Why is employee recognition so important? Staff can work happier and are much more likely to stay at your company if their efforts are valued and acknowledged. In fact, two of three employees said it’s likely they would leave their current position if they didn’t feel appreciated by their manager. But we know you have plenty on your plate already, so you need to find ways to reward your employees that are quick, simple and part of your regular routine. Employee recognition should be one of the most fulfilling parts of your job, so you shouldn’t be stressing over it. Relax, take a deep breath and read on for some valuable tips.

Not sure how to best show gratitude to your staff? Here are some employee recognition ideas to consider:

1. **Say thanks**
   Regularly acknowledge employees’ great work. Point out how their efforts will help the company or assist clients and customers.

2. **Keep a record**
   Save reminders of each worker’s contributions so you have that information handy and can refer to it during performance reviews.

3. **Celebrate milestones**
   Organize team lunches or off-site outings to recognize the completion of projects and special events, such as work anniversaries.

4. **Put it in writing**
   Prepare a handwritten thank-you note or copy senior executives on an email about a worker’s accomplishment.

5. **Spread the word**
   Share a message sent by a customer or other stakeholder lauding the work of a fellow staff member.

6. **Publicize achievements**
   Feature standout employees in the company newsletter and recognize them at a staff meeting.

7. **Let them show off**
   Arrange for team members to present the results of a project to company leaders.

8. **Give a little**
   Offer gift cards, movie passes or sporting event tickets to employees who go above and beyond on a project.
9. Encourage professional development
Reimburse staff for participation in industry associations and conferences and subscriptions to work-related publications.

10. Support continuing education
Offer tuition assistance for courses that will help employees in their jobs, and subsidize the cost of exams required to attain professional certifications.

11. Offer advancement opportunities
Have a policy of promoting from within, and make sure staff members know there’s a path to career growth in your organization.

12. Treat them
Bring in goodies for the team to enjoy.

13. Give the gift of time
Offer time off or extra vacation days for a job well done.

14. Develop leaders
Recognize an employee’s skills by asking him or her to mentor others.

15. Show your appreciation
Hand out personalized certificates or plaques for accomplishments.

16. Provide monetary rewards
If budgets permit, consider spot bonuses or salary increases for achievements.

17. Introduce them to management
Reward workers with a coffee or lunch meeting with company executives.

18. Award them
Nominate staff for external and internal accolades, such as employee of the month.

19. Offer the power of choice
Give strong performers the first option of working on desirable and challenging projects.

20. Take them out to eat
Treat your direct reports to lunch to discuss career goals and department objectives.

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