McMaster Team Celebrations Guide

Team celebrations are a great way to:
• Recognize staff contributions
• Look back on achievements
• Strengthen team relationships
• Learn more about our team members, their experiences and their traditions
• Celebrate milestones
• Create an engaging, inclusive and supportive work environment

Leader Greetings: Whether you mail hand-written cards to provide that personal touch, send a supportive message through an email or e-card, or record a video, a sincere message from the leader is an excellent addition to any celebration.

A Virtual Meal Together: While we can’t gather in person, teams can share a virtual meal together. Set a dollar limit that can be spent on the meal. Team members can order in or pick up their favourite lunch, and expense the meal. Review the McMaster reimbursement policy for more information.

Recognize and Celebrate Accomplishments: Take time to say thank you to team members, and recognize the great work they do! Some strategies for recognition include:
• Collect thank you messages in advance and present in a fun slide show
• Set up a virtual kudos board – Check out kudoboard.com (There is a free version, or other options for a small cost)
• Recognize team members for their years of service and celebrate special milestones
• For more information, review our online recognition resources

Gift Exchange: Consider a team gift exchange, or take it virtual with a card, recipe, song, riddle or poem exchange. Share them as a team - laughs guaranteed! Make sure to get consent if home addresses are provided for delivery of any gifts or greeting cards.

TIP: Display a multi-cultural calendar to help all employees stay aware of important cultural events for the rest of the year.
Get to Know Team Members Better: Here are some activities to get to know team members and strengthen connections:

- Team member trivia or a virtual scavenger hunt
- Zoom breakout room discussions

‘Speed-meeting’: Use Zoom breakouts for quick 1-on-1 conversations for a short time period (e.g., 2-4 mins), and then shuffle the groups.

Sample questions:
  - What’s your favourite movie?
  - What survival strategy has helped you during virtual work?
  - Looking back over the past year, what are you proud of?

Show and Tell: Encourage employees to share their celebration traditions through stories, decorations, and foods that they can showcase at your next team meeting.

Give Back with your Team: Consider leading a TMG Ways of Caring initiative with your team. The website highlights multiple opportunities and ideas on how you and your team can support our broader community. Your team could also host a fundraiser for McMaster’s United Way campaign by organizing a decorating contest, 50-50 draw, or group trivia contest.

Play Games With Your Team: Here are some resources and ideas to have a great time with your team playing games virtually:

- 30 Fun Zoom Games to Play with Coworkers
- Pictionary
- Other game sites such as Kahoot and Jackbox are also options but may require payment or set-up

Helpful Links:

- Engaging your Team During COVID-19
- Reimbursement Policy
- Employee Engagement at McMaster
- Employee Engagement Ideas for your Remote Team