

# Recognition Toolkit for People Leaders

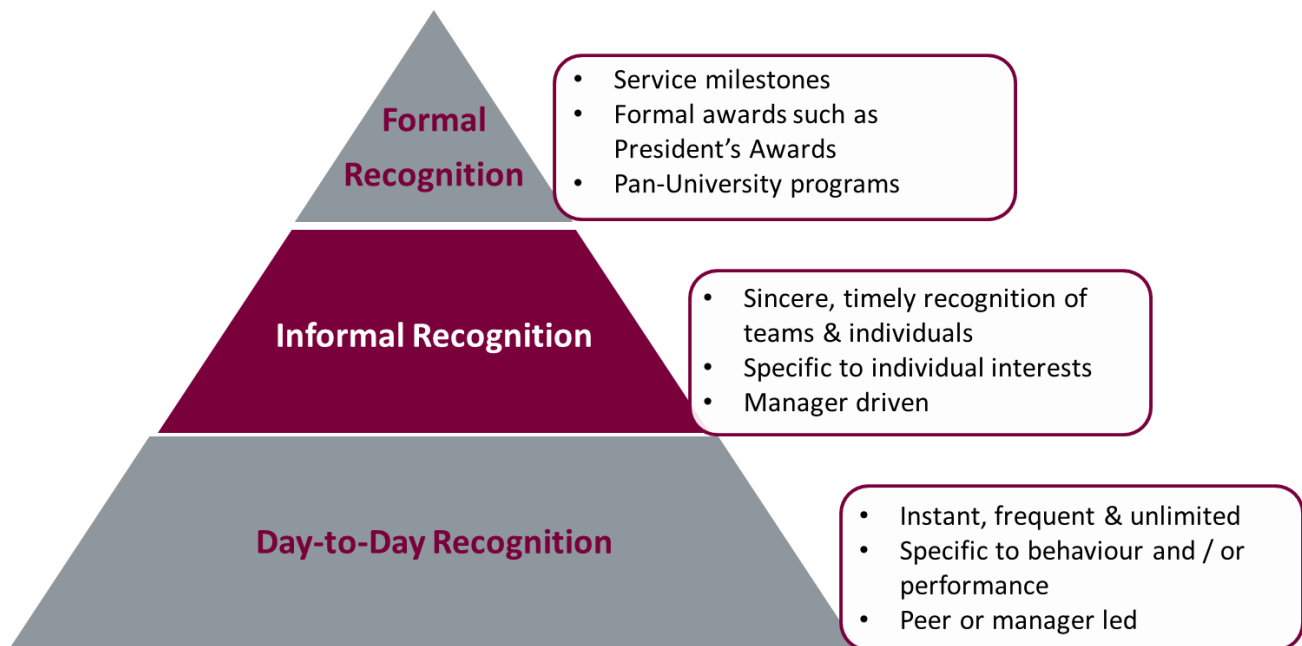
*Recognition is the acknowledgment of day-to-day accomplishments in the workplace through gestures of appreciation, communication and/or feedback. Recognition covers a range of formal and informal practices in the workplace that support organizational and departmental values, goals, objectives and priorities.*

## Employees are our greatest asset

McMaster University is committed to recognizing employees for their achievements made in support of our organizational priorities and strategic direction. As mentioned in *FWI: The Next Phase*, Human Resources is focused on enhancing the workplace culture and appropriately recognizing the achievements of staff.

Employee recognition contributes to a more supportive work environment that best utilizes an individual's potential, and better positions McMaster to attract and retain committed and skilled employees to meet current and future needs. The most effective and sustainable employee recognition programs combine both formal and informal activities.

## Forms of recognition



## Leading the way with recognition

No university-wide recognition program can have as much impact as genuine appreciation and recognition from a direct supervisor. No matter which jobs, levels, or positions you supervise, your actions have a direct impact on how motivated your employees are, and how satisfied they are in their jobs. Employees that are recognized and appreciated, try harder and achieve more. By making recognition and appreciation part of your daily routine, those around you will pick up on this and begin to do the same.



## Leading and Motivating

In addition to effectively recognizing employees, there are proven techniques to help improve employee morale, make staff feel appreciated, increase productivity, and promote staff retention. A few of these suggestions are listed below:

- Show employees that their ideas count. Implement some of their suggestions.
- Integrate elements of fun into meetings, daily work, etc. whenever possible.
- Welcome new employees appropriately - studies have shown that workers typically decide within the first two days if they plan to stay.
- Arrange a group outing after work – invite all team/department staff.
- Treat employees with respect. Simply put, treat them how you would want to be treated.
- Keep the communication lines open with employees. Actively promote communication by networking with them.

## Day-to-Day and Informal Recognition Ideas

Some of these ideas may or may not fit with your department's culture or individual preferences. It is important to know your employees before implementing a recognition strategy.

- Arrange for a team to present the results of its efforts to a senior leader.
- Support employee participation in wellness activities.
- Plan a surprise celebration.
- Post a thank-you note on an employee's door or work area.
- Acknowledge individual achievements by using an employee's name in a status report.
- Trade one of your tasks with that of one of your employee's for a day—her/his choice.
- Encourage participation on a University committee or project team.
- Take time to explain to new employees the norms and culture of your department.
- Allow employees to attend meetings in your place when you are not available.
- Ask your boss to attend a meeting with your employees during which you thank individuals and groups for their contributions.
- Write an email of praise recognizing specific contributions and achievements. Copy senior leaders and the personnel file.
- When you hear a positive remark about someone, repeat it to them as soon as possible.
- Encourage employees to identify specific areas for job-related skills. Then, arrange for them to spend a day with an in-house expert to learn more about the topic.