



Build a Culture of Celebration!

How a Culture of Celebration Helps You

Celebrating wellbeing achievements within your organization helps demonstrate that leadership values the wellbeing of your employees and supports the wellness initiatives within your organization. Leadership support sends a message to senior management that they should support wellness efforts within the organization. This cultural shift helps employees to get excited about the organizational culture. When employers highlight employee and organizational wellbeing successes, they demonstrate that they care about walking the talk that their employees are their most important part of the organization.

Your team has already demonstrated the company value on wellness by taking the time to go through the award process itself – you are doing great work, and your organization supports you in the time it can take to demonstrate that! Wellness awards are a visible way for others to promote your organization and company culture. When your employees hear these testimonies from others besides their organization, they increasingly believe in the organization's strong culture of wellness.

However, a culture of celebration does not have to center solely around awards! Work to identify how your organizational wellbeing initiatives are helping employees in ways outside of your data tracking – did they make a new friend at the fitness center? Did they form a virtual emotional support networking group? Set a standard of sharing these stories so you can hear the variety of ways your employees benefit from your wellbeing initiatives – and then celebrate those stories year-round!

What gets recognized gets repeated.

Ways to Build a Culture of Recognition

Recognize employees for supporting or embodying company values.

Promote behaviors that reflect your organizational values. Develop a pattern of recognizing the behaviors you want to encourage in the organization. It could be something specific like the value of teamwork, or something more diverse like leading by example. Make sure you look out for those who embody organizational values in less obvious - but still relevant - ways.

Make recognition fun.

Not everyone enjoys having to stand in front of a crowd to be recognized. Come up with a variety of methods to celebrate an employee, and let them choose! Maybe it's public recognition on your intranet or website - maybe it's a moving trophy. Think outside the box so you can identify a variety of fun possibilities to keep things interesting and suited to your diverse workforce. And you don't have to figure it out alone - survey your employees or build a Praise Committee with rotating membership!

Foster peer-to-peer recognition.

Encourage your employees to appreciate each other! Think of how it works best in your organizational structure. Is it a message board where people can post kudos about others? Can you print out cards to give to each employee so they can fill out the card for quiet, one-on-one recognition? Not only does recognition from a peer feel good, but demonstrating gratefulness and appreciation for others is a proven boost to personal happiness!

Keep recognition personal.

Recognition isn't one-size-fits-all! It needs to be meaningful (not empty or exaggerated) to "count." Be sure to cite specific examples and qualities that make employees deserving of recognition. If providing personal one-on-one recognition, try tying your appreciation to what you know the employee enjoys for an extra touch of thoughtfulness.

Being recognition-rich doesn't have to be costly.

Yes, you can plan dinners and prizes and buy physical awards. However, recognition-rich cultures can rely on a blend of leadership recognition and small acts like peer recognition and harnessing words of appreciation.

Make your recognition timely and frequent!



Celebrating the Ignite Awards Virtually

Meet early!

End the workday a little early and invite employees to hop on a virtual call an hour before the broadcast to have some private team celebration and bonding. Unable to make that Tuesday work? Save the link to watch later when it works best for the team. If you have a large group, consider putting everyone in breakout groups to watch the broadcast so that they can react and discuss live with each other!

Play games or trivia.

Jackbox Games has games as well as tips for playing over Zoom. Go Minute-to-Win-It style: look up what could be done at home, and send out a notice in advance to have specific supplies on-hand - don't forget to set a moderator to keep an eye on the gallery Zoom screen! Or, personalize something special for your team! Create something in the moment like "Zoom Background Bingo" to see how many listed items people can find in others' backgrounds.

Talk to each other.

Not every employee will enjoy games, and sometimes it can be more beneficial to just have the time to chat with each other about non-work things. Think about using Zoom breakout rooms for small-group **ice breakers** or draft your own questions to foster valuable conversation and connection. You can keep the breakout groups the same or switch them up throughout the evening.

Host a photo contest.

Download our **photo prop pack** (or make your own) to distribute in advance, either digitally or printed. Create a company hashtag and challenge employees to come up with the most creative photo during the celebration. Or, spread out the fun and issue a challenge in advance by providing a photo scavenger hunt or bingo card in advance - photo with an at-home "coworker," favorite break location, etc. Award prizes for completed challenges or funniest photos - host a live vote for best photo.

Engage leadership.

Make sure your leaders are on the call! Incorporate their involvement in fun ways by spotlighting them for the minute-to-win-it games, especially if you have a large group. Use your senior leadership to set the tone for the evening or take the time to award kudos, large and small.



Celebrating the Ignite Awards Safely Distanced

Meet early!

End the workday a little early and invite employees to meet in a socially-distanced safe space before the broadcast to have some private team celebration and bonding. Unable to make that Tuesday work? Save the link to watch later when it works best for the team. If you have a large group, consider smaller watch parties so that they can react and discuss live with each other! Provide individually-packaged food and pass out party favors.

Play games or trivia.

Go Minute-to-Win-It style! Or, personalize something special for your team!

Talk to each other.

Not every employee will enjoy games, and sometimes it can be more beneficial to just have the time to chat with each other about non-work things. Think about small-group **ice breakers** or draft your own questions to foster valuable conversation and connection. You can keep the small groups the same or switch them up throughout the evening.

Host a photo contest.

Distribute copies of our **photo prop pack** (or make your own) to have on-hand (be sure to have sanitizer available for people to clean up before touching). Create a company hashtag and challenge employees to come up with the most creative photo during the celebration. Or, spread out the fun and issue a challenge in advance by providing a photo scavenger hunt or bingo card in advance - photo with an at-home “coworker,” favorite break location, etc. Award prizes for completed challenges or funniest photos - host a live vote for best photo.

Engage leadership.

Make sure your leaders participate! Incorporate their involvement in fun ways by spotlighting them for the minute-to-win-it games, especially if you have a large group. Use your senior leadership to set the tone for the evening or take the time to award kudos, large and small.



Using Ignite Awards to Launch a Culture of Recognition

Share the videos and photos.

Don't let your celebration begin and end with the event - distribute and post the broadcast and/or any videos featuring your organization or employees. If you have a Light of Wellness winner, share the video or feature follow-ups with the winner. Feature them and recognize similar achievements and inspirational employees among your organization. Don't forget to share the fun videos from your celebration! Spread them out or run a fun raffle to build team spirit.

Engage leadership.

Ask senior management to get involved in brainstorming ways they can help support recognition company-wide, and how they could make it fun.

Talk about the value.

Explain why your organization values wellness awards, and ask employees what excites them about the company's and/or their coworkers' achievement. Use the awards as a conversation-started to get feedback from employees about the importance of organizational wellness and their understanding of your initiatives.

Talk about all the dimensions of wellness.

Does your award demonstrate multiple dimensions of wellbeing? Whether physical, mental, environmental, spiritual, occupational, intellectual, financial, and social, all dimensions are important and intertwine! Use the awards to spark discussion about the interrelation of the types of wellbeing and their importance to whole-person wellbeing. Use this conversation as a starting point to recognizing small daily wellbeing achievements.

