

WELLBEING CONSULTING

Connected Teams Require Intentional Recognition

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Organizational success relies on retaining, engaging, and empowering employees. One key concept and tool that is often undervalued and overlooked is recognition ¹.

We know that recognition significantly impacts the employee experience, and yet it continues to be misunderstood.

Recognition is not exclusively financial compensation, nor is it a half-hearted thank you. When approached in an authentic, timely, and personalized way, recognition becomes a strong tool for managers. On the contrary, when forgotten or missed, recognition can be a key reason for employees' disengagement or departure. "Employees who do not feel adequately recognized are twice as likely to say they'll quit in the next year" ¹.

Leaders must set the tone for initiating, sustaining, and fostering a culture of recognition and connection at their organization. After all, research reveals that the most memorable recognition comes from managers and leaders ¹. And with only 1 in 10 employees being asked how they like to be recognized or appreciated, this is an opportunity area for the majority of organizations and managers to continue to improve on ².

Taking time to understand how people feel seen for their contributions and intentionally recognize others helps to create a culture of connection.

Recognition combats loneliness and fosters connection

Prioritizing meaningful connections is vital, yet for so many, social connections today are lacking. Strong social connections have been linked to improved mental and physical health, safer and healthier communities, as well as longer healthspans and lifespans ³.

Building a habit of recognizing others is important for building connected cultures both inside and outside of work. Recognition makes people's efforts feel seen, known, and acknowledged. It promotes feelings of belonging, which directly combats feelings of loneliness, isolation, and even burnout.

Recognition from leaders matters most

Recognizing a team member is like creating a surge of connection – signaling to employees that they are valued, cared for, and respected ⁴. Recognition is a relatively easy and affordable way to drive high impact across an organization ⁴. Without recognition, employees provide effort without acknowledgment, which can be discouraging to future efforts ¹.

Like most organizational initiatives, building a culture of recognition requires understanding and buy-in across all levels to be successful. We encourage leaders to lean into promoting and practicing recognition to instill this in the company culture.

This opportunity for managers to recognize employees should not be seen as just a box to be checked. If that is the case, the feedback will not feel authentic nor meaningful and can even be damaging. Annual compensation check-ins for this reason should not be the only format in which feedback and recognition are given. Rather, recognition should serve as an ongoing coaching tool to help steer actions and encourage strong employee performance.

Do you know how individuals on your team or those around you like to be recognized? If not, that could be a good place to start to learn more.

For inquiries about how PartnerWell can assist you with building a meaningful recognition program, contact us at [**partnerwell@tpgrp.com**](mailto:partnerwell@tpgrp.com).

Citations:

1. (2016, June 28). *Employee recognition: Low cost, high impact* (Updated January 12, 2024). <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/236441/employee-recognition-low-cost-high-impact.aspx>
2. (2023). *A great manager's most important habit*. <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/505370/great-manager-important-habit.aspx>
3. World Health Organization. (2025, June 30). *Social connection linked to improved health and reduced risk of early death*. <https://www.who.int/news/item/30-06-2025-social-connection-linked-to-improved-health-and-reduced-risk-of-early-death>
4. Gallup & Workhuman. (2022). *Amplifying wellbeing at work and beyond: Through the power of recognition*. Gallup.