

RECOGNIZING GOOD PERFORMANCE

There are three main situations in which it is appropriate to recognize and commend good performance:

- 1) The employee has done something "above and beyond the call of duty."
- 2) The employee has performed competently and diligently over a time period.
- 3) The employee has improved his or her job performance.

Characteristics of good recognition

Timely: Give recognition as soon as possible after the performance takes place. Immediate recognition is best. The closer the recognition to the good performance, the easier it will be for the employee to remember what he or she did, thus making it easier to duplicate in the future. The passing of time tends to reduce the effectiveness of recognition.

Specific: Recognition should be directed at specific behavior(s). What specifically did the staff member do that you are recognizing? To merely say "good job" doesn't say much. Being specific lets the staff member know what behaviors they should repeat in the future.

Sincere: Insincere recognition is meaningless and will usually do more harm than good. Your employees probably know you better than you think, and they will sense insincerity.

Individual: Recognition should be directed toward individual rather than groups. Not everyone makes the same contribution. If all share the same glory, the hardest working staff members may resent the fact that everyone was treated the same, and that you didn't notice the difference in their performances. If you give group recognition, it should be followed by individual recognition for specific achievements.

Personal: All people are different. Adjust the style and method of your recognition to the individuals being recognized. For example, some individuals may like public praise, while others would appreciate a private discussion.

Proportional: Match the amount and intensity of recognition to the behavior being recognized. Overdoing recognition for "small stuff" will make people question your motives. All good performance should be recognized, but in varying degrees.