



RECOGNITION IN THE WORKPLACE

Breakthrough Secrets & Stats





About Quantum Workplace

Quantum Workplace provides an all-in-one employee engagement software that makes managers the central drivers of workplace culture. Serving more than 8,700 organizations, Quantum Workplace's technology gives team leaders direct access to employee feedback and personalized real-time insights, so they can make work better every day. The software includes surveys, goals, recognition, feedback, one-on-one, and alert features — providing a powerful solution for team engagement and continuous improvement.

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About BambooHR

BambooHR is the No. 1 HR software for small & medium businesses. Our beautifully designed interface gives HR professionals time for more meaningful work through powerful tools and intuitive features.

To see why thousands of customers in over 100 countries love BambooHR, visit bamboohr.com or follow us on Twitter at @BambooHR.

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ABOUT THE RESEARCH

We polled over 1,000 employees on their organization's views and processes surrounding employee recognition. We've collected the qualitative data, calculated the quantitative results, identified key findings and trends, and put all the details into this report.

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WHY IS EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION IMPORTANT?

There are many benefits of employee recognition, some large and some small. The four biggest benefits of recognition are increased productivity, increased engagement, decreased turnover, and improved company culture.



Productivity

Employee recognition supercharges employee productivity. Humans have an innate need to be seen by and receive praise from others, and employee recognition does just that. Wouldn't you work harder if you were publicly recognized every time you completed a goal?



Turnover & Retention

Research has shown time and time again that employees who feel valued are less likely to leave their employer. When you genuinely appreciate employees for their contributions and effort, they're more likely to stay with you for the long-haul.



Engagement

Recognized employees are more engaged employees. When employees feel acknowledged and appreciated by their place of work, they are more likely to develop the mental and emotional connections needed to be engaged.



Company Culture

Besides incentivizing achievement, employee recognition gives employers the ability to reinforce behaviors they find valuable. Recognition showcases the behaviors that make the organization successful. For example, recognizing an employee for volunteering for a local nonprofit signals to other employees that your organization values community responsibility.

EXECUTIVE FINDINGS



1 EMPLOYEES WANT MORE RECOGNITION.

Employees have spoken — and they want more recognition from both managers and coworkers.



52.5% of respondents want to receive more recognition from their immediate manager or supervisor



41.0% want to receive more recognition from immediate coworkers

But is there such a thing as too much recognition?



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INSIGHT:

Aaron Brown, Senior Insights Analyst



“Simple answer — yes. If you recognize your employees, your children, or your friends for the same accomplishment (and in the same way) over and over again, they will get tired of hearing from you. The meaningfulness of the recognition will diminish over time. I can only imagine how I would feel today if my dad followed me around with a video camera whooping and hollering every time I successfully rode my bike down the street. That specific recognition worked the first few times, and definitely made the bruises on the knee worth it when I was 6 years old, but it would be embarrassing now to go through that. We want leaders, managers, and peers to be intentional with recognition and gradually evolve the way in which they show gratitude for accomplishments in the workplace.

We want you to be considerate, authentic, deliberate, and timely with your recognition. Don't just publicly praise or recognize every little good thing that happens in the workplace, instead take care with how you recognize so that your employees derive the most meaning from it.”



BEWARE THE RECOGNITION SHORTAGE.

Despite employees needing (and asking for) recognition for their accomplishments and effort at work, it simply isn't happening.



19.9% of employees rarely or never receive recognition from immediate coworkers



22.1% of employees rarely or never receive recognition from their immediate manager or supervisor

Why is recognition missing from the workplace?



Brian Anderson
HR Insight Specialist



"The most effective recognition comes from relationships, and relationships are built on expectations. Employees need to know what their organization expects, and leadership needs to know what their employees expect. If managers lack the resources to measure and develop these expectations, then rewards programs come off as impersonal and insincere. Then either the manager stops trying to give recognition, or the employee doesn't register the recognition as meaningful. Rewards can't replace relationships."

Recognition efforts often fall under the objective of improving culture. But what is culture? Culture is the sum total of the experience your organization provides, and it shapes your employees' expectations. To reap all the benefits of recognition – and prevent a shortage of employee recognition within your organization – it needs to become part of day-to-day life.

FIVE RULES FOR CREATING A SUSTAINABLE CULTURE OF RECOGNITION



1. Define your mission and values.

Your organization's mission is what you want to do. Your values determine how you want to accomplish that mission. Identifying the conditions that lead to long-term success in your mission is a great way to develop values. For example, if your mission is to become the most recommended software platform in your industry, then values of open communication and employee integrity could make all the difference.

2. Align your operations with your values.

Listing your values is the first step, but your employees' day-to-day experience needs to align with those values for them to have the desired effect. Promoting values without providing a matching experience leaves employees with two assumptions: either your organization isn't competent enough to live its values, or it's pretending to be something it isn't. Neither impression inspires employee confidence in a sincere recognition program.

3. Communicate about performance.

It's all too easy for managers to get caught up in the day-to-day rush and miss the individual contributions from their team members. Scheduling regular one-on-one meetings between managers and their reports helps set a pattern of effective communication. Managers can ask employees about their challenges and triumphs, and they can work together to make the experience better. Mutual feedback sessions also give managers an opportunity to receive recognition from their direct reports. This also sets up opportunities for informal recognition as managers learn the ins and outs of their employees' daily routines.

4. Focus on intrinsic motivation.

Psychological research from Frederick Herzberg showed that there are two factors to workplace motivation. Building from the work of Abraham Maslow, Herzberg found that extrinsic motivators (like salary and the occasional gift card) reduced dissatisfaction to a neutral level, while intrinsic motivators (like a sense of purpose from sincere recognition) increased job satisfaction. Both are needed, but while extrinsic rewards fade over time, intrinsic rewards are tied directly to the employee's daily tasks.

5. Recognize both successes and improvement.

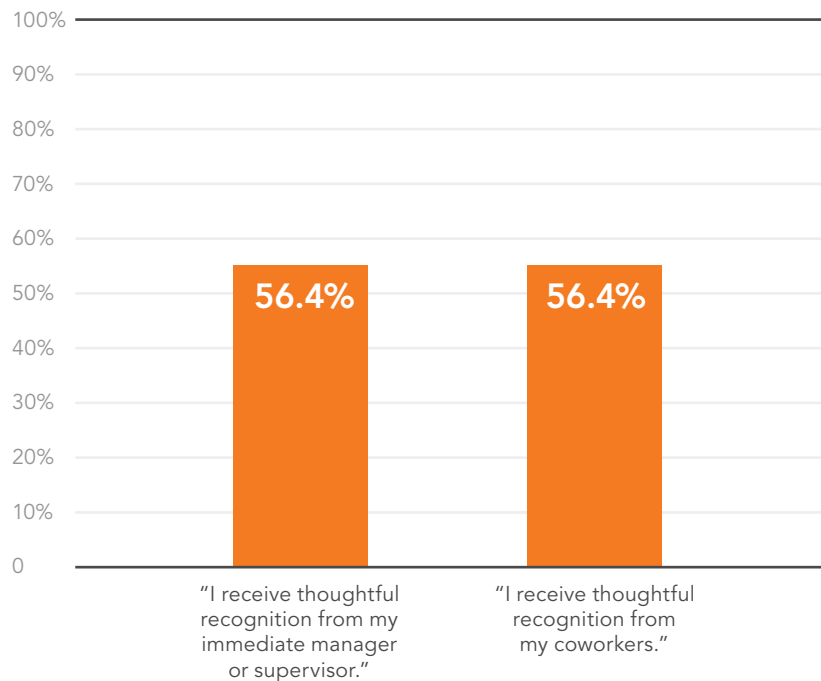
Often, the visible successes are just the tip of the improvement iceberg. Recognizing improvement helps keep your recognition consistent, even when an employee hasn't had a big win. This helps employees stay engaged even as you support their efforts to improve.



NOT ALL RECOGNITION IS CREATED EQUAL.

To really engage employees and drive performance, employee recognition needs to be genuine, authentic, and thoughtful. But unfortunately, only slightly over half of employees receive thoughtful recognition from their managers — and same goes for peers.

Employees Who Receive Thoughtful Recognition



■ Favorability

THOUGHTFUL RECOGNITION IN YOUR WORKPLACE

Use these tips to provide meaningful recognition:

1. Know thyself.

Reflect on your own history of being recognized. Where has recognition hit or missed the mark, and why?

2. Ask!

Sit down and have a conversation with each of your employees to understand their thoughts on meaningful recognition. After all, an unthoughtful recognition act only reminds direct reports just how out of touch you are with their needs and motivations.

3. Be spontaneous.

Ditch recognition quotas. Nothing screams “I don’t put any real thought into recognition” like a canned “atta-girl” that’s as predictable as the TV line-up. Tear up any schedules and recognize employees when they do something that deserves it.

4. Match rewards to your employees.

For individual recognition, find rewards that match your employees. A subscription to the Breadstick of the Month Club would mean much less to the employee with the gluten allergy.

The Formula for Thoughtful Recognition

- Deep Knowledge of Your Employee’s Recognition Preferences
- + Detailed Articulation of His or Her Accomplishment
- + Expression of How the Accomplishment Benefits the Team/Organization

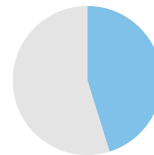
Thoughtful Recognition



RECOGNIZE PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY

You may be hesitant to recognize an employee or coworker because you don't know if they'd prefer a more intimate conversation or public praise. But the data shows that most people don't have a preference; they're just looking for appreciation.

"Do you most often prefer to receive recognition privately or publicly?"



45.5%
had no preference

We suggest a healthy mix of both private and public recognition; cater your delivery to each situation and employee. Here are ways to give private and public recognition at work.

5 Ways to Give Private Recognition

1. Write a thank you note
2. Bring in their favorite coffee drink to work
3. Give a cash bonus
4. Deliver a gift card the entire family can use
5. Dedicate time in your next one on one meeting to discuss

5 Ways to Give Public Recognition

1. Write a LinkedIn recommendation
2. Sing your praises in an all-hands meeting
3. Bring in donuts for the team to celebrate
4. Share your compliments on an employee recognition software
5. Give the employee the day off



4 HELPFUL TIPS FOR RECEIVING PUBLIC RECOGNITION

In some instances, public recognition can feel awkward and unwanted. There are a variety of reasons that we might shy away from public praise. However, when those situations do arise, use these tips to accept public recognition graciously and comfortably:

- 1. Say "thank you."** Recognition is a gift. Even if you didn't like the new shirt your uncle bought you for your birthday, you wouldn't throw it back in his face!
- 2. Focus on the complementor's words.** Listen, and take each individual idea to heart.
- 3. Imagine you're listening to a review of a new restaurant or movie, instead of your own performance.** This will help you remove the negative emotional response from the public praise.
- 4. Instead of diverting or minimizing the recognition, include others in the recognition as well.** For example, "Thank you, that project did go very smoothly. I couldn't have done it, though, without help from Suzannah."



MANAGERS MATTER MOST.

Manager recognition is most important to employees. In fact, employees value recognition from their managers over every other source – even executive leadership.

Recognition providers employees find most meaningful:

1. My immediate manager or supervisor
2. Customers/clients
3. Directors / executive leadership, *tied with*
My immediate coworkers within my own team/department
4. Coworkers in other teams/departments

What can a manager do that others can't?



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INSIGHT:

Dan Harris
Lead Researcher



“Many managers fall into the trap of only recognizing employees for formal goal achievements – but recognition can do so much more. Recognizing behaviors that match company values reinforces those behaviors. Because managers have the closest working relationships with their employees, they have the unique ability to recognize employees for behaviors that propel the company, yet don’t quite roll up into a particular metric goal.”

BUT THAT'S NOT ALL

Employee recognition is essential to your organization's engagement, but it's only one part of a much larger effort to engage employees.

Does your organization have the tools it needs to drive engagement and get results?

The logo for bambooHR, featuring a green bamboo leaf icon to the left of the text "bambooHR" in a green, lowercase, sans-serif font. A small trademark symbol (TM) is located at the end of the text.

bambooHR™

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The logo for Quantum Workplace, featuring an orange circular icon with a white dot inside, resembling a stylized 'Q' or a quantum symbol, positioned above the text "QUANTUM" in a blue, uppercase, sans-serif font. Below "QUANTUM" is the word "WORKPLACE" in a smaller, blue, uppercase, sans-serif font.

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