

Employee Satisfaction: My Best Tip



By Patrick Healey

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My best tip costs you nothing to implement

Before you dismiss this tip as too elementary, ask yourself this: How many times in the last seven days have you expressed appreciation to EACH of your employees? If your answer isn't at least once a week per team member, then you are squandering valuable currency. This currency is the good will that comes when you take the time to notice and sincerely acknowledge each person for their contribution to your success. We humans blossom with praise, and it releases endorphins when we get—and give it. Think back to a time when someone in a position of authority acknowledged you for a job well done. How did it make you feel? I bet it made you want to do even better at whatever it was you were doing. Remember the warm glow it gave you? That feeling is priceless, and while it's not a replacement for fair pay and timely raises, the trust and respect that ongoing acknowledgment will earn you far exceeds the small investment of your time to offer it.

According to Susan Healthfield, a member of the Society for Human Resource Management, in employee satisfaction surveys, "...55 percent of the respondents said that praise and attention from their supervisor would make them feel as if the company cared about them and their well-being. As you might also expect, money, benefits, and events such as company lunches ranked high, too. **But recognition from the supervisor ranked above all other choices.** I have sponsored similar surveys in different organizations. The findings are always similar. Employees want to know that they have done a good job—and that you noticed."

I believe in the power of appreciation so much that I'm including a tracking sheet on the next page for you to use. **I challenge you to conscientiously thank each employee at least weekly for a month and see if you notice improved morale around the office.** For best results, your thanks should be very specific, not just "Thanks everybody for a great job," tossed off as you hurry out the door for a 1 p.m. tee time. Pay careful attention to your team and look for opportunities to applaud them. While you're at it, do it in front of the whole team so everyone gets to share in the good vibe. The point of the tracking sheet is to make certain you don't leave anyone out.

After the experiment, you may want to discuss it with your team and tell them you had become aware that you could do a better job of thanking them, so you

made it a priority to do so. Suggest that they also get involved in appreciating each other's accomplishments and good deeds. Being better at relationships, women especially respond to this sort of campaign. Keep tracking your actions until it becomes second nature to you. Team members experience less job stress when they are reminded that they're on track. If they aren't, then you have an opportunity to help them get back on it. We'll talk more about how to do that in Chapter Seven: Learn To Coach Your Team To Success.

You may have heard of the Hawthorne Effect, which inspired the entire field of employee motivation. Named for a series of experiments conducted in the 1920s and '30s at the Hawthorne Works near Chicago, a number of variables were changed in workplace conditions to gauge the effect on productivity. In one experiment they enhanced the lighting in the warehouse so workers could better see what they were doing and presumably be speedier in their activities. The move had the hoped-for result and did indeed increase productivity. The shocker was that it was later determined that it was NOT the various changes in working conditions that led to increased productivity after all. It was simply that the employees suddenly felt that management *cared* about their working conditions. The employees were simply responding to the extra attention being paid to them.

With that in mind, can you think of ways to pay special attention to your team?



WORKSHEET

What A Great Team I Have!

Who did you thank today? Who needs appreciation? Who's struggling and how can you help?

WEEK ONE

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

WEEK TWO

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____

Date: _____ Name: _____

What s/he did: _____

My response: _____