

A background image showing a group of diverse office workers in a modern, bright workspace. They are gathered around a table, looking at documents and a laptop, appearing engaged and collaborative. The scene is lit with natural light from large windows in the background.

10 Ways to Reward Your Employees for Free

Rewarding employees is a crucial and effective way to ensure that your employees stay motivated and maintain a high morale. **Studies** show that employee morale, retention and overall satisfaction are key performance indicators for business success and the lack of these qualities directly affects the success of every business. This process is often very costly, however, especially for those running a small business. There are many ways to build employee morale without having to resort to spending lots of money, on the other hand, here are ten:

1. CEO for the day

Choose an employee to be the 'CEO for the day' and give them reasonable power to make a few fun and effective decisions and suggestions that all employees will enjoy and which management can learn from. This exercise allows for trust building, which is proven to boost morale.

2. Acts-of-service-auction

Run an auction during one of your company functions, such as an appreciation dinner, offering your employees the chance to win small and personal acts of services from management as prizes. For example, the winner can win the chance to have a cake baked for them by their manager, or a cooked meal, a car wash and so forth. This is sure to help boost morale, strengthen unity and a good laugh across the office.

3. Showing appreciation

Hand-writing a 'thank you' note for an employee and leaving it on their desk to be read first thing in the morning, is both heart-warming and motivating. You could also organise 'thank you' meetings for employees who have gone out of their way to benefit the business. Small gestures such as these are effective because public and personal appreciation helps employees to feel valued, acknowledged and important.

4. 'VIP' meet and greet

Another option is to introduce an employee to the 'VIP' members of the company or 'VIP' clients that they normally wouldn't have contact with. This will effectively encourage the employee as it shows them that they are important. This also helps to break down bureaucracy.

5. Allow your employees to take initiative

It is also a good idea to encourage employees to choose some of their own targets and goals for each quarter and/or year. Ask each employee what they want to achieve, what training they want to embark on and what projects they would like to lead or take part in. It is then imperative that the employees are given the opportunities they have chosen. This not only helps boost morale but it also links an employee's personal goals with the company's goals, which increases the chance of company goals being attained.

6. A box of appreciation

Choose an employee who deserves recognition for their hard-work and ask your other employees to write something positive that they admire about said employee, collect the notes and place them inside a box ready to gift it to the employee. This works to motivate employees and spread positivity across the office.

7. Feed their passions

Find out what your employees are passionate about and gift them something related to their passion. For example, if one of your employees is passionate about health and fitness, offer to pay their gym membership for a month. It may not be completely free but I am sure a £15 loss will not make a massive dent in the budget!

8. Anniversaries

Anniversaries are not only exclusive to married couples and birthdays. Business owners should also start celebrating the anniversaries of their staff joining the company. This not only shows appreciation but it also makes the employees feel valued and needed, which may help with retention.

9. Relaxation room

Create a relaxation room for employees to visit on their breaks to take a nap, talk on their phones, watch TV and so forth.

10. Playtime

They do say that we are all big kids at heart – so why not feed your employee's inner-child by assigning 'play time' in the office? This could be a 10min break allowing employees to play board-games, shoot hoops or play computer games to help them relax and relieve stress.

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