

## How to Praise Employees

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One of the top reasons why employees stay with their current employer (you) is a pleasant work environment. A key component of that environment is recognition of a job well done. Surprisingly, recognition does not have to be expensive for you (i.e., a raise or benefits increase).

Recognition for a job well done can be achieved in many ways:

**Title:** Giving an employee a title can boost self-esteem and morale. If an employee has several job tasks that cover different areas, combine the title to include all of them. For example, for the receptionist who also does the insurance billing, "company controller," "vice president of operations" or "office manager" may be acceptable titles.

**Business cards:** Give the employee a personal set of business cards with the employee's name and title. For less than \$20, the employee can proudly distribute them and promote your practice at the same time. (Hint: This is a good marketing tool.) If you use the business card programs included in most computer software packages, your expense will only be the cost of paper.

**Note or card:** A note or small card stating that you noticed a job well done makes a difference. Do this as soon as the project or task is completed. Leave the note or card in a place the employee can find it.

**Small gift:** While talking with the employee, listen to his or her needs and provide a small gift to say thank you. For example, if you notice the employee's car is dirty, give an auto-detailing certificate. If the employee enjoys massages, hire a therapist to come into the office for an hour and give 10-minute neck and shoulder massages.

**Verbal:** Little courtesies like "Thank you," "Good morning" and "Have a good weekend" go a long way. I make it a point to thank you my employees at the end of each day for a job well done. Without them, I would not have accomplished all that I have.

**Lunches:** When special occasions arise, such as birthdays, anniversaries, etc., take the employees out to lunch or order in. Enjoy a potluck lunch with the employees. It's a good way to foster camaraderie, and it shows you're part of the team.

**Publicly recognize accomplishments:** When an employee does a good job, praise the person when others are present. It boosts his or her self-esteem and allows everyone else to acknowledge it, too.

When giving recognition of a job well done, the praise should come in a timely manner so that the "punch" of the praise achieves maximum effect. Waiting weeks or months after an important project has been completed is less dramatic than when it has just been completed.

