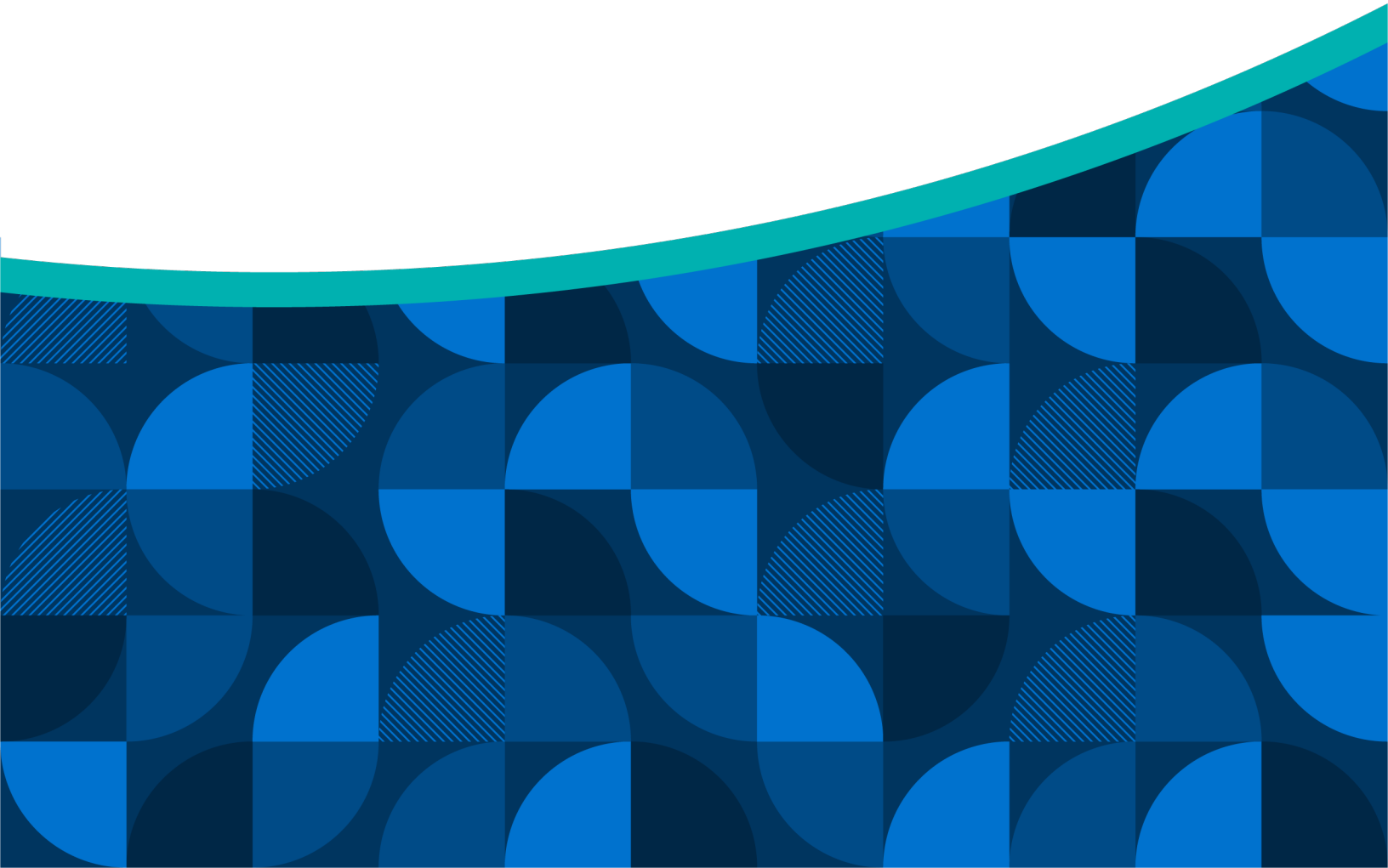




MORALE-BOOSTER COMPENDIUM

Recognition and Value

This resource includes strategies to address morale concerns in the Recognition and Value threat area. Use these templates and resources as a starting place to co-design solutions with teachers to address their morale challenges.



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Effective Recognition Is Timely and Specific

Research shows that for recognition to be effective, it must be clearly linked to specific accomplishments or actions delivered by someone of professional importance to the recipient in a timely manner. According to Gallup's employee engagement survey, Q¹², employees who are not adequately recognized at work are three times more likely to say they'll quit in the next year.¹

Two Key Factors



Timely

Individuals need recognition consistently and as close to the recognized behavior as possible. By elevating recognition in a timely manner, the action itself and its positive impact are still fresh in the mind. Due to human neurochemistry, timely praise helps tie the positive feelings associated with the chemical response to receiving effective recognition to the event and the specific behavior you want to reinforce.

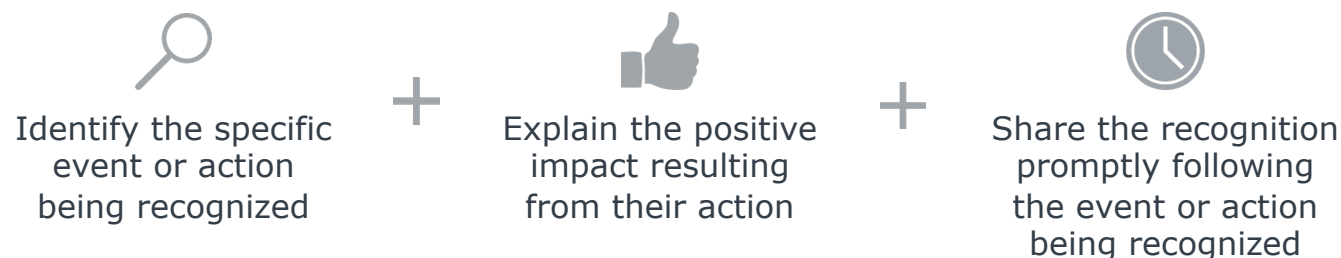


Specific

Too often, leaders rely on general appreciation efforts (e.g., free lunches, thank you notes to everyone at once) but what individuals value more is recognition of their specific behaviors. By elevating and recognizing specific behaviors that you (as a leader) would like to continue, you both encourage others to pursue similar behaviors to receive recognition and more effectively make teachers feel recognized and valued for their work.

Effective Recognition Formula

Use the below **three key variables** as a formula for leaders to use when recognizing teachers in any scenario:



1) Gallup, "In Praise of Praising Your Employees," 2006.

Sources: Workhuman, [Employee Recognition: Basics, Best Practices, and ROI](#), 2021; Gallup, "In Praise of Praising Your Employees," 2006; Panorama Education, [Behavior-Specific Praise in the Classroom](#), 2022; EAB interviews and analysis.

Recognition and Value Strategies

Strategy	Capsule Description	Problem Addressed	Profiled Institution
<p>21 Days of Thank You</p> <p>Who? District and/or Building Leaders</p>	<p>District and/or building leaders take on a 21-day campaign in which they recognize teachers in a different way every day. This strategy can be deployed multiple times throughout the year by various leaders (e.g., district leaders, building leaders, individual departments).</p>	<p>Teachers are not receiving recognition consistently from those they are seeking recognition (e.g., building leaders, district leaders, department leaders). 21 Days of Thank You distributes ample praise-giving across various levels of leadership, increasing the opportunities for teachers to be recognized by leadership.</p>	<p>Red-Carpet Learning Systems, Asheville, NC (Professional training and coaching firm)</p> <p>See pages 12-14 for '21 days of thank you' ideas</p> <p>Complexity</p> <p>Medium</p>
<p>Recognition Kits</p> <p>Who? Building Leaders</p>	<p>Provide building leaders with a physical supply kit including teacher addresses, note cards, envelopes, stamps, and note templates to reduce the obstacles of personalized recognition. Encourage building leaders to send at least one handwritten recognition note each teacher over the course of the school year.</p>	<p>Teachers often feel recognition is disingenuous and not specific to the behavior or event warranting recognition. Recognition kits outfit leaders with the tools to send timely, handwritten letters recognizing specific achievements that feel personalized.</p>	<p>Small Hospital Midwest</p> <p>See pages 8-9 for templates principals can use to guide their handwritten notes.</p> <p>Complexity</p> <p>Low</p>

Recognition and Value Strategies

Strategy	Capsule Description	Problem Addressed	Profiled Institution
<p>Recognition Tree Bulletin Board</p> <p>Who? Building Leaders</p>	<p>Building leaders can create a bulletin board with a tree (in the faculty room or central school office) and collect examples of exemplary teaching that is routinely announced at faculty meetings. Write each recognition note collected on a paper leaf, read recognition aloud at meetings, and have the individual being praised stick their leaf to the tree. Watch the tree 'grow' over the course of the year as teachers are recognized. Award & Sign saw a notable increase in employee engagement and celebration of each others' accomplishments after implementing the Recognition Tree.</p>	<p>Primary Problem: Recognition does not occur in a timely manner to reinforce positive behaviors and promote feelings of value. Adding leaves to the Recognition Tree over the year promotes a culture of continual recognition.</p> <p>Secondary Problem: Teachers are not aware of regular recognition coming from leadership because it is not publicized. By creating a public display of recognition, teachers clearly see how praise is distributed and for what behaviors.</p>	<p>Award & Sign, Greenwood Village, CO (Trophy and graphics store)</p> <p>Complexity</p> <p>Low</p>

Recognition and Value Strategies

Strategy	Capsule Description	Problem Addressed	Profiled Institution
<p>Social Media Recognition Campaign</p> <p>Who? District and/or Building Leaders</p>	<p>Create a social media campaign centered around shouting out your teachers highlighting specific instances of exemplary teaching. Tag organizations your teachers are involved in outside of the classroom and their alma maters. Oftentimes, colleges or organizations will share your post celebrating their exemplary alumni. Richmond Public School's Teacher of the Year posts for individual teachers were often shared by their alma maters and other community involvements increasing reach.</p>	<p>Primary Problem: Teachers are not aware of regular recognition coming from leadership because it is not publicized. Recognition on social media increases public reach.</p> <p>Secondary Problem: Recognition efforts too often feel impersonal and not specific to teachers' accomplishments. By celebrating teachers' life outside of the classroom, recognition becomes more personal and specific.</p>	<p>Richmond Public Schools, Richmond, VA</p> <p>Complexity</p> <p>Medium</p>
<p>Weekly School/District-wide Shoutout Email</p> <p>Who? District and/or Building Leaders</p>	<p>Send out a weekly email to the entire school calling out specific examples of excellent teaching or collaboration and the associated impact created for students or other teachers. Encourage teachers to submit examples of their colleagues, or of their own, excellent work to be shouted-out in the weekly email to increase buy-in and build anticipation for the consistent recognition.</p>	<p>Primary Problem: Teachers are not receiving recognition on a regular basis to promote feelings of value. Establishing a weekly shoutout email promotes consistent and timely recognition.</p> <p>Secondary Problem: Teachers are unaware of regular recognition coming from leadership because it is not publicized. By sending a weekly shoutout email to the whole school or district, teachers are more likely to see recognition and better understand the recognized behaviors.</p>	<p>Soulsville Charter School, Memphis, TN</p> <p>See pages 10-11 for an example of an effective shoutout email and advice on collecting feedback.</p> <p>Complexity</p> <p>Low</p>

Sources: [Advisory Board](#), Accessed 2022; Richmond Times Dispatch, [Meet Richmond's Teacher of the Year, 2022](#); [Richmond Public Schools Facebook](#), May 5, 2022; TNTIP, [4 Strategies to Retain the Best Teachers](#), 2022; EAB interviews and analysis.

Recognition Kits: Note Templates

Small hospital, IL

A small hospital in Illinois introduced 'recognition kits' in 2012: a box of supplies used to write personalized, handwritten recognition letters for their nurses.

District leaders can assemble and distribute 'similar kits to building leaders throughout the district. Kits should include note cards and envelopes for building leaders to send handwritten recognition notes to teachers' homes, stamps, and up-to-date home addresses of teachers. Restock kit materials monthly and update teacher addresses each semester.

EAB has developed templates for effective recognition notes for a few common scenarios. Include these templates in the kits distributed to building leaders to serve as examples for how to write notes to include specificity in their recognition.

Outstanding Mentorship

Dear _____,

I wanted to thank you for going above and beyond to mentor and support your colleagues! It has not gone unnoticed that you have been making an intentional effort to be inclusive and support them in their transition into our community. [INSERT SPECIFIC ANECDOTE ABOUT WHEN YOU NOTICED THEM PROVIDING MENTORSHIP AND HOW THAT WILL IMPACT THEIR COLLEAGUE]. Mentorship and fostering communities of support is integral to developing a strong and effective learning community for staff and students alike. Keep up the great work, we really appreciate it!

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

Recognition Kits: Note Templates

Exemplary Instruction

Dear _____,

I wanted to recognize your incredible instruction so far this year. I had the pleasure of observing your lesson on [INSERT SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL CONTENT] and wanted to take the time to thank you for your commitment to crafting engaging and effective learning content for our students. It was great to see the students engaging with your lesson and I could tell it resonated with them. [INSERT ANECDOTE OF STUDENT INTERACTING WITH CONTENT]. Your work truly exemplifies what it means to be a teacher at [INSERT SCHOOL NAME]. We are proud to have you representing us in the classroom!

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

Recent Certification

Dear _____,

I wanted to congratulate you on your recent achievement of [INSERT CERTIFICATION]. I know you've worked very hard over the past few months to achieve this goal and wanted you to know that your effort and time spent studying outside of the classroom doesn't go unnoticed. This certification will be useful in [INSERT A SPECIFIC USE CASE FOR TEACHER CERTIFICATION]. Your efforts truly exemplify your commitment to excellence. We are proud to have you representing us in the classroom!

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

Weekly Shoutout Emails

Soulsville Charter School, Memphis, TN

Soulsville Charter School is a K-12 school that serves ~600 students. The High School Dean of Curriculum and Instruction sends a weekly school-wide email that focuses on highlighting exemplary practices of their educators. These teacher shoutouts are highly specific, highlight student impact, and often include pictures and/or links to YouTube videos of teachers in action.

There are two key elements that make up effective shoutout emails:

1 Robust Content Collection

- Collect feedback from faculty and staff regularly through a single, consistent channel that is easily accessed
- Send a weekly shoutout collection request email on the same day every week asking faculty and staff to submit shoutouts for their colleagues
- Include a Google Form on your website or in any weekly staff correspondence

2 Specific, Impact-Oriented Shoutouts

- Ensure shoutouts are highly specific and center student impact
- Explicitly ask for any video or picture content showcasing teachers
- Encourage teachers to preemptively inform you of any lessons they are especially excited about so you can visit and collect visual content yourself when possible

Weekly Shoutout Emails Template

Soulsville Charter School, Memphis, TN

Good morning team,

Thank you for submitting shoutouts and content to highlight your fellow educators! As always, we appreciate your assistance in highlighting each other for your truly exemplary work.

Video Clips

- **Responding to Misunderstandings from the Previous Day:** Watch this clip from **Mr. Richards' class!** He takes the first few minutes of class to correct a misunderstanding that he was seeing on the previous day's exit ticket on the coordinate plane. This is a great way to strategically use daily data to inform instruction.
- **Clarity of Instructions:** In this clip from World History, **Ms. Johnson** gives students clear instructions for independent practice. The questions she wants students to answer are posted on a PowerPoint, in addition to being on their handout. She reads the questions aloud, specifies that she wants students to answer in complete sentences (Format Matters!), calls on a student to repeat the directions, and then gives them a time limit and voice code to follow.

Celebrating Growth and Accomplishments

- Soulsville snaps to **Mr. Jones and his Physics class** for achieving 87% mastery on systems and circles!
- Three power claps to **Mr. Cowan and his Algebra II scholars** for surpassing our school's goal for proficient/advanced students by 16.5% on the last interim!
- Shout out to **Mrs. Eppic** for celebrating student mastery through posting students' names to the prestigious Admiral's Club and Medallion Members wall. See the picture on the top right! Based on last week's quiz, two new students were inducted into the Medallion Members Club on Monday, and three were selected for the Admiral's Club.

Have a great Friday!

John Smith
Dean of High School Curriculum and Instruction

21 Days of Thank You



Day 1

Send a personal email thanking a teacher who makes a difference in your life. Be sincere and very specific about what they do that you appreciate.



Day 2

Thank a teacher face-to-face, telling them specifically how they make a difference in your school or district.



Day 3

Spend time walking around the school with the goal of observing positive behaviors. When you see something going well, speak up. Give them on-the-spot, specific praise. Do this multiple times throughout the day if possible.



Day 4

Put positive, encouraging Post-it notes up around the building. Leave specific affirmations in teachers' classrooms and general affirmations through the halls and common spaces.



Day 5

Start a chain of kindness. On a paper link, write specific words of praise about a teacher. Share it with them and ask them to add another paper note linked to the chain. Once you have built out a sizable chain, post it on a public bulletin board and encourage others to add to it.



Day 6

Encourage an employee who needs a little lift. Let them know how they make a difference and what they do well. Ask them how you can provide them guidance or additional support.



Day 7

Deliver a teacher that has been going above and beyond a balloon bouquet with a handwritten note that specifically mentions their achievements. Give it to them in their classroom or in a team meeting, depending on their praise preferences.



Day 8

Write a handwritten thank-you note for a teacher and encourage them to continue the chain. Initiate a thank you note marathon within your school!

21 Days of Thank You (Continued)



Day 9

Choose a grade level or department. Draw a line down the middle of a piece of paper. Write the names of all the teachers in that department on one side. On the other side, write something positive about each person. As you have the chance, privately share the praise with each person on the list.



Day 11

Set up a one-on-one lunch with a teacher and work on building a relationship. If they are a new teacher, take time to introduce them to three other teachers or admin.



Day 13

Gather your team for an impromptu stand-up meeting. Ask each person to spend 60 seconds sharing good news with the team—personal or professional. Celebrate together and then go back to work. If you already have meetings scheduled for this day, start or end your meeting with this exercise.



Day 15

Collect thank you notes from faculty and staff for the custodial staff. Work together to provide specific praise and let them know how much you all appreciate them.



Day 10

Bring in treats as a surprise for your staff! Bagels, pizza, cupcakes, or candy. If you'd prefer not to use food, purchase \$1 lottery tickets for all your staff. The goal is to provide something small, fun, and unique to randomly appreciate your teachers.



Day 12

Find a teacher that does a lot of behind-the-scenes work (out-of-classroom jobs, mentorship, etc.) without a lot of recognition. Let them know that you notice their work, and specifically point out how the little things they do make a big difference.



Day 14

Have face-to-face meetings today with at least two teachers. Talk to them about their long-term goals. See where you might be able to encourage and mentor them in reaching their goals.



Day 16

Decide to give someone who has gone above and beyond a standing ovation. Gather a few other teachers or staff and meet at a predetermined place and arrange for the teacher to come by. After you give them their standing ovation, be sure to explain what exactly they have done to warrant your recognition.

21 Days of Thank You (Continued)



Day 17

Surprise a teacher with one of the following: Let them leave contract hours a half hour early with pay. Provide a classroom cover for them so they can take a long lunch. Cover one of their out-of-classroom duties.



Day 19

Write and deliver five handwritten notes today. Be very specific elevating how this teacher adds value to your school.



Day 21

Write a handwritten letter to one of your teachers celebrating them and their recent accomplishments. Don't give it to them at school. Instead, mail it to their home.



Day 18

Start a traveling trophy! Find something fun to use as a trophy. Give the trophy to a teacher and tell them that in an hour they are to pass the trophy on to someone else. Keep it going all day and see who ends up with it.



Day 20

Have lunch with one or two teachers and ask them to share ideas on how to improve a specific aspect of school culture. Ask them to be specific. Thank them for their input and try to implement at least one of their ideas over the next week. Be sure to give them the credit.



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