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What Do Employees Want From Their Bosses, Exactly? This Study Sums It Up in 1 Simple Sentence



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A piece of reality I often alert my readers in management roles (<http://inc.com/marcel-schwantes/if-your-boss-shows-these-5-leadership-traits-every-day-you-d-be-crazy-to-quit-your-job.html>) to is the fact that, way too often, employees don't get the one thing so many of them want the most: *Being*

recognized for their individual contributions.

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The evidence is clear and quite convincing. The companies in Gallup's study (<http://www.gallup.com/businessjournal/120770/power-praise-recognition.aspx>) with the highest engagement (<http://inc.com/marcel-schwantes/10-best-ways-to-keep-employees-happy-engaged-and-working-hard.html>) levels use recognition and praise as a powerful motivator to get their commitment.

They found that employees who receive it on a regular basis (once per week, in fact) increase their individual productivity, receive higher loyalty and satisfaction scores from customers, and are more likely to stay with their organization.

In fact, the popular Gallup Q12 engagement survey even asks employees to confirm or deny the following statement about their immediate managers:

In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.

Research finds recognition is tied to meaning and purpose at work.

Another notable study highlighting the importance of workplace recognition comes from "The WorkHuman Research Institute: 2017 Survey Report (<http://www.globoforce.com/resources/research-reports/humanity-recognition-performance/>)," which was published by Globoforce (<http://www.globoforce.com/>), the pioneers of the WorkHuman movement.

For employees to find meaning in their work, they need frequent validation and recognition that what they do day-to-day matters in the context of the greater goals of the organization.

Those recognized in the last month are 29 percent more likely to agree with the statement, "The work we do at my organization has meaning and purpose for me," compared with those who have never been recognized, states the Globoforce report.

Let peers recognize each other.

The Globoforce report stresses the importance of leveraging social recognition programs -- where "everyone in the organization can give and receive recognition awards -- to blanket their culture with frequent, yet personal and specific recognition."

When survey respondents were asked, "Who is empowered to recognize at your organization?" nearly 60 percent said everyone, followed by managers (27 percent) and senior leaders (15 percent).

At Google, peers are encouraged to reward each other through an internal social recognition tool called "gThanks," (<https://medium.com/@K3ARN3Y/how-google-does-peer-recognition-188446e329dd>) which allows "Googlers" to send each other kudos and thank-you notes. The kudos

are then broadcast publicly for other Googlers to see and share on social media, which, according to Google's own studies, makes it the greatest perk for employees.

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At Zappos, peer-to-peer employee rewards programs allow "Zapposians" to recognize co-workers for going above and beyond and demonstrating the values that make up the famous Zappos culture. "While managers can certainly reward employees, we leave it up to the employees to nominate their peers. In remaining true to our core value 'Do More With Less,' we try to keep our programs affordable and scalable," writes the author of a Zappos Insights blog (<https://www.zapposinsights.com/blog/item/four-peertopeer-ways-zappos-employees-reward-each-other>).

Globoforce's report states that the best return on investing in such programs comes from values-based recognition, where awards are given based on employees demonstrating a core value of their organizations. "Ninety-three percent of people surveyed at companies with recognition programs tied to core values agree the work they do has meaning and purpose," states the report.

In closing, leaders should avoid making this mistake.

Companies that employ a static "check a box" solution to employee recognition just to say they recognize their employees, but lack clear vision and strategy, are missing the boat entirely. According to the Globoforce report, "an investment in a recognition program that is not strategic or aligned with greater company goals fails to deliver the same ROI when it comes to employee experience and engagement, whether employees love their jobs, and whether employees will recommend your company to their friends."

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