

# 2023

## Employee Rewards and Recognition Tips to Uplevel Your Program in 2023

As we've learned from years past, preparation and staying on the pulse of what employees want can set your company up for success. Whether you want to do a major overhaul of your current recognition and rewards program or just want some simple tweaks, get ahead of your employee engagement goals by checking out these tips below:



### Use Rewards to Attract New Talent



#### 1. Advertise recognition and rewards programs to candidates

Attract candidates with similar company values by promoting your recognition and rewards programs through job advertisements, social media, your company website and during the interview process.

#### 2. Celebrate small wins

2023 is the year to consider offering smaller and more frequent recognition. With many employees working remotely, recognition remains a top priority for candidates and employees to feel connected to their teams, boss and company.

#### Did You Know?



Nearly 4 in 10 employees of the youngest generation would prefer to be recognized by their manager at least a few times a week.<sup>1</sup>

#### 3. Employee holiday rewards payoff year-round

More than just a thoughtful gesture, the right holiday rewards attract more candidates. In fact, 4 in 10 employees would consider joining a new company if they gave out holiday gift cards.<sup>2</sup>

## Employee Engagement Goes Beyond Happy Hours

#### 4. Focus on peer-to-peer recognition

Your employees want to show gratitude to each other, so give them the opportunity. We found that 76% of employees want to recognize their coworkers.<sup>3</sup>

#### 5. Don't forget about people managers, too

People managers are employees too, but they often get the most responsibility and least recognition.<sup>4</sup> Encourage employees to celebrate their bosses and send them a surprise reward.

#### 6. Mental health programs are here to stay

With many companies expanding mental health coverage this year<sup>5</sup>, consider reviewing your benefits package or surveying employees about how to improve your holistic health offerings at work.



#### 7. Alleviate financial stress

To mitigate the economic uncertainty of 2023, consider offering financial education courses either through a retirement vendor or financial literacy organization.

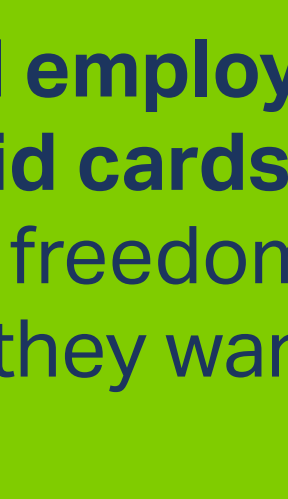
#### 8. Focus on employee communications as much as customer communications

Your employees are your biggest asset, so make sure they understand your company's strategy, goals and values as much as your customers understand the value of your business. Ensure your company takes as much time to craft and deliver important messages to your employees as you do for your consumers.

#### 9. Cultivate authentic moments of recognition

Recognition should never feel like a chore. When giving a reward, tell employees how their work contributed to the business or connected to a company value. When recognition is genuine and specific, it spreads like wildfire.

#### Bonus Tip:



Reward employees with prepaid cards so they have the freedom to spend on what they want or need.

#### 10. Encourage meaningful work

To ensure employees feel successful in their role both personally and organizationally, encourage managers and employees to have regular check-ins. Remind leaders to discuss career development goals and progression rather than just project updates to ensure employees continue to feel challenged and engaged.

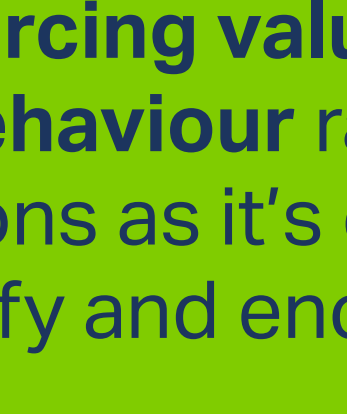
#### 11. Reinforce company values

Use recognition as an opportunity to encourage and reinforce core values.<sup>6</sup> For example, if your company wants to inspire teamwork, you can give recognition for those who volunteer to help a team member or manage a challenging client.

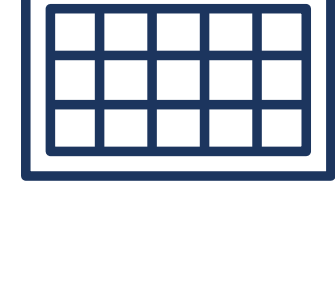
#### 12. Add inclusion as a key value in your recognition program

Show you care about inclusion by rewarding employees who organize diversity, equity, and inclusion events and activities, like leaders of employee resource groups.

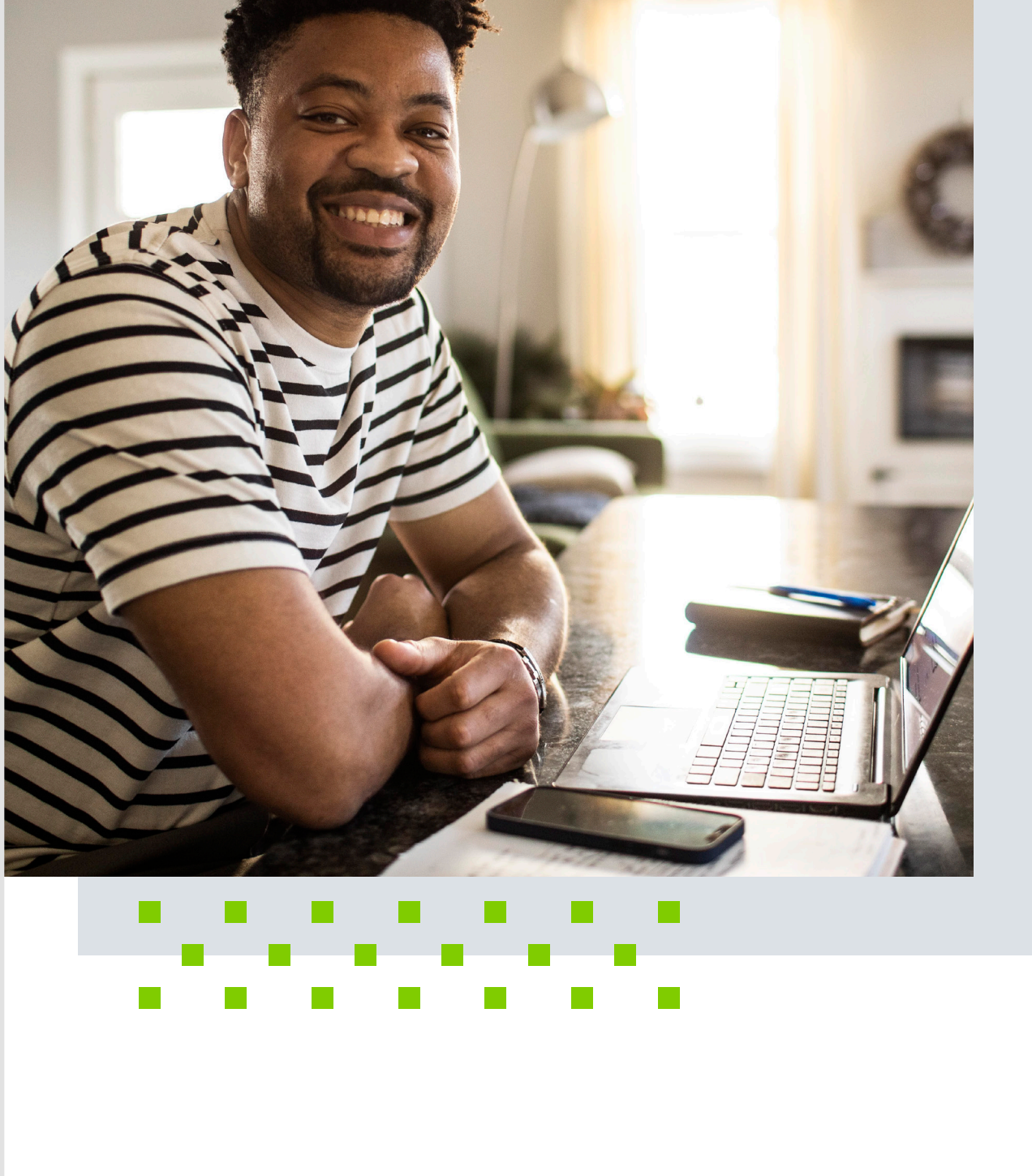
#### Pro Tip:



Make sure you're reinforcing values that drive behaviour rather than emotions as it's easier to quantify and encourage.



## Continue Embracing Flexible Work



#### 13. Combat productivity paranoia<sup>7</sup>

Nobody likes to be micromanaged, especially when working from home. Depending upon your employees' positions, give rewards for completed projects rather than time logged on the computer to encourage autonomy.

#### 14. Reduce roadblocks to optimize workflows

Reducing red tape empowers your employees to work faster, smarter and more creatively. Reward employees who streamline processes that contribute to individual and organizational success.

#### 15. Allow employees to reevaluate their work schedules

Are your employees making the best use of their time in the office? Nobody likes going to the office just to jump on Zoom calls, so ensure that your employees' schedules are still working for them.

#### 16. Get your game on

Use gamification to make recognition fun and fresh. For example, offer a reward for the teammate who gives the most recognition or do a gratitude challenge where both the giver and the recipient of the recognition receives a reward.

#### 17. Offer virtual rewards

Giving eGifts or other virtual rewards allows you to meet your employees where they are: online. With Blackhawk Network, most major retail and entertainment brands are available and digital rewards can be delivered almost instantly.



## Promote a Growth and Learning Culture

#### 18. Give immediate joy with on-the-spot rewards

Empower team managers to recognize high performers, milestones and other accomplishments instantly through BHN Rewards. Make it even more meaningful by sending rewards publicly, live in a team meeting or in a team channel so colleagues can see it and celebrate it, too.

#### 19. Break down silos

Reinforce collaboration across teams or your company as a whole. For example, try recognizing employees who present at a cross-functional team meeting or who seek out collaborative opportunities across the business.

#### 20. Invest in upskilling and reskilling

Learning is empowering, but sometimes we need extra motivation to carve out time. Reward employees who take a course and give extra incentives for those that apply their learnings. Not only does this give work more meaning, but it also gives employees more skills for upward mobility.



## Reporting: you can't manage what you can't measure

#### Sample employee reward survey questions<sup>8</sup>:

#### 21. Gather employee feedback

Administer surveys on your employees' preferred rewards at least once a year. This can be used to evaluate current rewards or start a new program.

#### 22. Utilize the employee net promoter score

Accurately measuring your employees' engagement levels comes down to asking the right questions. Instead of focusing on how employees feel about the organization, ask "How likely are you to recommend a friend/colleague or employment here?"

#### 23. Track rewards redemption

To gauge whether your rewards are successful, track whether your employees are using them. For example, in your survey, you can ask, "Did you redeem your entire reward?" Depending upon the results, iterate your rewards strategy as needed.

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