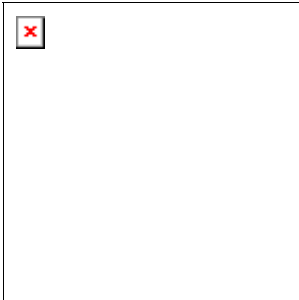


[Perspectives Dallas Chapter of ASTD Membership Newsletter - July 2006](#) <<  
[Table of Contents](#) <<

---



## What/Why of Rewards and Recognition

By Shirley Lee, VP Communications

Why offer a rewards and recognition program? Rewards and recognition motivate people and make them feel important.

Motivated people have an increased potential for success in projects, careers, and business. To better motivate people, make sure the reward and recognition program selected is one where everyone in the organization has an opportunity to be acknowledged and the program is recognized as valuable to the organization.

Everyone believes that there are two types of rewards and recognition. However, not everyone sites the same two items when talking about these types. When talking about rewards, most people think about monetary versus non-monetary. Monetary is where the individual or group receives dollar incentives for their work performance. Non-monetary, which includes what some managers call "soft" recognition. There is much debate in the business world as to which of these produces better results.

On the other hand, when talking about recognition, people tend to look at the internal and external benefits. Internal are the feelings of pride and satisfaction a person may get from a job well-done and their personal motivators for continuing to do well. External are those items that can be seen or touched and often are used to reinforce a particular behavior and then provide some level of future motivation depending upon how often the individual sees or uses their reward.

Again, there isn't complete agreement among professional as to which of these is most important to the individual. Therefore, I won't explain anymore about the two types of rewards and recognition. Instead I will briefly catalog what I believe are the minimum requirements of a good rewards and recognition program.

## Recognition should be:

- **Precise** by giving individual or group detailed information on relevancy of what was done, as well as acknowledging when, where, why, and how it was done.
- **Principled** by showing sincere and honest acknowledgement of an individual or group that supports organizational beliefs and values through their commitment and accomplishments.
- **Prompt** by giving well-timed acknowledgement as soon as possible after the event has occurred or action has been completed.

## Rewards should be:

- **Personal** by determining whether they prefer private or public recognition and communicating with the individuals involved to see what they prefer, whether it is an award, a gift, time-off, or money.
- **Proportional** by balancing the size or type of reward with the individual or group contribution and accomplishments as it relates to organizational goals.
- **Pleasurable** means making things fun and entertaining through the event in which rewards are given or by the selection of a creative reward.

If the purpose of rewards and recognition is to motivate people and make them feel important, then it must be continual and should be seen in some form every day. However, programs that appear to be insincere or overdone can lose their impact so watch out for this. The most important thing to remember in a rewards and recognition program is to give people credit for their accomplishments as they occur. Again, make sure the program allows everyone in the organization an opportunity to be recognized and that they and the organization value it.

---

**About the Author:** Shirley Lee is a consultant/facilitator who helps organizations increase employee, communications, and system capacity to produce results. She has been a member of Dallas ASTD for five years and currently serves as VP of Communications. Shirley designs and facilitates a variety of

team building, problem solving, and productivity improvement events. Her programs include managing time, facilitating meetings, project management simplified, workspace or group organization, the problem solving process, and team-building.

More information on her is available on her website:

[http://www.geocities.com/slee\\_rightfit/](http://www.geocities.com/slee_rightfit/) or by calling her at 214-457-5736.