

Employee Recognition - Evidence Review

Werner (Werner, 1992) evaluated the effectiveness of an employee-recognition programme aimed at improving work attendance. Compared with pre-existing sick-leave usage the 73 employees in the recognition group decreased their use of sick leave by 28%. Following the end of the recognition programme - which used the awarding and posting of attendance certificates as the primary method of employee recognition - the average sick leave returned to a level higher than it was before the recognition programme started.

A survey of employees by Luthans (Luthans, 2000) found that they valued highly-personalised recognition for a job well done as a critical dimension of their reward system.

Appelbaum (Appelbaum & Rammie, 2000) studied the use of non-financial incentives in small businesses. He concluded that “by increasing job satisfaction via job enrichment, employee recognition, internal pay equity and the use of skilled managers, smaller firms can increase productivity and attractiveness to existing and potential employees.”

Noviello (Noviello, 2001) found that there was *no* relationship between self-directed work teams’ productivity and recognition and rewards programmes.

Workspan (Anonymous, 2003) reported on a survey which found that employees preferred merchandise and travel awards for special recognition.

Dilly (Dilly, 2005) studied the effectiveness of an employee recognition programme on employee job satisfaction. The study found no differences in the average employee rating for “credit for a job well done,” and “overall job satisfaction,” following the introduction of the scheme.

Henneman (Henneman, 2005) reported a survey which said that rather than gifts most employees wanted support when they make a mistake, personal thanks for doing good work and workplace autonomy.

Klie (Klie, 2006) reported a study of 26,000 employees in 31 organisations in the U.S. which found that companies who reported the most investment in recognition had more than triple the profits of those that invested the least.

Jenkins (Jenkins & Fina, 2007) reported that although employees prefer cash incentives statistics show they will not work harder for them.

MGM Grand’s employee-recognition programme increased revenue and decreased employee turnover (Gibson, 2008)

The Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center’s employee-recognition programme boosted donor return rates, and led to more blood donors being converted to apheresis donors (Fina, 2008)

Henryhand (Henryhand, 2010) studied employee recognition and employee engagement in a medium-to-large public-sector agency in South Carolina. She found that perceptions of employee recognition had a significant impact on overall job satisfaction and intent to leave the organisation.

Kopelman (Kopelman, Gardberg, & Brandwein, 2011) studied a recognition and reward initiative for administrative staff in higher education. He concluded that “a recognition and

reward intervention can improve service excellence in a public sector higher education organisation.”

More than 80% of respondents to the Fall 2012 SHRM/Globeforce survey said that their recognition program had a positive impact on employee engagement (Anonymous, 2013)

Feys (Feys, Anseel, & Wille, 2013) found that if recognition and rewards went to people with whom other had a poor relationship this could spark negative emotions and counterproductive behaviour.

Cleveland Clinics' Caregiver Celebrations led to improvements in their annual engagement survey (Majernik & Patruchak, 2014).

A qualitative study of rural healthcare workers by Nwala (Nwala, 2015) found that all of them reported employee recognition and appreciation as an “extrinsic non-monetary benefit that impacts their retention.”

Merino (Merino & Privado, 2015) found that employee recognition led to positive psychological functioning which, in turn, led to improved wellbeing.

Wilches-Alzate (Wilches-Alzate & Jeffrey, 2016) found that as employees' perceptions of manager recognition behaviour and peer-recognition behaviour became more favourable and the more clearly they understood what behaviour would lead to recognition the higher levels of “customer-oriented citizenship behaviour,” were.

Li (Li, Zheng, Harris, Liu, & Kirkman, 2016) found that formally recognising a team member led to positive changes in their team mates' individual and collective performance.

Beaubien (Beaubien, 2016) reported that the European research centre assigned students to three hours of data entry. The highest performers received a thank-you card from their manager, and the groups' productivity jumped for the rest of the shift, especially among workers who had performed worst before the cards arrived.

In a controlled field experiment Bradler (Bradler, Dur, Neckermann, & Non, 2016) found that recognition increased subsequent performance substantially, particularly when it was provided exclusively to the best performers. The workers who did *not* receive recognition were mainly responsible for this performance increase.

White (White, 2017) found that employees overwhelmingly chose words of affirmation as the primary way they like to be shown appreciation in the workplace, whereas tangible gifts were the least desired. There was no difference between men and women. Quality time - having individual attention from a manager - and acts of service (help with one's work) were also desired by large numbers of employees.

A qualitative study by Short (Short, 2018) found that more recognition was associated with greater respect for one's managers whereas the absence of recognition led to less trust of them.

Gilbert (Gilbert & Kelloway, 2018) found that transformational leaders provided more recognition to individual employees and that recognition was more strongly related to wellbeing when leaders were seen as transformational.

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