College of Literature, Science, and the Arts
Rewards and Recognition Toolkit
(Adapted from a University HR Resource)

By

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For

Staff in the Career Family Classification System

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Recognition for a job well done is one the top motivators for employee performance. Guidelines for effectively rewarding and recognizing employees includes matching the reward to the achievement; considering the receiver’s comfort level; being timely and specific, and being fair and consistent.

*NOTE Refer to the Policy on Taxation of Gifts, Prizes and Awards to Employees as Referenced in SPG 501.4-1, Travel and Business Hosting Expense Policies and Procedures, Appendix E for specifications on tokens of appreciation to employees: Cash gifts, prizes and awards, and gift certificates, including gift cards, gift vouchers, etc.*
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I. Celebrate, Reward, and Recognize Employees

Celebrate

- Acknowledge and celebrate group birthdays (cards distributed at work and department birthday celebrations) by month or every other month while respecting an individual’s preferences related to public recognition of their birthday
- Provide a team lunch at the conclusion of a project, thanking the team for their participation
- Post a large celebration calendar in your work area and tack on notes of recognition to specific dates
- Create an announcement board for employees to share notes and photos of professional and personal achievements (awards, recognition, graduation, new baby, marriage, etc.)

Reward

- Swap a daily work task with an employee/coworker for a day/week (answer the phone, mail duty, kitchen clean-up, etc.)
- “In-house” gift certificate (swaps a task of the employee’s choice for a day, wear jeans on a normal business day, choose his/her next assignment, job shadow an in-house expert, etc.)
- Give special assignments to those people who show initiative
- Approve an employee’s request to serve on a department/University committee
- Write a letter of praise to an employee or each member of a team expressing appreciation for their commitment and thanking them for their participation and positive results (send a copy of the letter to the employees’ direct supervisor, Chair, Key Administrator, and personnel file)
- Approve a flexible work day schedule (per department’s needs and workflow)
- Start a department suggestion program and follow through with positive changes (anonymously announce the suggestions and the positive impact)
Recognition

- Greet employees by name
- Smile (it’s contagious!)
- Actively listen to employees and coworkers when discussing their accomplishments
- Practice positive nonverbal behaviors that demonstrate appreciation
- Arrange for an employee or team to present the results of a project to upper management
- Create a place to display memos, photos, and posters acknowledging progress towards goals with thank you notes from project leaders
- Remember the “Behind the Scenes” employees for those whose actions are not usually in the limelight
- Leave a thank you note/card in an employee’s work area
- When you hear a positive remark about an employee, let him/her know (forward positive e-mails and voice messages)
- Nominate an employee or team for a University and/or Department formal award program (LSA Spotlight)
- Ask your boss to attend a meeting with your employees/coworkers during which you thank individuals and groups for their specific contributions
- Spontaneously stop by an individual’s work area or group project meeting and express your appreciation for their involvement
- Call an employee into your office just to thank him/her (don’t discuss any other issue)
- Publish “kudos” in a department newsletter

Professional Development

- Encourage, enable, and employer staff to excel
- Assist in employee in developing and pursuing his/her career development goals
- Encourage employees to identify specific areas of interest in job-related skills. Arrange for the employee to spend a day job shadowing with an in-house expert
- Allow an employee to choose his/her next assignment
- Allow employees to attend meetings in your place when you are not available
- Allow and encourage employees to attend College or U-sponsored seminars or conferences
Professional Development (Continued)

- Encourage and recognize staff who pursue continuing education
- Authorize (when permissible) employees to enroll and attend sponsored degree courses as approved by the SPG and apply for tuition support (LSA Tuition Support)
- Offer to brainstorm alternative career possibilities
- Try to help an employee leverage their options to reach his/her goals. Consider lateral, enrichment, vertical, exploratory, realignment (moving down to move into something else) and relocation

II. Fun recognition Ideas

- **Play genie in a bottle to your employee’s recognition wish list**
  Ask an employee to write down six realistic/reasonable ways they would like to be rewarded. Ideally the goals should be low to no cost.

- **A chance to download**
  Give twelve coupons for “listening time” – one for each month where an employee can come for 20 minutes and talk to you about anything. Your job is to just listen to them.

- **An exception to the rules.**
  Give a “Bend the Rules” pass that involves and encourages bending (or breaking) the status quo. Then stay open and bend as much as you can when they make their request without violating a policy, procedure or practice. Show that you’ll question the rules.

- **A long-awaited action item-done!**
  An employee has asked you for something that you’ve put on your very lengthy “to do” list – and there it sits. Stop passing the buck. Surprise that employee – and just do it.

- **Submit to a critical employee’s “pruning”**. This may be one of the tougher gifts to give. But here it is. Ask the employee that you never see eye to eye with, the one who is the least like you, to give you some straight talk about how you might work better together. Listen very carefully. Don’t defend. Then, take a step towards changing one behavior.
### III. Practical Suggestions for Empowering Others

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<tr>
<th>Fostering Personal Mastery Experiences</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Break apart large tasks and assign one part at a time</td>
<td>➢ Allow the employee to choose from a list of potential projects, assignments and tasks that could enrich his or her work</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Assign simple tasks before difficult tasks</td>
<td>➢ Allow an employee to participate in the hiring process for a new manager-one level above them, or more</td>
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<td>• Highlight and celebrate small wins</td>
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<td>• Incrementally expand job responsibilities</td>
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<td>• Give increasingly more responsibility to solve problems</td>
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<th>Model Successful Behaviors</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<td>• Demonstrate successful task accomplishment</td>
<td>➢ Offer to have a career conversation with an employee. Hold it in a quiet, private place or off-site if possible. Try any or all of the following questions to get the conversation started: What part of your current job do you enjoy doing the most? Least? Which of your talents have not been used yet? What different jobs might you like to see yourself doing in the future?</td>
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<td>• Point out other people who have succeeded</td>
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<td>• Facilitate interaction with the other role models</td>
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<td>• Provide feedback through coaching</td>
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<td>• Establish a mentor relationship</td>
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| **Provide Support** | ➢ Nominate the employee for an University formal award program (LSA Staff Spotlight, Staff Recognition, U Matter, Candace Johnson Award and Workplace Award)  
➢ Include positive feedback in your annual performance evaluation.  
➢ Some helpful tips on how to start the conversation are on the LSA HR website at [http://lsa.umich.edu/facstaff/hr/professional_development/performance](http://lsa.umich.edu/facstaff/hr/professional_development/performance) |
| **Provide Resources** | ➢ Professional development is offered through LSA. Review the LSA HR website for more information at [http://lsa.umich.edu/facstaff/hr/professional_development](http://lsa.umich.edu/facstaff/hr/professional_development)  
➢ Offer the chance to attend an outside conference/seminar series designed especially for their affinity group.

*The Dean’s Office does not have a general budget to cover travel expenses and registration costs for staff development opportunities offered outside the local Ann Arbor area. Units are asked to anticipate and to budget such costs within their own budgets.* |
| **Arouse Positive Emotions** | ➢ Recognize effort as well as success  
➢ Involve employees in department decisions, when possible  
➢ Write five or more thank you notes for a job well done and hide the notes among the work on the employee’s desk  
➢ Show an interest in an employee’s interests/hobbies |
| **Provide Support** | ➢ Praise, encourage, express approval for, and reassure  
➢ Regularly provide feedback  
➢ Hold recognition ceremonies |
| **Arouse Positive Emotions** | ➢ Foster activities to encourage friendship formation  
➢ Periodically send light-hearted message  
➢ Highlight compatibility |
| **Provide Resources** | ➢ Provide training and development experiences  
➢ Offer technical and administrative support  
➢ Ensure access to relevant information networks |