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12 Ways to Show Employee Appreciation Without Breaking the Bank

No one needs to tell you why it's important for employees to be happy at work. When morale stinks, engagement suffers — which can do a real number on productivity, work quality, business growth, and retention.

While there isn't a one-size-fits-all way for engaging staff, these 12 strategies are a good place to start:

- 1. Focus on fun.** Work and fun shouldn't be mutually exclusive. There are a number of ways to incorporate fun into the workday without disrupting work itself. Celebrate "national" days, such as Hat Day, Donut Day or Coffee Day, or host contests, scavenger hunts, or after-work events.
- 2. Flex time.** Of all the benefits available, workplace flexibility is at the top of the list for most workers. Depending on the hours of operation, offer employees some flex time where they set their own hours. This doesn't reduce the total number of hours worked, but allows some flexibility to accommodate for personal matters.
- 3. Stocked kitchen.** You likely already provide free coffee. Why not go one step further and stock the kitchen with soft drinks, fresh fruit, and/or other healthy snacks.
- 4. Project days.** Set aside a few days a year to allow employees to work on new projects or develop new ways of tackling how they work each day. Then, schedule a meeting to share the results with other team members.
- 5. Extended lunches.** A little flexibility at lunch is always appreciated. Extending the break by even 15 minutes could give employees enough time to head to the gym, eat at a restaurant off the beaten path, or just recharge for the second half of the day.
- 6. Time off.** Everyone enjoys a little extra time off, even more so when it doesn't count against PTO. If you can swing it, give your team a half-day from time to time, and consider scheduling it on Fridays or before holidays for extra long weekends.

7. Car service. Finding time in the day to get an oil change or wash the car isn't always easy. Consider hiring a service to come out to the office and check that task off your staff's ever-expanding to-do list — and while they're working, no less.

8. Holiday hours. Most people take it a little easy during the holidays. Institute holiday hours to give staff the break they need. Or, kick it up a notch, and consider trying summer hours.

9. Employee feedback. Most companies conduct annual employee satisfaction surveys, but surveys usually happen just once a year and are often too broad to get a pulse on engagement. Give staff a greater voice by seeking continual feedback. Ask questions about morale, career progression, and growth opportunities — and then act on your findings.

10. Work/life balance. This may not sound like much of a perk, but encouraging staff to leave the office at a decent hour shows respect for their personal lives.

11. Time for development. Help employees reach their professional goals by encouraging them to attend workshops, classes, and conferences during the workday. It will show that you care about their careers.

12. Thanks. Sometimes the little things mean the most. Share recognition for employee efforts on a regular basis by simply saying "thanks." To make it more meaningful, be specific and authentic.

What works for one company or team won't always work for another, so play around with employee perks and engagement activities to determine which ones resonate with your staff. If you'd like to brainstorm additional ways to improve your workplace culture and employee engagement, contact us!

About Staffmark Group

Staffmark Group is a family of staffing brands with a mission to align people and companies to create opportunity. We provide the expertise, connections, and technology to help people and companies succeed. If you need a job, we want to provide it. And if you need staff, we want to deliver the best candidates.

A proud member of RGF Staffing, Staffmark Group is organized into three operating units: Commercial Staffing Services (Administrative & Light Industrial), Technical & Professional Services, and Strategic Workforce Solutions. Our national network of 450+ branch and on-site service locations connects 250,000 talent annually.

Opportunity is everywhere, but it's not always easy to uncover. We partner with you to help you find it.

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