

Reshaping Culture: Developing Heart-Centered Leaders Who Empower

When you provide consistent opportunities to recognize and appreciate your team members, the results are exponential in higher morale and higher productivity. Below are 10 great concepts to motivate, encourage or celebrate your team members in a genuine way. While going through these, consider ways you can include them in virtual team settings.

1. Surprise the team with a pizza or cake party for accomplishing a monthly or quarterly goal. Set it up and then, for effect, call an “urgent mandatory staff meeting.” When they walk in, leaders should be applauding and clapping for them.
2. Write about them in a company-wide email. Be specific, mentioning names and/or departments as well as what is being celebrated. A simple “thank you” will not have nearly as much impact.
3. Give a long-lunch, extra break, or comp time for a team or individual accomplishment.
4. Trust them with a special assignment you normally do that offers prestige or notoriety and empower them to succeed in it! Be sure it is something you know they will enjoy doing and that you provide enough information to enable them.
5. Gift them with flowers, a book, or other small gift for doing an extraordinary job or for sticking it out when things were tough.
6. Invite them to a one-on-one lunch notifying them in advance that the intent is to gain feedback and insights. Then resolve to show value by listening and taking notes. Make it and extra special and rewarding experience. Who knows what you may learn?
7. Send a thank you note or gift basket to their spouse on weeks where extra hours were necessary.
8. Arrange to have their home or car cleaned as a pre-arranged gift for some extraordinary efforts or training that may have taken them away from their home life.
9. Offer to teach them a skill or send them to a class they would be excited to learn about. Try to align it with their role and to the forwarding of their career. Consider, allowing them to stay on the clock during class time.
10. Buy a dozen donuts and announce to the departments that they are in the honorees office and that they should stop by to say hi and get one. Be sure to “make the rounds” once a week or once a month so that others get honored as well.

The important thing to remember is that empowerment doesn't stop with just recognition and rewards. It also requires support, trust, relationship and opportunities where employees can feel part of the success chain in an operation. This means engaging them to apply their own talents in ways that motivate and inspire them. Finally, you must believe in them and provide them with a clear vision, the right tools and uninterrupted support.