

# Employee Recognition Toolkit

## Planning Framework

A good business case will help convince senior management of the need for recognition activities and related budgets

### Step 1 – Getting Senior Support

In order to begin the process of planning for employee recognition activities, it is important that the senior leaders within your department support the initiative. The senior leaders include the Deputy Minister/CEO, and the senior management team members including human resource and communication representatives. Gaining buy-in from this group will provide you with a solid foundation for initiating communication with all managers, employees and members of related program teams like your healthy workplace committee, and/or your social committee. It is a good idea to identify a program champion from your senior management team. This individual can provide a link between the senior leaders and the recognition team during the development and implementation stages of your program.

#### What To Do:

- ★ Gather general information on recognition; what is it? why is it important?
- ★ Build a business case
- ★ Make connections to department business needs; goals, objectives, and priorities
- ★ Make connections to the department and/or corporate values
- ★ Provide context for recognition programs and activities. How does recognition relate to existing corporate and department initiatives like attraction and retention initiatives, healthy workplace initiatives, employee survey action teams and employee engagement
- ★ Make appointments with senior leaders to obtain feedback and support. Identify a project sponsor or champion - a senior leader preferred

#### Toolkit Components:

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| ★ Corporate context                | ★ Research summaries                    |
| ★ Is your workplace ready?         | ★ Theoretical approaches                |
| ★ Building a business case         | ★ Sample power point presentation       |
| ★ Recognition framework            | ★ Public service values                 |
| ★ Attraction & retention framework | ★ Excuses for not recognizing employees |
| ★ Healthy workplace model          | ★ Articles                              |
| ★ Policy background paper          | ★ Project charter template and sample   |



### Step 2 – Building the Program Team

Identifying a team lead for your recognition program is an important step. This individual along with the rest of the team will be responsible for planning and steering appropriate activities. The recognition team will lead the development, implementation and communication of your recognition program. Ideally, your team should be representative of the employees in your department and both managers and employees should participate in the process. Once your team is established, a key first step is the creation of a 'terms of reference'. A 'terms of reference' document will be valuable in outlining how team members will be selected in the future, how often the team will meet, how decisions will be made, what everyone's role will be, and what the main objectives of the team will be.

#### What To Do:

- ★ Be strategic about your team recruitment; consider participation from all levels of employees and diverse employees.
- ★ Consider what type of team will work best – depending on your workplace this could take various forms; one individual, one team, several teams.
- ★ Establish parameters for your team through a terms of reference document

Diversity should be a consideration when building your committee. The committee should be representative of the diverse employees in your department.

### Toolkit Components:

- \* Establishing your recognition team
- \* Terms of reference template
- \* Tips for running effective meetings
- \* Shared team values
- \* Put health on the agenda
- \* Team recruitment – sample email
- \* Team recruitment – sample posters



## Step 3 – Finding Out What Matters

It is essential to develop a recognition program based on the department's business needs as well as individual employee needs

Before an effective recognition program can be developed, it is necessary to ask employees what their needs and preferences are, and to gauge their level of interest. To ensure a program's success, it must reflect what employees themselves consider to be important. In addition, it is important to understand your department's business needs and workplace culture. These factors will vary for each department and/or division across government. Information collected and assessed should include a review of current literature and best practices, a look at the characteristics of your employees - their needs and preferences, a review of department business objectives and priorities, and a look at the organizational culture.

### What To Do:

- \* Determine what you want to achieve through recognition activities
- \* Understand the concept of recognition
- \* Review general literature
- \* Review best practices across jurisdictions and other organizations
- \* Understand your employees' needs and preferences
- \* Understand your department/division business needs and workplace culture
- \* Gather new information through surveys, focus groups, questionnaires, etc.
- \* Gather existing information from employee surveys, comment cards, evaluations, etc.

### Toolkit Components:

- \* Steps in conducting a needs assessment
- \* Sample surveys
- \* Resource list



## Step 4 – Your Program: The Blueprint

Start small and focus on a few key activities that align with employee preferences and are supported by management. Then, build on these activities to maintain momentum. Keep activities dynamic and

At this stage, the information collected during the needs assessment process should be reviewed and assembled into a blueprint for the development of your recognition program. Being aware of business and employee needs will help you to identify the program's purpose. What are the outcomes you hope to achieve? Ensure that the outcomes are measurable. Ultimately, the program should be fair, flexible and achievable.

### What To Do:

- \* Identify your program purpose; what do you hope to achieve? what behaviours do you want to promote and reinforce?
- \* Identify key issues, objectives, goals, expected outcomes, resources, risks, and timelines
- \* Identify budget requirements
- \* Identify measures for success
- \* Who should be involved?
- \* Consider employee's preferences as identified in Step 3
- \* Consider manager's priorities

fresh.

**Toolkit Components:**

- \* How to create a work plan
- \* Defining roles and responsibilities
- \* Logic model template and sample



**Step 5 – Your Program in Detail**

Re-engage senior leaders.

At this stage, a detailed recognition program should be created. The program plan should outline a combination of specific formal and informal activities, objectives and evaluation methods. The plan should be revisited regularly to check on progress and make necessary adjustments. The most effective recognition programs include a combination of formal and informal activities.

Align recognition activities with business priorities, goals and objectives.

**What To Do:**

- \* Re-engage senior leaders
- \* Identify formal activities
- \* Identify informal activities
- \* Raise awareness
- \* Define roles and responsibilities
- \* Determine budget and resources
- \* Determine how the program will be evaluated
- \* Identify timelines
- \* Make your program sustainable and measurable
- \* Don't forget to make linkages to business objectives and values.

Make your program sustainable and measurable.

**Toolkit Components:**

- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| * Introduction to recognition        | * Quality criteria                        |
| * Formal recognition                 | * Who, What, Where...approach             |
| * Informal recognition               | * Best practices                          |
| * Steps in developing a formal award | * Recognition quotes                      |
| * Award program design worksheet     | * Recognition resources                   |
| * Nomination form samples            | * Service milestone certificate templates |
| * Inventory of activities template   | * Recognition certificate templates       |
| * Ways to express recognition        | * Note cards                              |



**Step 6 – Your Program in Action**

Have a kick-off event.

The purpose of this step is to put the plan into action. The detailed work plan should guide the implementation of the program in terms of timing, content, strategies, monitoring and evaluation. It is important to communicate with employees, promote the program and receive and respond to feedback. Communication is essential to every step in the recognition program development process - managers need to communicate department values and business priorities, senior leaders need to communicate their support, employees need clear communication about the program's purpose, award eligibility and award criteria. Communication of award recipients reinforces the whole program.

**What To Do:**

- \* Develop a communication plan
- \* Promote the program
- \* Take advantage of existing communication vehicle; newsletters, website, e-mail
- \* Engage participation

- ★ Provide training, learning opportunities for employees
- ★ Build capacity

**Toolkit Components:**

- ★ Communication plan template
- ★ Briefing note template
- ★ Formal event planning tips
- ★ Program launch ideas



Evaluation is the systematic collection, analysis, and reporting of information about a program in a way that allows us to learn from our experience.

**Step 7 – Learning and Enhancing**

Monitoring and evaluating provides accountability. Share successes, learn from mistakes and adjust your course of action accordingly.

**What To Do:**

- ★ Maintain a record of activities for monitoring
- ★ Explore various methods of evaluation
- ★ Evaluate activities based on goals and objectives
- ★ Report successes, lessons learned
- ★ Has the program had impact?
- ★ What do employee’s think about the program and activities?
- ★ Does the program/activities achieve what was intended?
- ★ What were the unintended outcomes?
- ★ Make recommendations
- ★ Adjust activities
- ★ Communicate

**Toolkit Components:**

- ★ Measuring your recognition program
- ★ Evaluation overview
- ★ Article – steps in evaluating a program
- ★ Fact Sheet – step by step guide

