

Recognition Between the Lines

How sentiment tells a different story

August 13, 2025



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Objectives

1. How we view recognition
2. How recognition is received
3. Reading between the lines
4. What we're learning about recognition
5. Next steps



Wasatch Back

- Ragnar Relay
- 200 miles
- 12 participants
- 2 vans of 6 people
- Team building event

Assumptions

- Physical Health
- Mental Wellness
- Dedication and Focus
- Quality of Life



Employee Recognition

Benefits of regular validation in the
workplace



Human Factors

- Physical limitations
- What people experience
- Long-term effects
- Environmental impact

“We can only recognize what we see, observe,
or learn about from others and our
recognition focuses on what we appreciate,
which is not always what others want to be
appreciated for.”

Christopher Littlefield | [Harvard Business Review](#)

“Only 34% of employees report that their employer has a recognition program, and a mere 13% rate these programs as excellent... This disconnect persists even though 70% of employees believe their leaders really do care about recognition programs.”

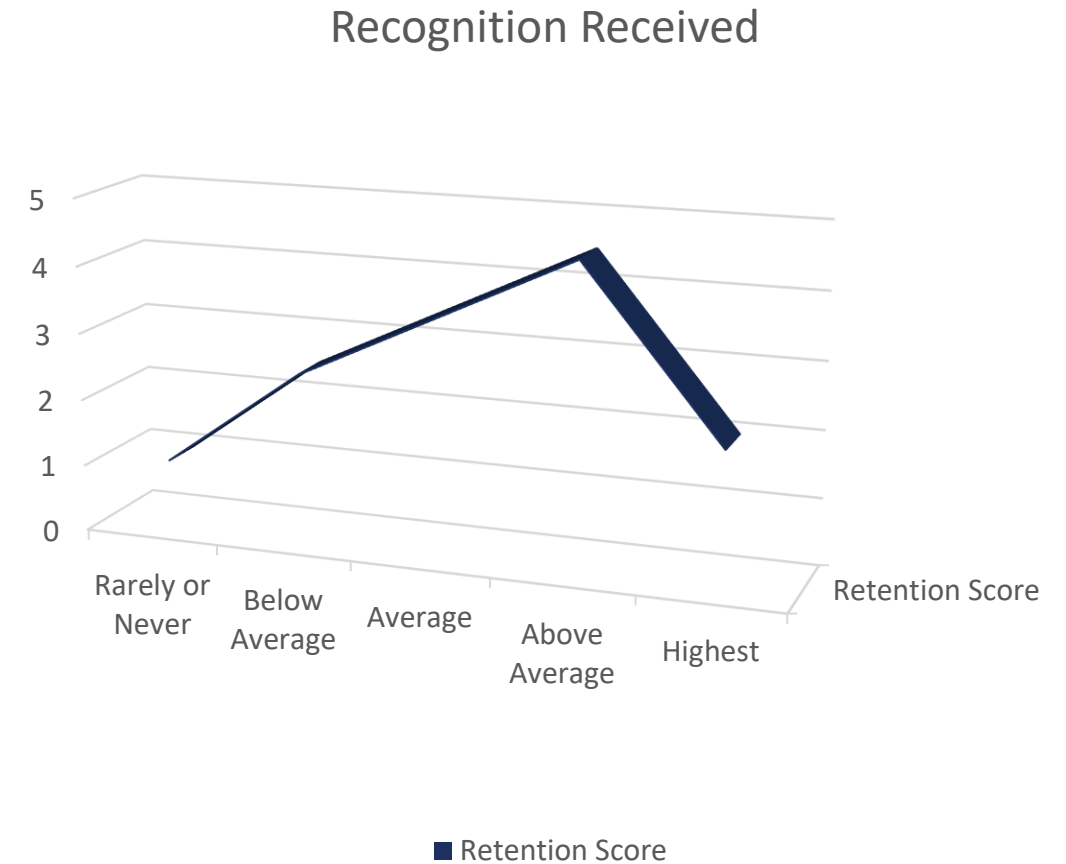
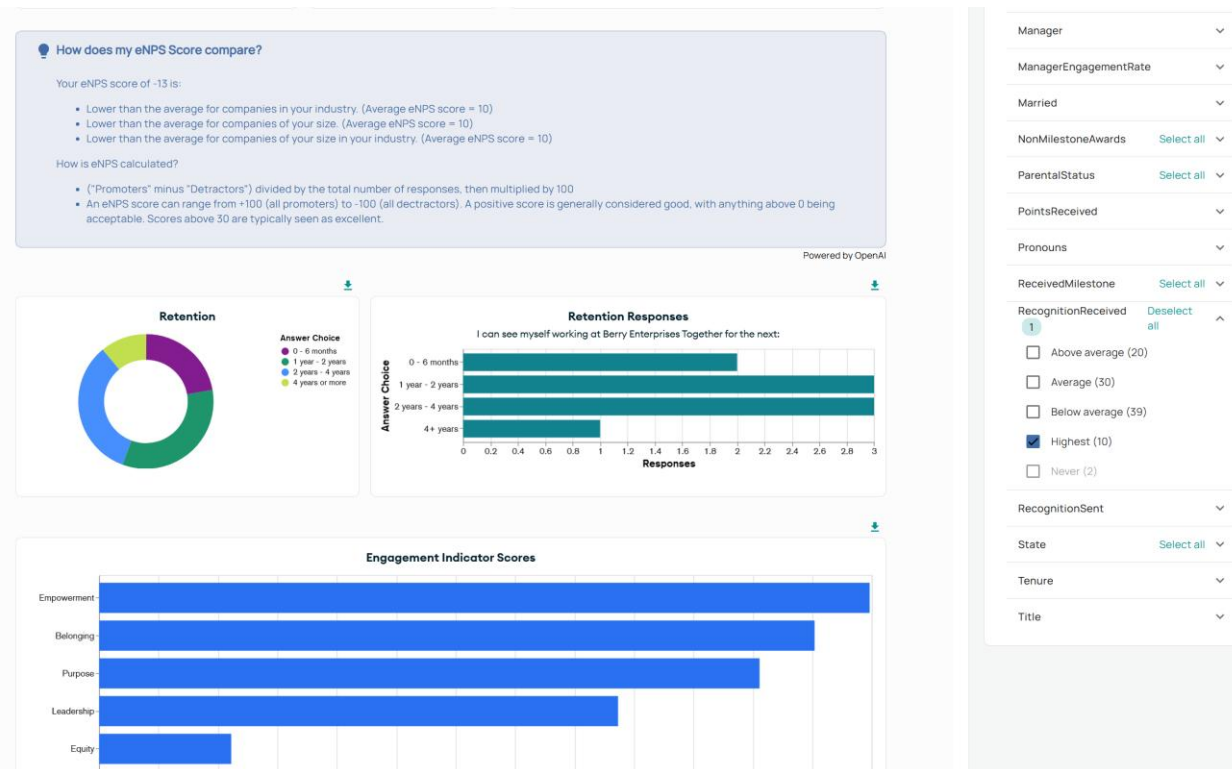
Kara Dennison | [Forbes](#)



Terryberry Approach

1. Measurable outcomes
 1. -What would runners do?
2. Begin with listening
3. -Humans aren't all the same
4. Make isolated changes
5. Observe
6. Listen again

What we learn when we listen



"We are trained, often unconsciously, to value visibility and responsiveness as a proxy for dedication. Employees who respond late at night or skip vacations are seen as 'going the extra mile.' Meanwhile, those who protect their non-work hours are viewed as less passionate, less committed, and therefore less promotable, even when they are equally or more effective on the job."

Eva Buechel and Elisa Solinas | [Harvard Business Review](#)

Purpose in recognition



The Koloa story



Things to consider

1. Recognition without sentiment is assumption
2. Understand your most recognized employees
3. Listen to your employees
4. Create a safe culture for recognition

Thank You!

Email: tpoppleton@terryberry.com
LinkedIn: tpoppleton

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