



people  
make the  
difference

## People Make The Difference whitepaper

November 29 2016

By Craig Tegel

### **What motivates me doesn't motivate you.**

My business is called 'People Make The Difference' for a reason. Simply put: no matter how wonderful your business strategy or plan, you are only as good as the people you lead. Those people make the difference to your organisation or business. It is people who bring plans to life, hit sales targets, lead other people, make decisions on your behalf. Without the right people making the right difference, nothing works.

Which is why I have a personal soapbox about reward and recognition. Each week, your team is going above and beyond their job descriptions, so it's right and natural to want to recognise their hard work and reward them accordingly.

Yet it can be difficult to know exactly how to deliver these rewards or even what to give. Here are four simple questions you can ask yourself whenever you're considering giving recognition and rewards to your team.

#### **Are your rewards reflecting your team values?**

Remember all that time you spent carefully planning your team values and making sure your whole team was on board? All that time and effort could be undone with a reward system that doesn't reinforce those values.

For example, do you allow employees to drink on the premises on a Friday afternoon? If not, then perhaps a gift of wine at Christmas time, or in response to an achievement, is not the wisest of gifts. Directly contradicting your own rules shows that you hold little stock in your own words, so why should your team?

If a team member achieves great results, but gets them through taking short cuts and unnecessary risks, rewarding them is telling the rest of your team that you don't really value honesty and integrity within the team.

### **Is every reward appropriate for the achievement?**

Do you have a standard gift for when you want to reward great work? Many leaders take this approach with the intention of being fair to everyone, but it might be more harmful than it first appears.

Throughout the week, there can be a huge variety of different achievements, from simply fixing the printer to acquiring a new client or getting a promotion. As with the variety of achievements, there should be a variety in the rewards given in response.

Some smaller achievements, such as fixing the printer, might only require words of encouragement and praise – after all, everyone uses the printer and productivity can suffer when it's broken. Bigger achievements, such as getting a promotion, might call for a monetary gift, flowers or a gift card.

### **How frequently are you delivering recognition and rewards?**

Have you come across leaders who love handing out compliments and positive reinforcement? These leaders can be incredibly encouraging, recognising their team members' efforts every day and never missing a beat. Unfortunately, other leaders take a similar line but go about it in a different way, using physical and monetary gifts instead of words.

Again, this doesn't have to be a negative approach but unfortunately, receiving lavish gifts for even the smallest of achievements can cheapen the novelty when a big achievement does come along. Among some teams, the frequency of dependable gifts can even become funny, with the team joking about always receiving a voucher for the cinemas every time anyone does great work.

Some individuals may even take advantage of a generous, yet misguided leader, only doing work to receive the reward, going against the integrity and work-ethic established within the team. Keeping an element of surprise (while still keeping it fair) to your rewards and recognition keeps everyone on their toes and makes it a great feeling for everyone.

### **Are your rewards and recognition personalised to each individual?**

Everyone loves a good food-based hamper – especially one with lots of cheeses, right? You can hand that over to any of your team members and you can easily walk away patting yourself on the back, job well done!

That cheese-based hamper might look wonderful to you, but the team member who is now placing it on their desk is actually a vegan. What's more, they commute to work ... and it's summer. You've given them a gift they have to carry all the way home on a busy

train in the stinking heat, while the cheese slowly melts. At the end of that harrowing trip, they can't even eat it.

By giving that hamper, you've shown your team member that you've not been listening and you don't care about their preferences or personal life. Taking the time to think deeply about your rewards, gifts and recognition and personalise them to each of your team members can be time well spent in making sure each team member feels valued.

*If you're ready to kick-start your rewards and recognition system, People Make the Difference can help you with training workshops, one-on-one coaching and Coach On Call services. To find out more, call us on 0412 333 415 or visit [peoplesmakethedifference.com.au](http://peoplesmakethedifference.com.au).*