

Rewards and recognition in the workplace

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE



Boost

Employee benefits, made easy.

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Every business or organisation lives or dies on the abilities and willingness of their employees.

Without dedicated and motivated people on your teams, productivity limps along like an injured marathon runner.

We're not telling you anything new here; however, we can deliver news about how successful HR managers are keeping employees keen, capable and driven.

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1 What is employee engagement?

Think about the most dedicated and productive employee you've ever known. What drove them to come to work every day with such enthusiasm?

It's likely to be more than just their salary. True employee engagement stems from a strong company culture, as well as ongoing recognition and non-salary benefits that make people feel noticed and appreciated.

When employees are truly engaged, they:

- Find meaning in their work that drives their motivation
- Feel a connection with the organisation's goals and values
- Are comfortable with sharing their ideas for improvements
- Receive the support needed to excel in their roles and progress their careers
- Are recognised and appreciated as unique individuals within the organisation



2 How do you assess your current level of employee engagement?

Before you create plans to improve employee engagement, it makes sense to establish a baseline so that you can measure success. The best way to do this is with an anonymous survey.

Employee surveys are a great way to find out how happy and engaged your team is. They give you real insights straight from your employees about what they love and what could be better. When you know how your team feels, you can make plans to improve their work experience. Plus, asking for their input shows that you care about their opinions, which builds trust and makes them feel valued. Regularly checking in with surveys helps you to spot trends, address issues and keep your team motivated.

These days employee surveys are usually conducted through online platforms, making them easy and convenient for employees to complete. There's a raft of cloud tools in this space, including Survey Monkey, Culture Amp, Sentrient or even Google Forms.

Here's a breakdown of the process:

- **Design the survey:** HR teams or external consultants create the survey, including questions that cover various aspects of employee experience, such as job satisfaction, company culture and engagement.
- **Distribute the survey:** The survey link is sent to employees via email, internal messaging systems or through your organisation's HR software.
- **Encourage participation:** To get a high response rate, organisations often build awareness of the upcoming survey, explain how the results will be used, send reminders and may even offer completion incentives.
- **Collect responses:** Responses are gathered anonymously to encourage unfiltered feedback and protect employee privacy.
- **Analyse the data:** HR teams analyse the survey results to identify trends, strengths and areas needing improvement. The initial survey becomes a baseline to measure the effectiveness of employee engagement initiatives going forward.

3 Developing an employee engagement strategy

Creating an employee engagement strategy is key to building a motivated and committed workforce. It starts with understanding what drives your team and what areas need improvement.

By focusing on their needs and fostering a positive work environment, you can boost morale and productivity.

This process involves gathering feedback, setting clear goals, and implementing initiatives that resonate with your employees. Think of it as a roadmap to a happier, more engaged team. With the right strategy in place, you'll not only retain top talent but also create a workplace where everyone feels valued and excited to contribute.

To create an effective employee engagement strategy, follow these steps:



Assess the current state:

- Conduct surveys and focus groups to gather feedback on employee satisfaction and engagement (as described above) and gather more detail on areas that might need clarification.
- Review existing data on turnover rates, absenteeism and performance.



Set clear goals:

- Define what you want to achieve, such as improved morale, reduced turnover or increased productivity.
- Ensure goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART).





Identify key drivers:

- Determine the factors that influence engagement, like career development, recognition, work-life balance, and company culture.
- Prioritise these based on employee feedback.



Develop initiatives:

- Create targeted programmes and initiatives to address the identified drivers.
- Examples include mentorship programs, wellness initiatives, recognition schemes, and flexible working arrangements.



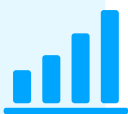
Communicate the plan:

- Share the strategy with all employees to ensure transparency and buy-in.
- Use multiple channels, such as meetings, emails and intranet.
- Design communications to initially build awareness, then follow up with more detail of what's involved. The third step is to request employees' commitment to helping the plan to succeed.



Implement the strategy:

- Roll out the initiatives in phases, ensuring adequate resources and support.
- Monitor progress and address any issues promptly.
- Encourage leaders at all levels to 'walk the talk' and lead the desired changes with their teams



Measure and adjust:

- Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy through surveys, feedback and performance metrics.
- Make adjustments based on the results to continuously improve engagement efforts.
- Recognise employee commitment to the plan, celebrate progress and explain how employee feedback is being used to make further improvements.

4 Employee engagement initiatives that are known to work

Every business or organisation is different, so some employee engagement initiatives will be more effective for you than others. Through gut instinct and data from your employee surveys, you'll be able to recognise which initiatives are worth a try.

That said, some of the following ideas are universally accepted as best-practice i.e. great on-boarding, training and recognition programmes.



1 Comprehensive on-boarding

A best-practice employee on-boarding programme is essential for setting new hires up for success and ensuring they feel valued from day one. A well-structured on-boarding process helps new employees understand their roles and integrate into the company culture, boosting their engagement and productivity from the start.

Here's how to create an effective on-boarding programme:

Pre-boarding

Send a welcome email with essential information about the first day, including a schedule, dress code and any required documents.

Provide access to an online portal with resources, such as company policies, team introductions and training materials.

First day welcome

Greet new hires with a warm welcome and a tour of their workspace.

Introduce them to their team and key colleagues they will interact with.

Role-specific training

Offer comprehensive training tailored to the new hire's role, including job-specific tasks, tools and systems.

Assign a mentor or buddy to provide guidance and support during the initial weeks (more about mentoring below).

Company culture integration

Share the company's mission, values and culture through engaging presentations and materials.

Encourage participation in team-building activities and social events to help them connect with colleagues.

Regular check-ins

Schedule regular one-on-one meetings to address any questions or concerns and to provide feedback.

Set clear goals and expectations for the first few months to ensure they stay on track.

Continuous support

Provide ongoing learning and development opportunities to help new employees grow in their roles.

Foster an open-door policy where new hires feel comfortable seeking help and sharing their ideas.

2 Goals and values

Sharing company goals and values with employees is important for creating a unified and motivated workforce. When everyone understands the organisation's mission there's a shared sense of purpose and direction. Employees who know the company's goals can see how their work contributes to the bigger picture, which helps to boost engagement and productivity.

To effectively share your organisation's goals and values, incorporate them into on-boarding programmes so that new hires grasp the company's vision from the day they arrive. It's also important to regularly refresh employees about goals and values through team meetings, newsletters and internal platforms. Create clear links to these foundations when recognising employee and team achievements. Visual displays, like posters and digital screens, can also reinforce these messages in the workplace environment. Encourage open discussions and feedback to ensure employees feel connected and invested in the company's direction. By keeping your entire team aligned with the company's goals and values, you'll create a stronger, more cohesive and driven workplace.

3 Training

Employee training is vital for keeping your team skilled, motivated and ready to tackle new challenges. Well-trained employees are more confident and capable in their roles, leading to higher productivity and job satisfaction. Plus, investing in their growth shows that you value their development, which can boost morale and retention.

To deliver effective training:

- Start with a clear plan that outlines the skills and knowledge needed for each role. Use a mix of methods - like workshops, online courses and on-the-job training - to cater to different learning styles.
- Regularly update training materials to keep up with industry changes and ensure relevance.
- Encourage a culture of continuous learning by providing access to resources and setting aside time for professional development. Offering feedback and recognising progress can help keep employees to make the most of their training opportunities.

4 Social events and celebrations

Social events and celebrations help to improve company culture by bringing people together and creating a sense of community. When employees have the chance to connect outside of work tasks, it strengthens relationships, boosts morale and builds a more cohesive team.

To make the most of social events, mix things up with a variety of activities, like team-building exercises, casual get-togethers and milestone celebrations. Encourage everyone to participate by making events inclusive and fun. Recognise achievements and wins, both personal and professional, to show appreciation and nurture a supportive atmosphere. Regularly scheduled events, like a monthly shared meal (everyone brings a plate) or annual parties, can keep the momentum going and ensure that team bonding becomes part of the company culture.



5 In-house mentoring

In-house mentoring, where a senior staff member guides a lower-level employee, is a fantastic way to strengthen your team and accelerate individual growth. This one-on-one support is especially important for new hires, so they can navigate their roles more effectively, understand company culture and develop valuable skills. It's also a great way to pass on knowledge and build stronger connections across the organisation.

To set up a successful mentoring programme, match mentors and mentees based on their roles, interests and goals. Encourage mentors to offer regular meetings, constructive feedback and practical advice. Create a structure that includes goal-setting and progress tracking to ensure both parties stay focused and motivated. It's also smart to recognise and celebrate the achievements reached through the mentoring process to keep everyone engaged. Regularly scheduled events, like a monthly shared meal (everyone brings a plate) or annual parties, can keep the momentum going and ensure that team bonding becomes part of the company culture.

6 Employee communications channels

Effective employee communications channels keep everyone in the loop and support a connected, cohesive workplace. Having a centralised platform for sharing updates, information and feedback helps to ensure everyone's on the same page.

An intranet is one of the best tools for this. It acts as a hub where you can post company news, updates and resources. It's also a great place for employees to access important documents, participate in discussions and stay up-to-date with company events. Other effective channels include email newsletters for regular updates, internal messaging apps for quick and casual communication, and team collaboration tools for project-specific discussions.

Encourage regular use of these channels by making them user-friendly and by providing training if needed.



7 Improved collaboration

Improving collaboration among employees can significantly enhance productivity and team dynamics.

Here are some effective ways to boost collaboration:

Leverage collaboration tools

Use platforms like Slack, Microsoft Teams or Asana for real-time communication and project management.

Ensure everyone is trained on how to use these tools effectively.

Encourage cross-departmental projects

Create opportunities for employees from different departments to work together on projects.

Cross-departmental projects promote diverse perspectives and a broader understanding of how your organisation works.

Host regular team meetings

Schedule frequent team meetings to discuss goals, progress and challenges.

Use these meetings to brainstorm ideas and solve problems collaboratively.

Promote open communication

Foster an environment where employees feel comfortable sharing ideas and feedback.

Implement regular check-ins and feedback loops to keep communication flowing.

Create shared workspaces

Set up physical or digital shared spaces where team members can collaborate on documents, presentations and other projects.

Ensure these spaces are easily accessible and organised.

Encourage team-building activities

Organise team-building exercises and social events to strengthen relationships and improve teamwork.

Activities can range from workshops to recreational outings.

Set clear goals and roles

Define roles and responsibilities clearly to avoid confusion and overlap.

Align team goals with individual tasks to ensure everyone is working towards the same objectives.

8 Remote working options

Offering remote working options can do wonders for employee engagement. When employees have the flexibility to work from home or another location, they often feel more trusted and valued. This autonomy can lead to higher job satisfaction and productivity.

Remote work allows employees to find better work-life balance because it cuts out commuting time, giving employees more time to focus on personal interests. It can also make your business or organisation more attractive to a wider pool of talent, as people appreciate the option to work from anywhere.

To make remote work successful, ensure you have the right tools in place for communication and collaboration, and regularly check in with your remote employees to help them stay connected.

9 Benefits programmes

Benefits programmes can be a cost-effective way to keep employees happy and engaged. They take remuneration beyond basic salary, showing your people that you care about their overall wellbeing and work-life balance. Well-rounded benefits packages can include initiatives like subsidised health and/or life insurance, fitness memberships and discounted products from other companies.

When you're looking for an employee benefits initiative with broad appeal, a standout example in New Zealand is the **Boost** programme by n3. This programme offers members a huge range of discounts and special deals on everyday purchases, from HelloFresh and JB Hi-Fi to car rental and prescription eyewear. By providing exclusive access to these benefits, you give employees tangible perks that can improve their quality of life and help them save money.

Programmes like Boost not only enhance job satisfaction, but also help to build a positive work culture. Employees who feel appreciated and rewarded are more likely to have a constructive attitude to their work.



10 Recognition programmes

Recognition programmes are all about giving employees the appreciation they deserve. They can be incredibly powerful for boosting morale and business results. While tangible rewards like bonuses and gifts are nice, sometimes a heartfelt 'thank you' or public acknowledgement can make a big impact.

These programmes focus on celebrating achievements, big and small, and recognising the hard work and dedication of your team. It could be as simple as a shout-out in a meeting, a special mention in the company newsletter, or a 'star of the month' award. The key is to make sure the recognition is genuine and timely. To design an appropriate recognition programme for your workplace, consider consulting your employees first. Their input could help you to come up with something original and special.

11 Incentive programmes

Incentive programmes are fantastic for motivating employees to achieve specific goals by offering them a reward to aspire to. These programmes can drive performance, boost morale and create a competitive (yet supportive) atmosphere within the team.

One way to run an incentive programme is by setting clear, achievable targets. For instance, sales teams might have a programme where hitting a certain sales milestone earns them a bonus or a trip. Alternatively, you could set up a points system where employees earn points for reaching targets or displaying desired behaviours, which they can then exchange for prizes or special privileges.

Another approach is to introduce tiered rewards. For example, reaching a lower-tier goal might earn a smaller reward, while hitting higher tiers could unlock bigger incentives like extra days off, high-end gadgets or even an all-expenses-paid holiday.

Incentive programmes can also include recognition elements, like a 'top performer' board or awards at company events, adding an extra layer of motivation. By designing incentives that align with your team's interests and goals, you can fuel the drive to excel.

5 Examples of recognition programmes that leverage proven employee benefits

Below you'll find some ideas for rewards and recognition programmes. You'll also learn more about **Boost** by n3, a real programme that's used by a growing number of New Zealand employers.

Impact Points Programme

Overview: The Impact Points programme allows employees to earn points for actions that positively impact the business, whether it's hitting sales targets, completing projects ahead of schedule or contributing to community initiatives. Points can be accumulated and redeemed for a variety of rewards, including extra leave, gift cards or donations to a charity of the employee's choice.

Why it works: This programme is flexible and allows employees to be recognised for different types of contributions. The point system provides ongoing motivation and the option to donate to charity adds a social responsibility element, which can be particularly appealing to value-driven employees.

Shout Out Fridays

Overview: Every week, employees can nominate colleagues for a Shout Out by highlighting something exceptional they did during the week. On Friday, these shout-outs are shared company-wide via email or in a brief meeting. One standout Shout Out is selected each month and that employee receives a special reward, such as a team lunch, a small bonus or a personalised gift.

Why it works: This programme encourages peer recognition and fosters a supportive team environment. It also creates a regular opportunity for employees to feel appreciated and celebrated, which can boost morale and strengthen workplace relationships.

Boost by n3

Overview: Boost by n3 is an employee benefits programme designed specifically for New Zealand businesses and organisations. Employees of businesses that belong to Boost can access to exclusive discounts and special offers on everything from food and sports shoes to electronics and travel.

Why it works: Boost by n3 is effective because it provides tangible, everyday value to employees without requiring significant investment from the employer. By offering discounts on common expenses, the programme helps employees to stretch their pay further, which can lead to increased job satisfaction and loyalty. It's particularly appealing in industries where salary increases might be less frequent, as it offers a way to enhance the overall compensation package.

[Enquire about joining Boost by n3.](#)

Skill Builder Programme

Overview: The Skill Builder programme rewards employees who take the initiative to develop new skills that benefit the business. Employees who complete relevant training courses, attend industry conferences or participate in skill-building workshops receive certificates and a reward, such as professional development funds, a paid day off to focus on their new skill or a public acknowledgement in a company newsletter.

Why it works: This programme not only recognises employees for their dedication to personal growth, but also helps the business by continuously developing a more skilled workforce. It encourages a culture of continuous learning, which can lead to greater innovation and productivity.

Work-Life Win Rewards

Overview: The Work-Life Win programme is designed to promote a healthy work-life balance. Employees earn rewards for maintaining a balanced approach to work and life, such as regularly using their vacation days, participating in wellness activities or consistently managing their workload efficiently. Rewards include flexible working hours, wellness vouchers, or a paid wellness day.

Why it works: This programme addresses the importance of wellbeing and work-life balance, which are critical for long-term employee satisfaction and retention. It encourages employees to take care of themselves, which can lead to higher productivity and lower burnout rates.

Team Spirit Awards

Overview: The Team Spirit awards recognise teams, rather than individuals, by rewarding collaborative efforts that lead to successful projects or initiatives. Teams that exemplify strong collaboration, communication and results are nominated by their peers or managers. Winning teams receive a group reward, such as a team outing, lunch at a local restaurant or a day off for a team-building activity.

Why it works: This programme promotes teamwork and collaboration, which are crucial in smaller businesses where employees often wear multiple hats. By recognising and rewarding collective achievements, the programme reinforces the idea that success is a shared effort.

“ Culture eats strategy for breakfast.

– Peter Drucker

“ The way management treats associates is exactly how the associates will treat the customers.

– Sam Walton

“ You don't build a business. You build people, and people build the business.

– Zig Ziglar

Check out an easy way to add a layer of benefits to your employees' remuneration.

[Reward my team now!](#)

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Employee benefits, made easy.