HR Human Resources
Central Washington University

Recognition Ideas

Category	Recognition Ideas
Individual	1. Post a thank you note on an employee's door 2. Acknowledge individual achievements by using employee's name when preparing a status report 3. Make a thank-you card by hand 4. Cover the employee's desk with balloons 5. Nominate the employee for a University formal award program 6. At a monthly staff meeting, award an Employee of the Month 7. Name a continuing recognition award after an outstanding employee 8. Allow employees to attend meetings in your place when you are not available 9. Express your appreciation 10. Give a personalized coffee cup or mug filled with treats 11. Write a letter of praise recognizing specific contributions and accomplishments, send a copy to senior management 12. When you hear a positive remark about someone, repeat it to that employee as soon as possible (Face-to-face is best, e-mail or voice mail are good in a pinch) 13. Call an employee to your office to thank them (don't discuss any other issue) 14. Express an interest in employee's career development goals 15. Encourage employees to identify specific areas of interest in job-related skills and then arrange for them to spend a day with an in-house "expert" to learn more about the topic. 16. Share verbal accolades – forward positive voice mail messages 17. Keep a supply of appropriately funny notes that can be given as immediate rewards and keep the supply visible – in a basket or box in your office 18. E-cards – there are many creative sites to assist you sending a free, customized, e-card 19. Acknowledge and celebrate birthdays; Send birthday cards to employees, signed by the departmental staff 20. Treat an employee to lunch 21. Have an outstanding employee spend a day with a dean, director, or department head
Departmental/ Team	1. Plan a surprise picnic 2. Make a photo collage about a successful project that shows the people that worked on it, its stage of development, and its completion and presentation 3. Establish a place to display memos, posters, photos and so on, recognizing progress towards goals and thanking individual employees for their help Swap a task with an employee for a day – his/her choice 4. Present "State of the Department" reports periodically to your employees acknowledging the work and contributions of individuals and teams 5. Serve ice cream sundaes to all of your employees at the end of a project 6. Once a year, have a "Staff Appreciation Day" where the managers supply, cook, and serve food 7. Have staff vote for top manager, supervisor, employee, and rookie of the year 8. Arrange for a team to present the results of its efforts to upper management 9. Encourage and recognize staff that pursue continuing education 10. Hold informal retreats to foster communication and set goals 11. Provide a lunch for project teams once they have met a deadline 12. Send a letter to all team members at the conclusion of a project, thanking them for their participation 13. If you have a department newsletter, publish a "kudos" column and ask for nominations 14. Post a large "celebration calendar" in your work area and post notes of recognition to specific dates 15. Widely publicize suggestions used and their positive impact on your department 16. Serve popcorn and lemonade during a video training session 17. At an employee meeting, randomly tape gift certificates to the bottom of chairs (for the first time, choose chairs only in the front row) 18. Bake a gift (cookies, bread, etc.) for an outstanding employee or team
Institutional	1. Annual Employee Appreciation Awards 2. Annual Employee Reception for those with five years or less tenure 3. HR's New Quarter Welcome Reception