

# A MyPerformance Guide to Employee Recognition



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BC Public Service Agency



Where ideas work

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# The Power of Recognition

*"By acknowledging me, I know my supervisor 'gets' who I am." ~ BC PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEE*

Did you know that as a supervisor, you have the ability through recognition to increase employee engagement and performance? It may seem simplistic, but people who feel recognized and appreciated are more productive and innovative. The most effective supervisors know that employee recognition is an effective form of communication that reinforces and rewards the most important outcomes people create for their teams every day.

The practice of frequent and meaningful recognition benefits employees, teams and the organization by:

- Reinforcing the BC Public Service corporate values, organizational visions and goals.
- Increasing the quality of services for the citizens of BC.
- Supporting business transformation and building a culture of trust.
- Improving employee engagement, self-confidence and empowerment.
- Reinforcing positive behaviours, performance and attitudes.
- Generating a higher level of teamwork and cooperation.

Managers and supervisors who prioritize recognition truly understand its power to create a positive cycle of ever-increasing employee engagement and motivation. In other words, by recognizing and acknowledging employees who demonstrate exceptional corporate values, we ultimately create a high-performance culture of trusted feedback in the BC Public Service.

# Understanding the Different Types of Recognition

## RESOURCE ALERT



*The BC Public Service Agency manages formal recognition programs such as the Premier's Innovation and Excellence Awards and the Long Service Awards.*

*In addition, you can nominate your employees and teams for external or industry awards such as Influential Women in Business Awards, or the BC Community Achievement Awards.*

*Imagine telling the world about the phenomenal, leading edge work we do in the BC Public Service!*

## Day-to-Day

Employee recognition is an effective form of communication that reinforces and rewards the most important outcomes people create for their teams. Knowing when to apply the right type of recognition in a way that is most valued by the employee can be powerfully reinforcing. There are three dimensions that allow managers to take a balanced approach:

**DAY-TO-DAY** recognition is the most frequent practice and has the greatest ability to impact employee performance. It can take the form of a verbal "thank you", hand-written note, ecard, etc. This type of recognition provides genuine everyday expressions of appreciation and allows you to land acknowledgements to reward positive behaviours. These daily recognition activities have the potential to reach 100 per cent of the employee population.

## Informal

**INFORMAL** recognition is unstructured, timely and easy to deliver. It focuses primarily on performance achievements, goal accomplishments, and other milestones by individuals or teams. This can include no or low-cost mementos, team celebrations and development opportunities. Informal recognition practices create an atmosphere of continuous and spontaneous acknowledgment and also have the potential to reach 100 per cent of the employee population.

**FORMAL** recognition involves a structured process, where employees, work units or organizations are nominated for an achievement award. This type of recognition is usually high profile and recognizes individuals and teams in a public setting. Formal recognition programs promote organizational goals and values and foster a sense of unity and pride in the work we do in the BC Public Service.

## Formal

# Steps to Practicing Effective Recognition

## Make Recognition Specific, Timely and Meaningful

Informal recognition is considered significant when it is given in a timely manner, either right at or immediately after a specific positive action has occurred. Recognition should be attached to specific accomplishments so the individual is aware of the reason they are being recognized. This creates a long lasting recognition experience.

Meaningful recognition is extremely important as each individual is unique and their preferences vary in the ways they want to be shown appreciation. Ask employees during their MyPerformance goal setting or performance conversations what forms of recognition they prefer.

## Say “Thank You”

An important element of informal recognition is saying “thank you” to employees and colleagues. Many employees value a hand-written note from their supervisor, manager or executive, specifying what they did to warrant the recognition and how their actions contributed to the goals and/or values of the organization. Never underestimate the power of writing down some personal words while recognizing someone for their accomplishment.

## Celebrate!

Celebration events allow employees to be recognized in front of their peers, managers and executive. These events may vary from being spontaneous in nature to being an item on a regularly-scheduled meeting agenda. They can also be large, formal events that recognize employees and teams for their accomplishments and can create a significant and long lasting recognition experience.

### RESOURCE ALERT



*The BC Public Service Agency offers the **Coaching Approach to Conversations** to assist you in landing acknowledgements and celebrating employee strengths.*

*This workshop supports an approach to conversations that will enhance employee engagement and improve performance. Supervisors will learn how to have more meaningful interactions one conversation at a time.*

*Visit **The Learning Centre** to find out about upcoming “Coaching Approach to Conversations” workshops.*

*“We need to acknowledge people more for ‘who’ they show up as in the workplace”*

*~ BC PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEE*

## RESOURCE ALERT



***Do you want to implement a Peer-to-Peer Recognition Program within your team?***

***Here are some simple steps to follow:***

- ***Focus on the behavior you want to reward.***
- ***Make it easy for anyone to be recognized or rewarded.***
- ***Keep it simple.***
- ***Have your team run and own the program.***
- ***Make it FUN!***

***Tell your staff about e-cards and how they can be used for day-to-day peer recognition.***

## Peer-to-Peer Recognition

Peer-to-peer recognition is the genuine expression of appreciation between co-workers. The positive communication between co-workers can significantly improve trust and relationships in the workplace. Supervisors are not the only ones responsible for recognition; therefore, encourage your employees to recognize one another through a peer-to-peer recognition program to create a culture of recognition within your work unit.

## Recognizing the Remote Worker

As tele-workers become more common within the BC Public Service, it is more important for supervisors to use the MyPerformance model as a tool to maintain employee engagement. While having your next performance conversations with a tele-worker, discuss what is necessary to achieve their performance goals and set target dates. You can monitor their progress and recognize their achievements upon reaching their goals.

## Rewards and Opportunities

It is important that recognition be tailored to the recipient's specific needs, interests and likes. Traditional rewards are not always as effective as we think or hope they are. The most important aspect of recognition is not the mug or the plaque, but the message. Employees value opportunities for career development, learning and autonomy. By providing authentic acknowledgement, you demonstrate to the employee that you have tailored the reward to them.

## Accountability and Measurement

When recognition is effectively delivered by peers, managers, and executive, it ingrains a culture of appreciation, respect and trusted feedback within the BC Public Service. In order to support the culture shift, employees and supervisors should include recognition in their MyPerformance Profile by creating recognition targets; including personal milestones and their preferred form of recognition. By including recognition goals and preferences, you can measure the effectiveness of your recognition practices and ensure accountability in reaching your recognition targets.

*The focus is on the conversation...*

# Motivating Performance through Conversations

True “people” managers function as the eyes and ears of the organization. They have the ability to identify untapped potential in their employees and help these individuals achieve successful careers. A great time to identify what motivates your employees is through your MyPerformance goal setting conversations. For employees, it assists them in creating professional goals that are meaningful to them and ensures that employees understand how their own actions contribute to the overall goals of the organization. These conversations are key in helping employees acknowledge the impact of their work.

So why is this so important? The answer is simple – two-way dialogue builds trust between employees and supervisors. Employees feel they are being seen, heard and understood. When recognizing employees, you can use the skill of landing acknowledgements by addressing who the person is and who they had to be in order to do what they have done. You are pointing out someone’s special qualities and emerging abilities

in a descriptive and appreciative way. When recognition occurs, employees will know their hard work and commitment is being genuinely acknowledged and appreciated. People are then more motivated to continue to improve their performance by taking on new challenges and continuing to develop their skills.

The following offers sample recognition statements for managers and supervisors to open up a conversation.

## Exceeds Expectation

High-performing individuals tend to be a model of motivation and a positive influence for others. They appreciate being profiled as the “go to” person in the organization for specific skills and knowledge and enjoy getting the opportunity to hone or master their skills.



### RESOURCE ALERT



*The BC Public Service Agency has Performance Coaching Services available to assist you in preparing for performance and recognition conversations.*

*Performance coaches are your ally for success and will assist you in reaching higher levels of performance. You will gain perspective, explore and set goals, identify obstacles, create a plan, and work towards achieving what is important to you in your career.*

*To sign up, complete a Performance Coaching Request form on MyHR.*

## RESOURCE ALERT



**Are you looking for support in recording your conversations into your and/or employee's MyPerformance Profile?**

**Click on the Profile Help button**

### Profile Help

**in your MyPerformance Profile where you will find helpful tools like profile samples, user guide, and FAQ's.**

**To get started, visit MyHR for a direct link to your MyPerformance Profile.**

An example of a recognition statement for an employee who exceeds expectations:

*"Your thoughtful effort and professionalism has made an impact with all of your colleagues. There's an industry conference in September and in order to assist you in meeting your learning and development goals, I would like to offer you the opportunity to participate in the one day session. Would you be interested in attending the conference?"*

## Achieves Expectations

Solid performing employees are key contributors to team outcomes and a positive and engaged work place. They are valued team players and contributors. Their accomplishments and behaviours should be recognized on a regular basis in order to demonstrate that the organization values and appreciates their skills and steadfast reliability.

An example of a recognition statement for an employee who achieves expectations:

*"I am impressed with your responsiveness, reliability and how you build great relationships with our clients. We have received a tremendous amount of positive feedback regarding your customer service. In your MyPerformance Profile, under Learning and Development, you expressed an interest in increasing your responsibility in a leadership role. I will be going away for vacation and would like to offer you the opportunity to act in my role while I am away. Would this be of interest to you?"*

## Developing

Building a positive and supportive relationship with your new and growing employees will create a positive work environment. Use coaching conversations as an opportunity to acknowledge their achievements, behaviours and strengths and encourage further development. Through a supportive coaching approach, employees will come to fully understand their strengths and trust their manager's feedback.

An example of a recognition statement for an employee who is developing:

*"I thought you did a great job presenting your work to the team at this morning's team meeting. Your enthusiasm was contagious and I can see that you have some great presentation skills that we should be developing. A few of your colleagues have been providing presentations to different ministries on our new health profile and I think you would be a great addition. Would you be interested in joining this team?"*

### It's time to think outside the box when recognizing employees! Key contributors to employee motivation are:

- Autonomy
- Mastery
- Purpose

PINK, D. H. (2009). Drive: the surprising truth about what motivates us. New York, NY, Riverhead Books.

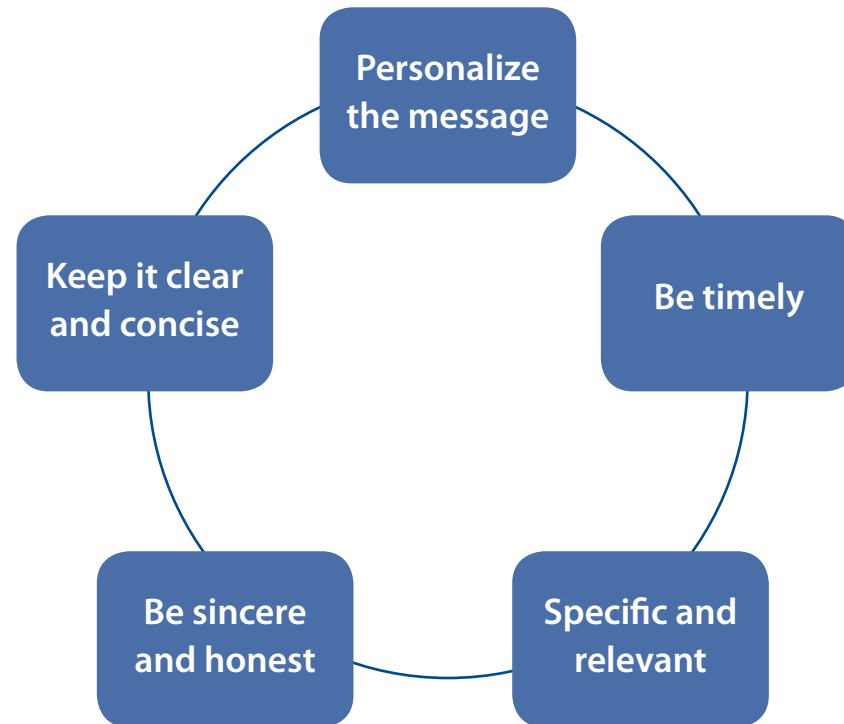
*"Landing acknowledgements is key to demonstrating the coaching approach. The skill of acknowledgement helps to celebrate the person's internal strengths. By acknowledging that strength you give that person more access to it."*

~ Coaching Approach to Conversations Workshop



# Recognition Success Factors

RECOGNITION PROGRAMS
<b>Day-to-Day and Informal Recognition</b>
<a href="#">Ecards</a> , customizable <a href="#">PS Value Certificates</a> and ministry-specific tools and resources.
<a href="#">Staff Appreciation Awards Guidelines</a> Please check with your <a href="#">Ministry Recognition Contact</a> .
<b>Formal Recognition</b>
<a href="#">Premier's Innovation and Excellence Awards</a> – provides the public service's most prestigious recognition in eight categories: Cross-Government Integration; Emerging Leader; Innovation; Leadership; Legacy; Organizational Excellence; Partnership; and Service Excellence.
<a href="#">Long Service Awards</a> – recognizes the contribution of employees with 25, 30, 35, 40 and 45 years of service.
<a href="#">Long Service Award Pins</a> – Pins are available in five-year increments. To order pins for staff, please check with your <a href="#">Ministry Recognition Contact</a> .
Ministry-Specific Recognition Programs – for details regarding formal and informal recognition initiatives specific to your ministry, please contact your <a href="#">Ministry Recognition Contact</a> .



*"Don't forget to recognize the recognizers!"*

