



3 Creative Ways to Build Culture and Engagement

DRIVE BUSINESS RESULTS WITH STRATEGIC RECOGNITION





Let's face it: The last few years have been tumultuous for employees and businesses. Against the backdrop of an ever-shifting economic landscape, it can be easy to forget that every organization is ultimately made up of people.

These people feel more disengaged from their work than they have in a decade, according to Gallup research. Yet, their feelings about their leaders, their team members, themselves, and their lives ultimately provide the fuel for performance – for better or worse.

Strategic recognition creates a ripple of positivity across the organization, contributing to a dynamic company culture that drives engagement. **Weaving recognition into the fabric of culture does right by your people and has a quantifiable business impact.**

But you can't wave a magic wand and manifest company culture out of thin air. What follows are three actions you can take today to prioritize people and culture.

ONE

Align culture to your company's values.

How do you define your organization's culture? Letting culture form naturally can lead to some common pitfalls, such as hiring bad culture fits, failing to clearly communicate the company mission, and a lack of awareness among employees about how their behaviors influence culture. Like everything else, your values need a strategy.

Drive alignment by simplifying the process of living your values. People data from a strategic recognition program can highlight which values your employees most frequently use to recognize each other. This shows which values they relate to – and where you should define values more clearly so employees can associate them with day-to-day actions.



Our values are reinforced through our recognition program. ... If you ask individuals, 'What are you recognized on?', they can name the four values that drive our organization.

MARA NOTARFONZO
VP of Total Rewards at CAA

Source: ["Reinforcing Values Through Employee Recognition Programs,"](#) Workhuman Customer Spotlight video, 2022

TWO

Infuse appreciation into culture with recognition at all levels.

Peer-to-peer recognition is an essential driver of employee engagement. Merck partnered with Workhuman® to launch its first global, peer-to-peer program, called INSPIRE. Excitement around INSPIRE led to a 12-point increase on the recognition question in Merck's employee engagement survey.

"Workhuman's platform allowed us to improve every aspect of the recognition process, making it easier for employees to both give points and recognize each other, as well as redeem for gift cards and merchandise in every country," explains Michaela Leo, former director of compensation at Merck.

When recognition is an important part of workplace culture, employees are nearly **2x more likely** to rate their team's performance as excellent.

Source: "From Praise to Profits: The Business Case for Recognition at Work," Gallup and Workhuman, 2023

THREE

Invest in recognition as a strategic differentiator for your culture.

Gallup reviewed correlations between employee recognition and employee outcomes across hundreds of organizations and thousands of teams in different industries. Globally, only one in four employees in Gallup's database strongly agree they have received recognition or praise for doing good work in the last week.

Gallup found that if the median business in their database* doubled the number of employees who strongly agree to this item, that business could see:

9%
improvement
in productivity

22%
decrease in
safety incidents

22%
decrease in
absenteeism

\$92M
in gained employee
productivity

\$2.8M
saved due to
decreased injuries

\$3.8M
saved due to
fewer unscheduled
absences

*a 10,000-person company

Source: ["From Praise to Profits: The Business Case for Recognition at Work,"](#) Gallup and Workhuman, 2023



The numbers show that the likelihood of positive social interactions plays a major role in where we end up choosing to be on any given day. If we expect that we are going to be treated unfairly at work, we don't want to be there. In contrast, a consistent environment of appreciation makes the workplace a place where people want to be rather than simply where they have to be.

Thriving in the future of work requires a simple, yet essential change in mindset: Bring more humanity to your workplace. A human workplace is the cornerstone of a motivated, energized, and engaged workforce – factors that have a direct and measurable impact on your organization's financial success.

Luckily, when it comes to strengthening and reinforcing culture, you have a major, largely untapped resource at your fingertips: employee recognition. So ask yourself:

- How are you recognizing your employees for who they are as people, what they bring to the organization, and the impact they have on their teams and the business?
- Does gratitude in your organization feel genuine?
- Is praise personalized to the individual?
- Is the way you recognize employees perceived as fair?

The answers to these questions will help you on your path to bolstering employee engagement – and business outcomes.

Ready to boost engagement and create a culture of connection? Contact us directly or explore Workhuman Cloud®.

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