

# Top Ten Ways to Show Appreciation to Employees

## From Food to Favors for Employee and Coworker Appreciation

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You can tell your colleagues, coworkers and employees how much you value them and their contribution any day of the year. Trust me. No occasion is necessary. In fact, small surprises and tokens of your appreciation spread throughout the year help the people in your work life feel valued all year long.

Looking for ideas about how to praise and thank coworkers and employees? Here are ten ways to show your appreciation to employees and coworkers.

- Praise something your coworker has done well. Identify the specific actions that you found admirable.
- Say "thank you." Show your appreciation for their hard work and contributions. And, don't forget to say "please" often as well. Social niceties do belong at work. A more gracious, polite workplace is appreciated by all.
- Ask your coworkers about their family, their hobby, their weekend or a special event they attended. Your genuine interest - as opposed to being nosy - causes people to feel valued and cared about.
- Offer staff members flexible scheduling for the holidays, if feasible. If work coverage is critical, post a calendar so people can balance their time off with that of their coworkers.
- Know your coworker's interests well enough to present a small gift occasionally. An appreciated gift, and the gesture of providing it, will light up your coworker's day.
- If you can afford to, give staff money. End of the year bonuses, attendance bonuses, quarterly bonuses and gift certificates say "thank you" quite nicely. TechSmith staff receive a percentage of their annual salary for their end of year bonus.
- Almost everyone appreciates food. Take coworkers or staff to lunch for a birthday, a special occasion or for no reason at all. Let your guest pick the restaurant.
- Create a fun tradition for a seasonal holiday. ReCellular employees draw names for their Secret Santa gift exchange. Alison Doyle, About's Guide to Job Searching, also works in Career Services at Skidmore College where they do a "gift grab" at their holiday party.

LuAnn Johnson who works in Human Resources at the Schaller Anderson Mercy

Care Plan says, "We celebrate Treat Tuesday, every Tuesday between Thanksgiving and Christmas. We match up departments or people who don't normally work together as a unit and assign a day to provide gooey, healthy or scrumptious treats for the other groups. It's a great mixer, an opportunity to show off our culinary skills and a morale builder - to say nothing of the sugar high!"

- Bring in bagels, doughnuts or another treat for staff and coworkers. Offerings such as cookies or cupcakes, that you've baked personally, are a huge hit. (Have you tried baking cupcakes in ice cream cones? People love them.) Another hit? Bring chocolate - chocolate anything.
- Last, but not least, provide opportunity. People want chances for training and cross-training. They want to participate on a special committee where their talents are noticed. They like to attend professional association meetings and represent your organization at civic and philanthropic events.

These are my top ten ways to show appreciation to employees and coworkers. Stretch your imagination. There are hundreds of other employee and coworker appreciation ideas just waiting to be found. They'll bring you success in employee motivation, employee recognition and in building a positive, productive workplace.