leading to increased morale and job satisfaction. This translated into improved productivity and reduced turnover rates, which were evident in the data analysis. Managers also experienced improved relationships with their teams, as the program provided them with a systematic approach to acknowledging and rewarding employee achievements. The organization witnessed improvements in customer satisfaction and overall performance, as evidenced by positive feedback and increased productivity levels.

While the actual results aligned with my expectations, there were a few surprises along the way. One surprise was the extent to which employees embraced the program and actively participated in recognizing their colleagues' achievements. The level of engagement and enthusiasm exceeded my expectations, contributing to a more positive and collaborative work environment. Another surprise was the ripple effect of the program on employee motivation and job satisfaction. Not only did the recognized employees feel more valued, but their peers also felt inspired to strive for recognition, leading to a positive cycle of performance and recognition.

In hindsight, there are a few things I would have done differently. Firstly, I would have involved employees in the design and development of the program from the beginning. Their input and ideas would have ensured that the program was tailored to their needs and preferences. Secondly, I would have established clear and consistent communication channels to keep employees informed about the program's objectives, guidelines, and updates. This would have ensured that all employees were aware of the program and understood its importance. Lastly, I would have implemented mechanisms to regularly evaluate and fine-tune the program based on the feedback received from stakeholders, ensuring its continuous improvement and relevance.

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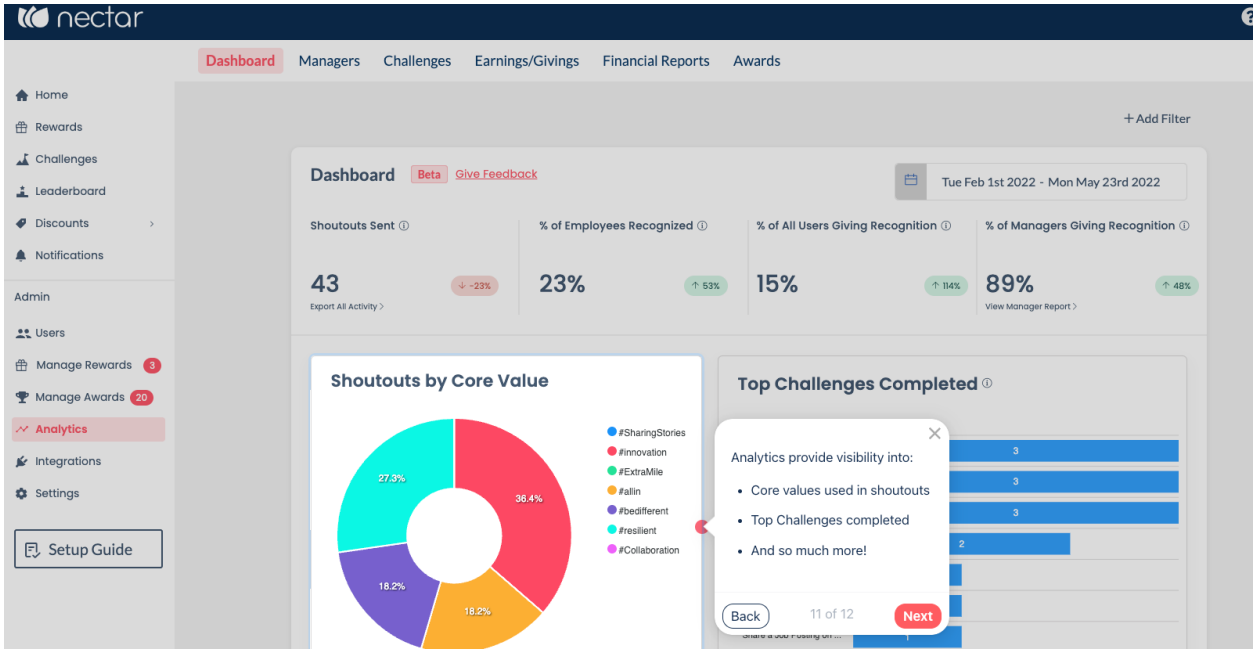
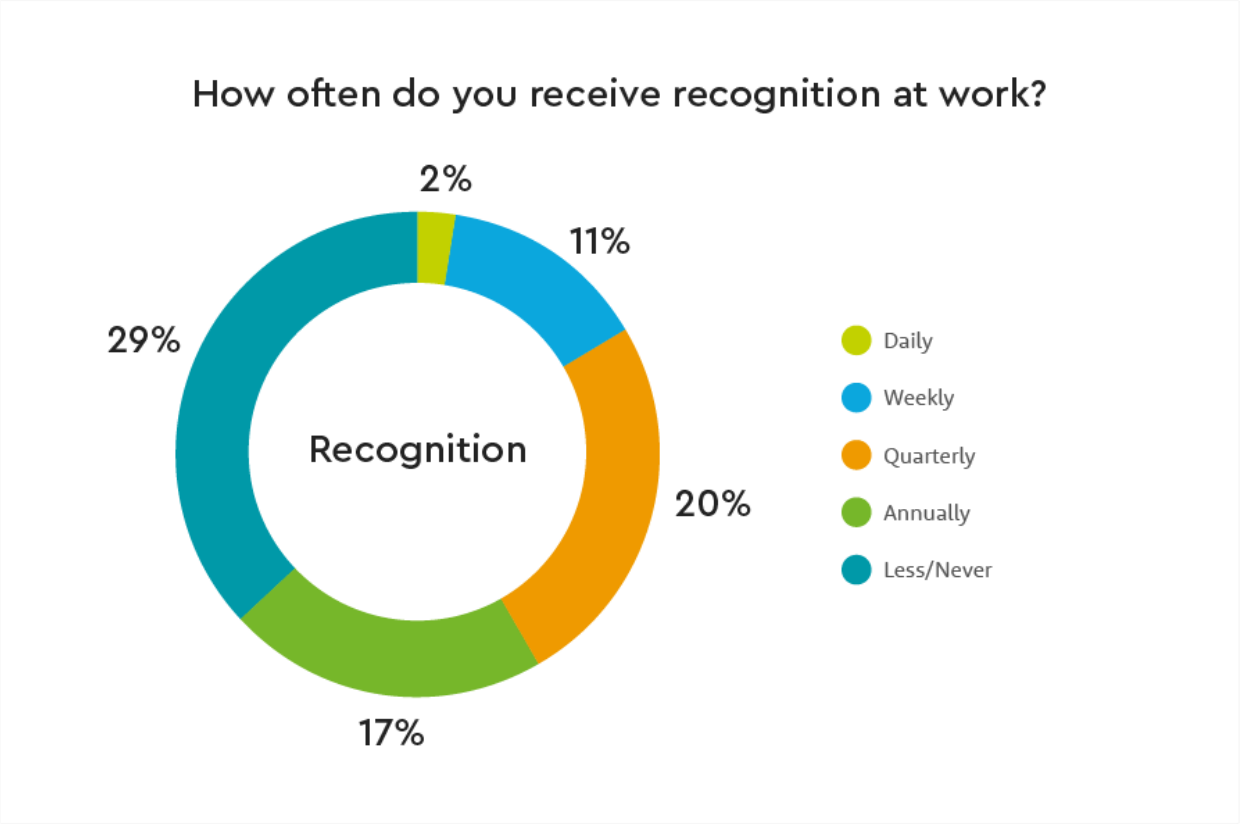
Appendix

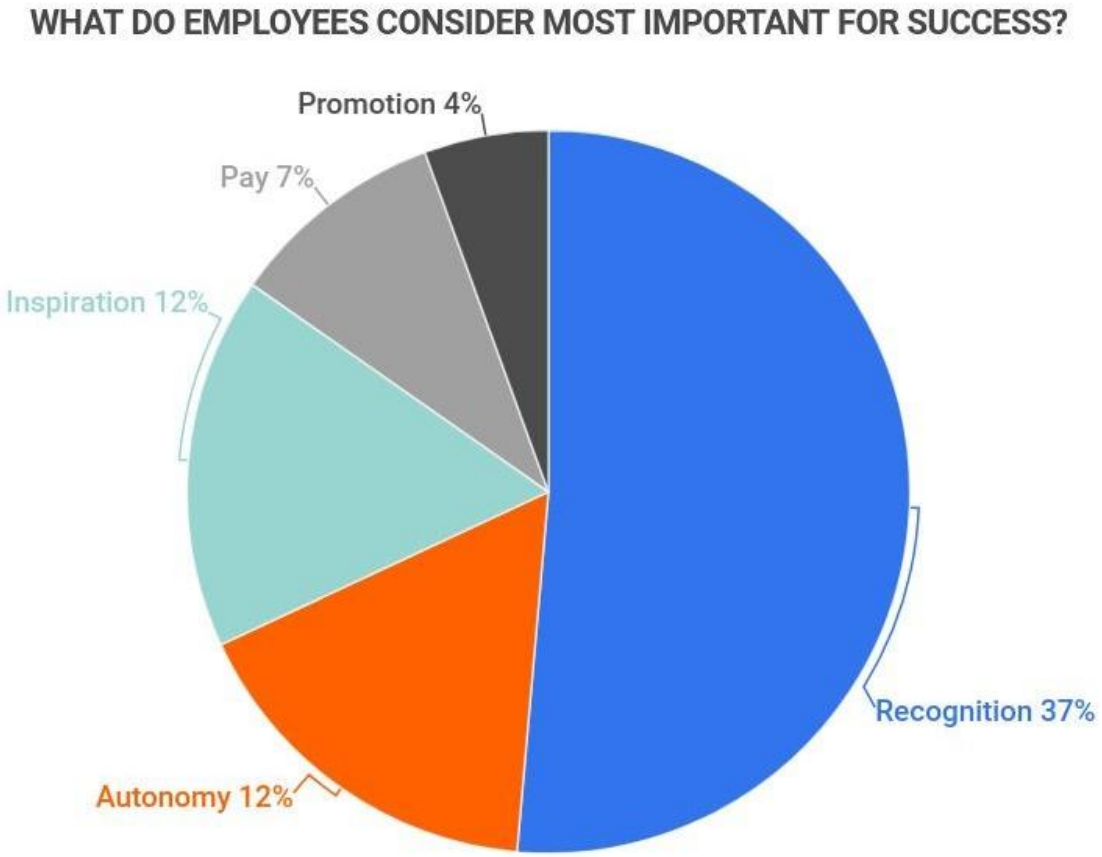
Screenshot of Nectar solution for Employee Recognition Program. This tool allows all the data analytics along with stakeholders seeing real time results and recognition.

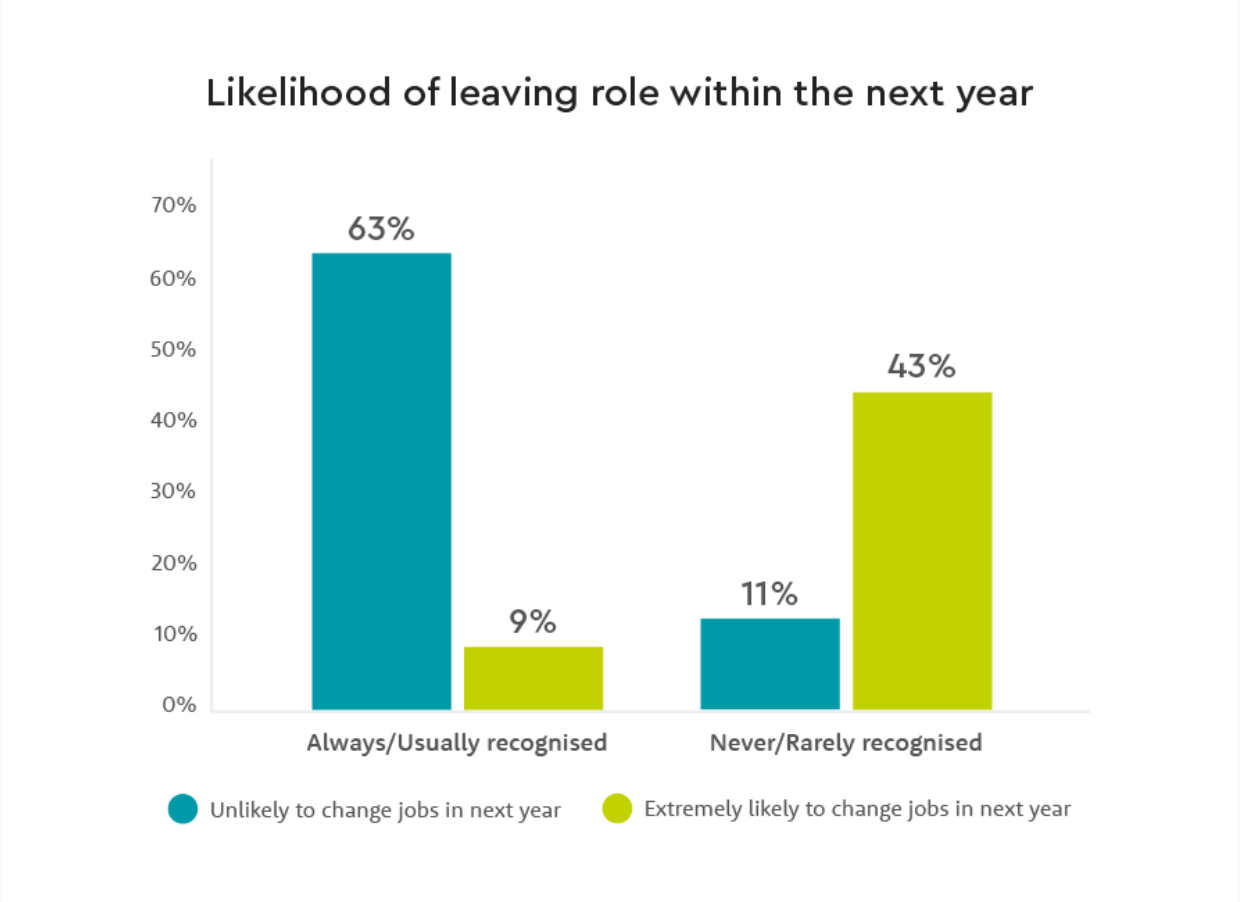


Sample of Survey Data collected.

72% say recognition for performance has a significant impact on employee engagement
Recognition
72%
Clearly communicated strategy
70%
Clearly communicated business goals
70%
Staff and corporate goals aligned
69%
Performance reviews aligned with corporate goals
67%
Pay linked to corporate goals
54%
Training linked to corporate goals
52%


How often do you receive recognition at work?
2%
11%
29%
Recognition
20%
17%
Daily
Weekly
Quarterly
Annually
Less/Never


WHAT DO EMPLOYEES CONSIDER MOST IMPORTANT FOR SUCCESS?
Promotion 4%
Pay 7%
Inspiration 12%
Recognition 37%
Autonomy 12%


Likelihood of leaving role within the next year
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
63%
9%
11%
43%
Always/Usually recognised
Never/Rarely recognised
Unlikely to change jobs in next year
Extremely likely to change jobs in next year

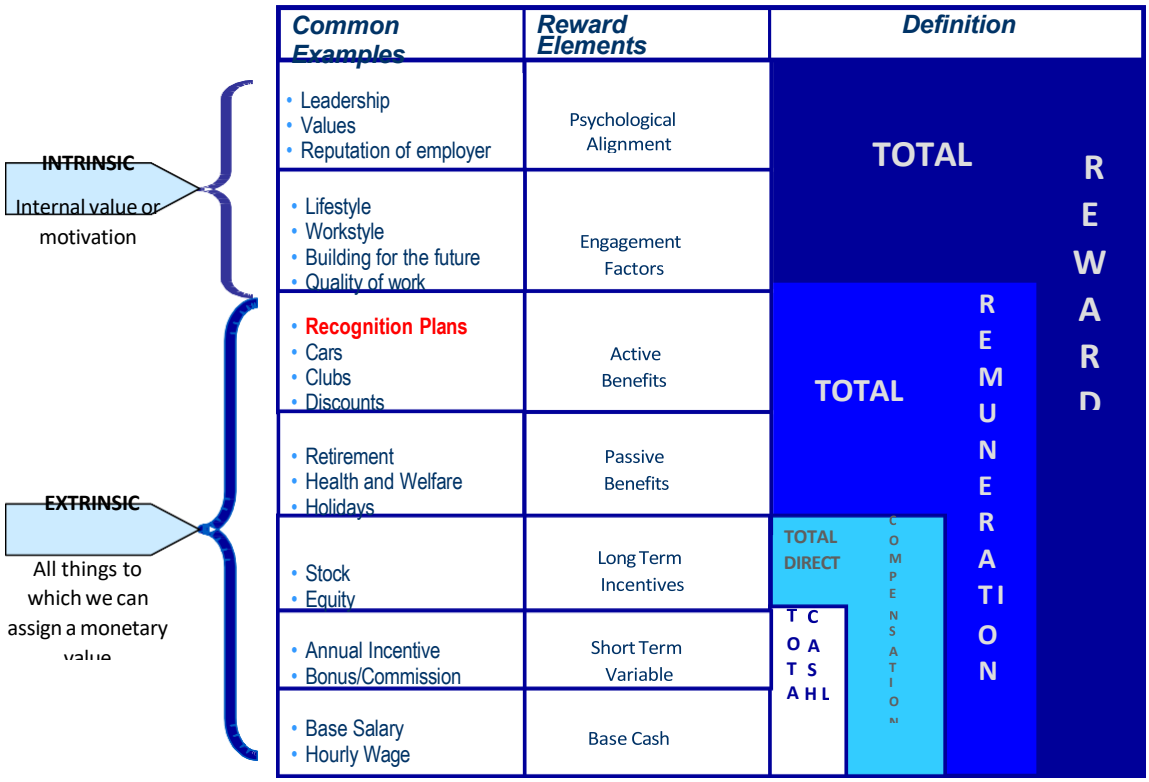
Guidelines and Process for Employee Recognition Program

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PROGRAM

DECEMBER 2023

Purpose of this Framework	The purpose of this framework is: - to reinforce the significant value of recognition for both the company and the employees. - to provide documentation and a standard set of requirements for the implementation of recognition plan.

Recognition as part of Total Reward	Recognition is one of the key cornerstones of Total Reward contributing to the reward for performance culture and creating a positive work climate.



Definition of Recognition	Recognition is the appreciation expressed by the company towards the employees for their contribution to the company's success resulting in a climate of engagement, retention, performance, and innovation. Recognition can either have a non-monetary or a monetary value. "Cash" payments for delivered performance are not considered as recognition as such and are not in the scope of this framework.

Objective of Recognition Program	Recognition is an important element of the program L!FC creates and fosters a culture where employees are valued and respected for the ongoing and exceptional contribution to the company's success.
	
	Providing recognition is a powerful tool in addition to the standard reward and benefit programs, ensuring continued motivation from the employees is displayed in a dynamic and changing business environment. Employees are valued and appreciation is expressed for their efforts and unique qualities.
	
	Recognition program encourage positive and constructive behaviors in line with our company values. They contribute strongly to the overall employee satisfaction.
	
	The objectives of a recognition program are as follows:
	
	- Recognition as a "key business driver":
	  • Creating a positive, productive, and innovative business climate.
	  • Sustained employee motivation is an absolute requirement to realize continued growth.
	  • Providing encouragement for continued success.
	  • Connecting employees with the goals & objectives of the organization.
	
	- Recognition as a "key communication tool":
	  • Reinforcing the successes which have been created within the organization.
	  • Triggering communication across different functions and layers within the organization.
	  • Creating high visibility & consistent messaging within the organization.

Objective of Recognition Program (cont'd)	- Recognition as a "key retention tool": • Employees being valued create stronger ties with the company. • Providing recognition effectively differentiates from the competition. - Recognition as a "key leadership characteristic": • Creating an environment where employees are appreciated for their efforts. • Developing a constructive relationship with the employees creates the support for the achievement of the business goals on a larger scale. • Driving incremental performance. - Recognition as a "key engagement characteristic": • Creating a climate of mutual benefit for the employee and the company. • Identification of the employee with the company. • Developing a constructive work environment.
Types of Recognition	Providing recognition can be offered in 2 main ways: - recognition in the frame of the day-to-day contribution of the employees to the company's success. - recognition which is developed relating to a specific target, project, or event (can be time bound). This framework mainly includes a set of guidelines for the second category but reinforces with equal importance the value of providing day to day recognition.

Approach and Requirements relating to the Development of Recognition Plan	- This framework is designed to provide standard guidelines and support for the development and implementation of local recognition plans. - Recognition plans need to be developed and implemented at local level considering local market and business requirements. The company's values & behaviors and compliance rules need to be always met. - The local plans need to be line with the country's legislation (including tax and social security rules). - Non-monetary recognition is the preference and is most effective as a token of day-to-day appreciation. Monetary recognition is effective regarding specific targets, projects, or events. - By nature, recognition plans have in first instance a motivational impact and the value needs to be non - substantial. The value can increase depending on the timeframe involved and the impact of the results for the company.
Eligibility	- Only "internal employees" with an employment contract (for an indefinite period or temporary contract) are eligible to participate in recognition programs. - Individual employees or teams can be recognized. - Members of the local management committee are excluded. - All external workforces are excluded: interim employees, third party providers.
Budget	- The budget is determined at corporate level approved by the CFO. - The amounts or value need to be determined based on local market practice, local employment conditions, return for the company and complexity of goals.

Timeframe	- Needs to be determined at corporate level depending on business objectives. - As a standard approach there is day to day recognition which is added on by quarterly, semi-annual, and annual recognition initiatives (or specific other local initiatives).
Program Evaluation	- The programs need to be evaluated locally to assess the effectiveness, share best practices, and ensure alignment with changed business environments.

Governance of Recognition Plan

The process and governance in the development, implementation and application of recognition plans is hereby attached.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION FRAMEWORK

PROCESS AND GOVERNANCE FLOW CHART

Process Steps	Owner	Consultation	Approval
Design of the plan (including budget)	Dept Head / Functional Head	HRM / Finance / Legal	Dept Head / Functional Head / Finance
Communication and implementation of the Plan	Dept Head / Functional Head	HRM / Communications	Dept Head / Functional Head
Target setting (1)	Dept Head / Functional Head	HRM / Finance	Dept Head / Functional Head
Determination of final winners (2)	Dept Head / Functional Head	HRM / Finance	HR Head / Functional Head
Employee communication	Dept Head / Functional Head	HRM / Line Manager / Communications	HR Head / Functional Head

Compliance & Code of Conduct !

Note: (1) the target setting only relates when it concerns recognition relating to a specific target, project, or event.

(2) it is advised that the recommendation on the winner(s) is taken by a collegial group of people securing neutrality.

To be implemented: Key Success Factors of Recognition plan

Successful recognition programs are beneficial for the Company, Employee and Managers.

Company	Employees	Managers
• Increased productivity. • Delivers ROI. • Improves overall employer climate. • Creates loyalty & commitment. • Generates positive feedback. • Empowers workforce. • Ensures efficiency.	• Receive appreciation. • Creates positive mindset. • Receive a diverse selection of attractive personalized awards. • Timely recognition for efforts made. • High quality and visible awards are delivered.	• Efficient and easy to run programs. • Creates engagement. • Stimulates open communication. • Includes all employees. • Creates a partnership with the workforce.

Recognition Programs:

- Need to be developed reinforcing the specific behaviors L1FC wants to emphasize performance, innovation, cooperation, simplicity, …
- Need to create the opportunity to celebrate success (individually or collectively).
- Fairness, clarity, and consistency prevail: all employees of target group have equal chances.
- Managers need to drive the recognition: take initiative and deliver personally.
- Need to be simple in concept and easy to administer.
- When related to specific target, project, or event: clear communication on targets, rules and timeframe.
- Provide recognition for different contributions within the organization across different functions.
- Need to be kept alive through regular communications issued by local management.
- Recognition needs to be offered for unique opportunities not creating a fixed entitlement.
- The format of the recognition needs to be changed on a regular basis to have a surprise effect and avoid entitlement.
- Needs to be delivered by a variety of people: manager, colleagues, business head, HR, …
- Combined recognition approach for immediate, short term and long-term contributions.
- Awards needs to be attractive and unique.

Examples of recognition tools (not limitative)	**Recognition relating to the "day to day" contribution** - Say on a regular basis "Thank You" or give an instant thanks for a job well done. - Make use of a "Thank You" card, Recognition Certificate, e-mail note, … - Praise in person or publicly the exceptional contribution or success. - Invite associates to senior business meetings. - Associates attending meetings of functional professional organizations. - Listen and gain ideas and opinions from associates. - Provide feedback on the further development of an action, initiative, or accomplishment. - Show interest in personal life of associates. - …….. **Recognition relating to a specific "target, project or event"** - Offer small gifts: T-shirts, roller pen, lunch, dinner, wellness, … - Offer gift vouchers: purchase vouchers, sports vouchers, cultural vouchers, … - Attend sports-music event, … - Offer a small trip (or contribution by travel voucher), … - Applaud achievements. - Highlight employee achievements on the intranet and magazines (cross-country depending on scope of the exercise) - Make use of an "Employee of the Month, Quarter, Year" based on specific targets (qualitative and/or quantitative).

Examples of recognition tools (not limitative) (cont'd)	**General Notes** Providing recognition on a day to day basis using common courtesy and common sense is a very positive performance driver and retention tool. Recognition relating to the day to day contribution needs to be applied as well when employees work on a specific target, project or event. Making use of a company's technology solution NECTAR.