

Rewarding and recognising your employees



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Employee recognition is something that most business owners agree is a very successful tool in fostering a positive, productive and happy pharmacy team. More importantly, employee recognition encourages repeat actions and behaviours that you believe make your pharmacy successful. It is a wonder that despite the evident success employee recognition can bring to your pharmacy, many business owners say 'Why should I thank him or recognise his work – he's just doing his job and he's getting paid for it!'

Admittedly, employee recognition does take time. Employers start out with the best

of intentions when embracing employee recognition but tend to lose consistency. Other business owners may not know how to effectively provide employee recognition, so they have bad experiences when they attempt to do so – it is important to know that recognition has to be clear, fair and personal rather than adopting a one size fits all policy. Think outside the square when it comes to rewards and recognition – what you consider recognition may be viewed completely differently in the eyes of your employees.

Above and beyond attractive salaries, work/life balance and employee benefits, more than

half of the staff I interview are more likely to be loyal to an owner that makes them feel like they are part of the pharmacy, recognises and praises their contribution and makes them feel like they are truly cared about. Irrespective of how great the workplace is, employees always want to know if they have done a good job, they want to be appreciated for their efforts and they want to know that the boss has noticed!

The most effective employee recognition strategies are immediate, straightforward and powerfully reinforcing. How do you put an Employee Recognition Plan in place? A good starting point is to decide what you want to achieve from providing employee recognition. Clarify your goals, action plans and desired outcomes. This will assist you in recognising the actions, behaviours and accomplishments that you want repeated at your pharmacy. Clarity of your expectations is paramount if you want them to be met and exceeded.

Recognition needs to be consistent and regular. For example, if you are aiming to increase the level of customer service in your pharmacy, write thank you notes to employees, commending them on their excellence in serving your customers in the last week/month. People who feel appreciated are more positive about themselves and their ability to contribute. The recognition you provide them with will raise their self-esteem giving them the potential to be your best employees.

Recognition should also be fair – employees need to see that each person who contributes the same/similar levels of effort has an equal chance of receiving recognition for their input. For example, if you want to increase the level of sales, set sales targets and recognise ALL team members who exceed sales expectations and anyone that goes the extra mile to achieve these results.



Eight simple ways to recognise your employees

Say please and thank you: Simplistic no doubt, but everyone loves to hear a please and a thank you. No budget is too small to afford employee recognition – niceties and appreciation of hard work go a long way. Thanking your colleagues and employees will show them how much you value their contribution – it's often these small gestures throughout the months that make people feel appreciated all year long.

Written recognition: This is a powerful and long-lasting tool where you can praise employees while noticing what they did specifically, why it was important and how it impacted on you and your pharmacy. A copy of this can be given to your employee, published in your pharmacy newsletter or placed on your notice board to applaud your employee and motivate other employees to do the same.

Gifts: If your budget permits, a small gift accompanied by verbal or written recognition can be very effective. Some pharmacies offer employees cash bonuses upon meeting sales targets, providing customer service excellence, going the extra mile etc. The gift can be personally tailored to their interests, or you could even offer paid time off!

Public recognition: Where possible, express group and individual

recognition publicly – even if your employee is uncomfortable with publicity, it's encouraging for other employees to know that others are receiving recognition. This also diminishes the talk of favouritism when recognition is hidden from other employees.

Take personal interest: Without being intrusive, take an interest in your employees' lives, families and values. Your genuine interest will ensure your staff feel understood and valued. This will also give you insider tips on how to motivate them, and reward them with recognition that ties in with their interests. A personal touch can make all the difference.

Food is always a winner: Treat your staff to birthday lunches or bring in morning/afternoon tea to show employees that you appreciate their contribution. Eating together is also a bonding exercise for you and your team, where everyone care share in the rewards.

Providing opportunities: Employees want professional development, training and up-skilling. Involve them in professional training, seminars and at events where they are given the opportunity to represent your pharmacy. This shows them that you want them at the forefront of your business in appreciation and recognition of their commitment and involvement.

There are so many other creative tailored strategies that you can adopt to recognise your employees – stretch your imagination! Pharmacy owners who prioritise employee recognition understand the power of this tool. Recognising your employees is not just being nice to them or showering them with praise – it rewards and reinforces the success your people bring to your pharmacy. When you reward your employees, you show them genuine appreciation of their efforts, which in turn reinforces the actions/behaviours you want to see repeated. If your employees consistently feel cared about, appreciated and recognised, they naturally perform at a greater standard, serving your pharmacy and your customers with excellence. **Re**