



# 35 Employee Recognition Ideas

Great ideas for employee recognition, collected from HR professionals & business leaders like you!

Terryberry can help turn your recognition ideas into reality. Learn how at [www.terryberry.com](http://www.terryberry.com)

## DAY-TO-DAY Recognition

*Manager & employee interactions. Peer-to-peer interactions.*

1. **“Make a Note of It”** Give each manager a sticky note pad with instructions to write a “Thank-You” note per day until they’re gone. You’ll be surprised by the results.
2. **“Snail Mail”** Send a card home to let an employee or coworker know why you appreciate them. Be specific!
3. **“Couponing”** Keep a stack of **reward coupons** for items from the company cafe to give as instant appreciation when you notice someone going above and beyond.
4. **“Personal Days”** make a note of significant dates in your employees’ lives to let them know you care: birthdays, anniversaries, etc.
5. **“Payday”** Thank employees for their hard work during the pay period. Give a PayDay candy bar and a high five when you deliver paychecks for an instant pick-me-up.
6. **“Social Buzz”** Get recognition mileage from your employee’s personal network. Post praise for a special achievement on your employee’s Facebook page and let the “likes” roll in.
7. **“eCards”** Send an **eCard** for instant appreciation on a job well done.
8. **“Varsity Letter”** give employees a varsity letter and any time they have a great customer review, they get a star to place on their varsity letter. Each employee places their **letter** in their cube for all to see.
9. **“Ring the Bell”** Place a bell in the corridor of your department. Ring it whenever anyone does anything well for all to hear.
10. **“Caught in the Act”** Publish a weekly “police blotter” style of events with the person’s name and action who were caught displaying extraordinary work.
11. **“Shining Star Gram”** Post notes of praise shaped in a star in recipient’s office or cubicles.

## INFORMAL Recognition

*Casual structure, defined criteria. Frequent minimal investment.*

12. **“Bright Ideas”** Encourage continuous improvement by rewarding employee suggestions that improve workflow processes. Try an engraved glass plaque in the shape of a light bulb.
13. **“Pass the Ball”** Encourage **peer-to-peer recognition**. Once an employee has been recognized for going above and beyond, he or she keeps the ball for a specified period (day or week), then “passes the ball” by recognizing a peer.
14. **“Snaps for Peer Recognition”** Place a “snap cup” for employees to put in notes of recognition for coworkers. Then read them aloud during weekly staff meetings and afterwards give each other “snaps” (snapping your fingers) for a good job.



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15. **“Shout Out Board”** When external and internal clients compliment an employee, the praise is printed and stuck on the outside of their cube. Then, when co-workers walk by and see the compliment, they shout-out great job or well done!
16. **“Lunch with the Boss”** Make a practice of taking employees out to coffee or lunch. Getting out of the building creates opportunities for outside-of-the-box conversations.
17. **“Traveling Trophy”** Designate a travelling trophy that can be awarded to individuals or teams. Let your unique culture shine! Often, the more silly or kitschy the item is, the better!
18. **“Day off”** Give a spontaneous day off with pay for an employee who’s been working long hours for an extended period of time...Bonus: throw in a restaurant gift certificate for a family night out, or a basket of goodies and a special beverage to take home for family night in.
19. **“Free Parking”** Reserve the best spot in the lot as a special reward for someone who’s contributed at a high level.
20. **“Candy Gram”** Allow employees to send candy grams with a small note of thanks to any or all employees.
21. **“Certified”** You’d be surprised at how valued a piece of paper can be when it symbolizes special recognition. **Certificates of recognition** carry added significance when they are displayed for others to see.
22. **“Quarterly Event”** Recognize your team each quarter with an informal special event, like a catered lunch or cappuccino cart serving employees. Include a branded award like coolers for the lunches or travel mugs on coffee day.
23. **“Quest for the Best”** Nominate a fellow employee for displaying exceptional work ethic. Have three winners drawn quarterly and present a **certificate** with balloons.
24. **“Kudos Bars”** At weekly all-staff meetings, give out kudos bars to recognize contributors, thanking employees for have given extra help, etc.
25. **“Top Dog”** Reward top sales performing employees per month by giving them the title “Top Gun” and post their name of the “Wall of Fame.”

## FORMAL Recognition

*Defined structured recognition. Significant awards for significant achievements.*

26. **“President’s Circle”** Induct employees who surpass a goal-post objective into an exclusive President’s Circle with honors.
27. **“Welcome Aboard Award”** Recognize new employees upon completion of orientation training with a small award like a company logo lapel pin. A basket of goodies shipped to the new employee’s home on the first day of work says, “We’re glad you’re here!”



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28. **“Your Service Matters”** Multiply the impact of **service awards** by making presentations to tie the milestone recognition to specific contributions made throughout the recipients’ year and career.
29. **“Root for Your Home Team”** By winning the Taking the Team to the Top Award, each team member receives an engraved key chain, thank you card signed by all of the administration team and the team gets to have the suite at the local baseball stadium for an upcoming game.
30. **“Family Matters”** Recognize the important people in your employee’s life for the role they’ve played in helping him or her achieve success. In addition to recognizing the employee, give a small “supporter’s” gift to commemorate a significant contribution.
31. **“Diamond Club”** Reward employees who reach a designated high benchmark with a ring customized with your company logo. Add a diamond for each successive achievement. Great for sales awards!
32. **“Employee’s Choice”** Recognize special contributions by presenting recipients with an **award gift catalog**. Employees choose the award that fits their lifestyle like a kayak or a cappuccino maker.
33. **“Sail Away”** An incentive trip may create miles of motivation. First class all the way! Be sure to include a tangible memento award to serve as a reminder after the trip is done.
34. **“Piece of Mind Award”** Create a personalized reward for those employees who demonstrated behaviors to match your mission statement and who have provided peace of mind to your clients.
35. **“Safety Milestone”** When your company reaches a significant safety milestone, employees directly responsible for achieving this milestone receive awards such as a **plaque**.

Find these employee recognition ideas and more at [www.terryberry.com/tools](http://www.terryberry.com/tools)

Terryberry helps organizations implement and manage effective employee recognition programs to acknowledge and reward exceptional employee contributions.

Get started at [www.terryberry.com/Programs](http://www.terryberry.com/Programs)

