

## **Valuing Work @ Wellesley College**

### **General Guideline for Employee Recognition for Managers/Supervisors**

Everyone wants to be acknowledged for a job done well. Employee recognition is managers and supervisors recognizing the positive actions and behaviors of the employees reporting to them. Recognition works when it is meaningful and memorable. Immediate feedback that is specific as to what was accomplished or done right is highly valued. Crucial elements include thanks, praise, and respect.

#### **Reasons to Recognize**

- For good work
- For always being willing to help
- A creative idea
- For consistent quality
- For going above and beyond what is asked
- Meeting a goal
- Finishing a project
- Cost conscious behavior
- Solving a problem
- Perseverance
- Overcoming obstacles to completing the work
- For managing time appropriately
- For motivating and inspiring others
- For accepting responsibility
- Employees who recognize other employees
- Service to the College (service on committees)
- Being a team player

#### **Know Your Audience**

When Human Resources held employee focus groups on rewards, the top three rewards desired by Wellesley College employees were bonuses, merit increases and verbal praise from manager/supervisor. Trinkets, certificates of appreciation, mugs, etc. were not valued by Wellesley employees. Take the time to know your employees and their interests. An extroverted employee might enjoy an announcement of a job well done at a division-wide staff meeting while a shy employee might be embarrassed. You would not want to give an employee who was allergic to flowers a floral tribute. While one employee might enjoy a candy bar, another employee who is on a diet might not.

## **Examples of Employee Recognition**

### ***No Cost***

- Send a handwritten thank you note.
- Send an e-mail.
- Leave a voice mail for someone complimenting them on their hard work.
- Send an appropriate cartoon or message to someone who is working on a stressful project.
- Comment positively about how work was performed.
- Call someone into your office to thank them for doing a good job – focus only on this and do not discuss other business.
- Volunteer to help with a particular task even if only for a short time. This is great at building a team.
- Ask your manager or division head to call one of your employees and thank him/her for doing a good job.
- Ask the employee for advice and suggestions.
- Give public credit for ideas.
- Acknowledge someone's achievement at a staff meeting.
- Go for a walk with your employee and talk about their work.
- Give someone a little extra time off.
- Allow flexibility in the work schedule.
- Even negative feedback can be positive if framed as an opportunity for further career growth and development.

### ***Low Cost***

- Buy someone a coffee or soda.
- Buy someone a candy bar.
- Buy someone an ice cream cone.
- Buy lunch.
- Have lunch or coffee with your employee and take an interest in their work. (You do not have to buy them lunch!)
- If your department holds an annual retreat, acknowledge specific contributions, take pictures and give everyone a copy as a memento.
- Send a plant or small bouquet of flowers.
- Send a fruit or goodie basket.
- Take a picture of the employee working on a project and give it to them with a note of thanks.
- Give a subscription to a professional magazine or periodical.
- Give a gift certificate.
- Host a pizza party for a team that has accomplished a particular project.
- Have a team celebration – remember to tie it in to the specific accomplishments being celebrated.

## ***Other***

- Allow the employee to attend a relevant conference.
- Pay for membership in a professional association.

## **Cautions**

Be careful about the following:

- Something given to all employees in your group, regardless of contribution or effort, is a perk, not recognition.
- Failure to be specific about what is praiseworthy.
- Insincerity or false praise.
- Timeliness - Recognition should take place close to when the behavior happens not two months later. Don't wait for the annual performance appraisal.
- Recognition needs to be work specific. Celebrating birthdays is not an acknowledgement of work performance.