

Best Practices for Staff Recognition



Prepared by Administration
and Business Affairs

START Committee
Sacramento State
July 2017

Executive Summary

The START Committee (Strategic Thinking, Achieving Results Together) recently re-convened in 2017 as an opportunity for staff leaders to contribute to ABA goals and objectives regarding staff engagement. One of the first charges of the committee was to revise the Staff Recognition Program and develop a Best Practices resource for managers.

This report serves as means to communicate with managers the ways in which staff members feel are viable and desirable ways to be recognized. You will find within recognition strategies at the division, department, team, and individual levels, as well as detailed implementation suggestions for every group size. The goal of this document is to provide managers a resource that is easy to access and implement that best represents the desires of staff members in ABA.



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Introduction

The ABA START Committee would like to acknowledge the importance of staff recognition. Based on the Inaugural ABA Staff Appreciation Survey results, the Organizational Development Office (formally SPQI) and START Committee have set a series of action items and goals that they hope to implement over the next year. The goal is to see an overall improvement of 2% in the workplace engagement category.

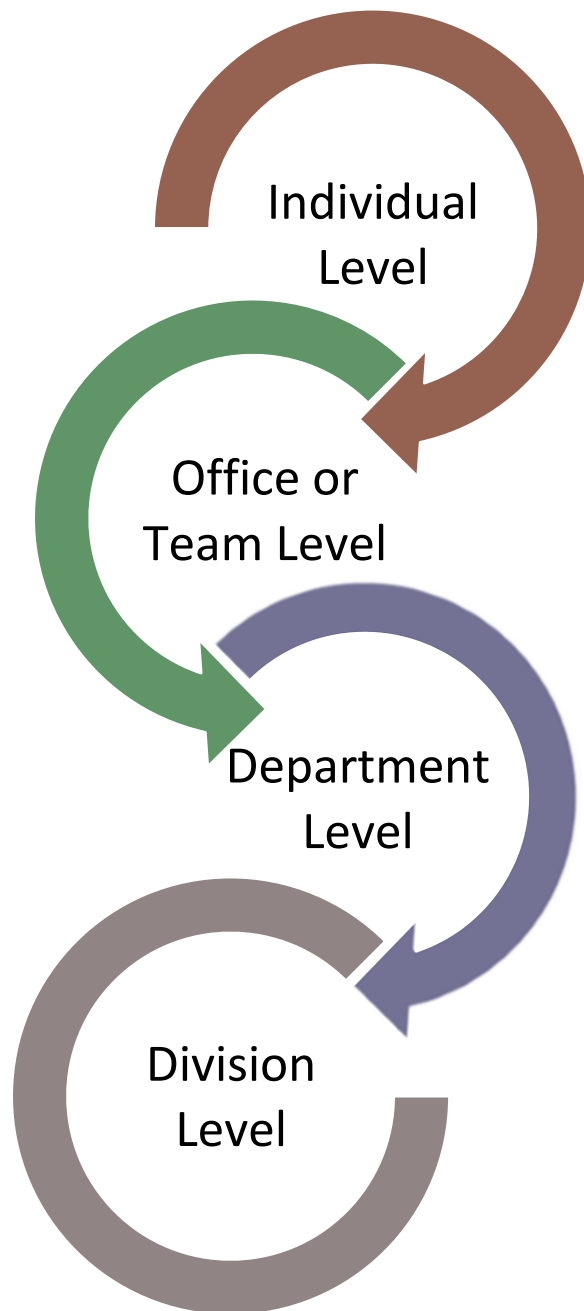
Additionally, one of the action items for the committee was to create a resource for managers that outlines methods, examples, and strategies to implement instant, scheduled, and spontaneous recognition of their staff. The perspective of this Best Practices document is that of a valued staff member. The goal of this document is to be an easy to use guide for managers to implement some recognition strategies in their office in the near future, without reinventing the wheel. Rather, the steps, procedures and suggestions that follow should provide enough guidance to the manager so that implementation is easy.



The START Committee membership includes representation from each department in ABA and a wide-range of experience and expertise. The 2017 members of the START Committee are responsible for the creation and dissemination of this document.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Department - Office</i>
<i>Adejobi, Ademidun</i>	Budget Planning and Administration
<i>Bush, Jessica</i>	Administrative Services - Space Management
<i>Chohan, Elisa</i>	Administrative Services – Organizational Development
<i>Lor, Pa Zao</i>	Financial Services – Bursar’s Office
<i>Nahhas, Don</i>	Risk Management Services
<i>Palu, Frances</i>	Administrative Operations
<i>Rogers, Danielle</i>	Financial Services – Procurement and Contract Services
<i>Saeteurn, Karen</i>	Transportation, Parking and Support Services
<i>Skrinie, Paul</i>	Police Department
<i>Stiffler, Andrew</i>	Administrative Services – Organizational Development
<i>VanAdrigem, Sarah</i>	Facilities Management - Administration
<i>Watkins, Grant</i>	Facilities Management - Planning, Design & Construction

Recognition Structure



- Managers and supervisors are responsible for identifying how staff members desire to be recognized
- Sincere, consistent, fair recognition
- Spontaneous, informal
- Daily, weekly

- More organized and structured
- Monthly
- Formal

- *May be the same group as the office or team level*
- Less frequent number of events or actions
- General recognition rather than specific
- Quarterly

- Organized and facilitated by Organizational Development and/or VP Admin Ops
- Formal
- Semi-annual or annual

Quick Reference Guide

The following recognition suggestions will be explained in greater detail throughout this handbook, but below is a quick reference of the ideas and suggested implementation level.

Individual Level	Team or Office Level	Department Level	Division Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thank you card• High five• Email• One-on-one• ABA Kudos Blog• Birthday Celebration• Individual Tokens	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Birthday Celebration• Office potluck• Staff Appreciation Day/Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Birthday Celebration• Kudos Wall• Challenge Coins• Employee of the Quarter• Staff Appreciation Day/Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ABA Kudos Blog Raffle• Annual ABA Recognition Awards• Staff Appreciation Day/Week

Individual Tokens

The START Committee members agreed that it does not take much for staff to feel appreciated or recognized. It does not need to be some grand gesture, but rather, something that is genuine and sincere. Coordinating recognition efforts around holidays, events or large projects can make the implementation easier. In addition, setting reminders on your calendar is another great way to stay committed and consistent. Here are some examples of ways to recognize staff members through tokens.

Individual
Level





Implementation Tips:

1. Set a budget
2. Set a reminder on your calendar
3. Set a schedule to coordinate with holidays, events or projects
4. Track those who receive the tokens to ensure everyone can be recognized

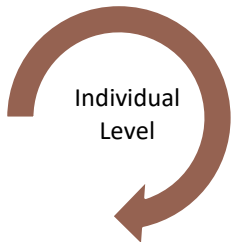
Birthday Celebrations

START Taskforce Committee members recommend that managers/supervisors initiate a birthday celebration routine in their office/unit. The committee recognizes the following limitations to implementing a birthday celebration routine:

1. The size of your team may be so large that a time and place to meet may be cumbersome
2. The nature of your team's work may prevent a likely time and place for your team to meet
3. The burden of purchasing a cake for each birthday or each month traditionally falls on the manager/supervisor and can be cost prohibitive
4. Not everyone likes to celebrate their birthday with a cake or at work

Therefore, the following options have been developed in hopes that you will find the "right fit" for your team.

You may choose to modify the size of your teams by combining offices and/or celebrate at the department level. For example, Budget, Auditing, Org. Development, VP Office and Financial Services Admin are all located in Sac Hall, so we celebrate birthdays with Option #1 below.



Option #1 – For small-sized teams: Individual Birthday Celebrations

1. The manager of each direct report coordinates, purchases and invites the team to celebrate the employee's birthday as close to their actual birthday as possible
2. The manager circulates a card for the person celebrating
3. The employee chooses the cake they would like (within a reasonable cost)

Responsibility: Manager is responsible for purchasing card(s) and cake and coordinating the location, decorations etc. and may choose to specify a cost maximum

Option #2 – For medium-sized teams: Monthly Birthday Celebrations

1. Chose a date in the middle of the month and organize a 30 minute meeting in a central location
2. Celebrate all of the employees who have a birthday that month with one treat
3. Circulate a birthday card for each person celebrating a birthday

Responsibility: Manager is responsible for purchasing card(s) and cake and making the selection of the cake. A staff person may be designated to coordinate the location, decorations etc.





Option #3 – For large teams: Coffee and donuts with your AVP or Senior Director

1. Identify birthdays in a quarter or month (depending on size and numbers)
2. Invite those identified to celebrate their birthday with their AVP or Senior Director

Responsibility: Someone would need to be designated as the coordinator of this event. The cost of the coffee and donuts would also need to be determined.

Option #4

If you have some members of your team not wishing to participate specifically in cake celebrations, you may want to make the recognition exercise optional by using this strategy.

1. At an arbitrary point (start of the fiscal year, start of the calendar year, your next all staff meeting – just needs to be the start of a 12-month period) ask each person who wishes to celebrate his or her birthday to place their name on a card.
2. The first drawing – the person with the next birthday on the calendar draws a name from the pool. The drawn name is responsible for purchasing the treat for the birthday person. You may want to put restrictions on the cost of the treat. It could be a \$25 max; it could be drinks, donuts, bagels, cake, cookies, or anything the celebrator wishes.
3. The drawer's name is removed from the pool for that year because they have made a purchase.
4. At the celebration, the next birthday on the calendar draws a name from the pool.
5. Rotate until everyone has celebrated a birthday and has purchased a treat.

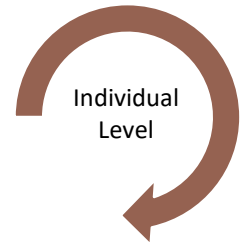
The risk with this method is that the team membership might change and therefore, someone might have celebrated a birthday, but not contributed etc. Alternatively, by the last birthday, there are not be any more names in the pool. At that point, it would be the manager's responsibility to purchase the cake.

In theory, this method prevents the burden of the cake buying on the manager and allows for only those who wish to participate to participate.

ABA Appreciation Blog

The START Committee, in partnership with Organizational Development (formally SPQI), has re-launched the Thank You Blog as the ABA Appreciation Blog. The purpose of the Appreciation Blog is to:

1. Digitalize a manual process to increase efficiency
2. Track and catalog kudos in one location for all ABA members
3. Increase communication between ABA staff members
4. Create a pathway for instant recognition
5. Provide a more formalized individual recognition option
6. Bridge individual recognition with higher levels of recognition (i.e. division level)
7. Create a pathway for a reward system outside of the annual recognition award program



Process:

The Appreciation Blog is an opportunity for ABA employees to recognize their fellow colleague's wonderful deeds that may have otherwise gone unnoticed.

Notice something a staff member did that deserves recognition



Go to the ABA Appreciation Blog and fill out the information:
<http://csus.edu/aba/organizational-development>

1. Date
2. Colleague Name
3. Colleague E-mail
4. Message



Behind the scenes:

1. Your message will be sent to the recipient and recipient's manager and Department leader via email
2. The recipient will receive a signed certificate from the START Committee acknowledging their kudos
3. The recipient will be entered in the quarterly raffle contest

Kudos Wall



Office or
Team Level

The START Committee encourages you to find a space in a central location in your office to post kudos recognitions. Here are some suggestions:

1. Find a place that is central in the office, or at least a place that most of team frequently passes or congregates
2. Decorate the space with some bright colored paper and signage
3. Decide whether you would like to coordinate your office kudos wall with the electronic Kudos Blog or if you would like to do both
 - a. *Remember that only the electronic kudos entries will be entered in the ABA quarterly raffle*
4. If you decide to utilize a manual kudos process, rather than the electronic version, print the sample Kudos Cards in Appendix B and post near the wall and/or provide them to all staff members regularly
5. At your next all staff meeting, explain the kudos wall, the purpose and the procedure

Sample Script:

You might have noticed the new kudos wall near the break room. I think we all know that we are doing great things for our team and this campus on a daily basis. However, sometimes we don't slow down and recognize those people who do something extraordinary or go out of their way to deliver exceptional customer service. The Kudos Wall is a meant to be a space where we can celebrate those successes and recognize each other for a job well done. The criteria for giving kudos are as follows:

1. Anyone can give kudos
2. Anyone in the office can receive one
3. You can print the electronic kudos you submit through the ABA Kudos Blog and post it on the wall, or you can fill out a form <https://aba.webhost.csus.edu/thankyous.aspx?mo=1&yr=2017>
4. The kudos can be something directly affecting you or something you noticed the recipient doing for another co-worker or customer
5. If you receive a kudos via email from a customer, feel free to print the email and post it as well



Updated: February 2018

Challenge Coins

This idea is borrowed from the military and is meant to be a teambuilding and unifying exercise amongst a diverse team.

Premise:

Using a uniquely designed coin, managers recognize their team members when they exhibit a shared organizational value.

How to Get Started:

1. As a team, decide what your shared values are
2. Contact Contract Services for possible vendors to work with on coin purchase
3. Working with vendor, design a coin that reflects the team and the shared values
4. Explain premise and procedures to managers and staff
5. Distribute coins to managers



Procedures:

1. At start of the program, managers give an individual coin (the size of a half dollar) to a staff member when they see them exhibiting a shared value. This can be soft – just reward for doing something that makes your organization better!
2. It is important that the manager explain what the coin means – impress upon them the sincerity with which the coin is presented. It is also a secret that should not be shared amongst other employees. The employee then has the right to challenge the manager at any time at work by “flashing” the coin at the manager. The manager is expected to “flash” their coin in return in recognition of the employee any time they are at work.
3. If the manager does not have their coin with them, they should do some act of kindness for the team member, such as buying them a cup of coffee.

Reference:

This is an example of the challenge coin designed by Facilities Operations



Employee of the Month/Quarter/Year



The START Committee does not think launching a division-wide employee of the quarter and year is feasible right now. However, START is encouraging more departments develop their own programs, so that in a few years Organizational Development (formally SPQI) can facilitate an employee of the year program for the division, using the department programs as a foundation. The plan is to take the quarterly winners of each department and enter them into the annual winner pool. Then, Admin Council could discuss and select a winner each year. The goal would be for the winner to receive a preferred parking space on campus.

Suggestion for implementation:

Family or department managers meet once a quarter and select a member of their team to be employee of the quarter. The employee can be nominated by any manager in the department. Nominations can be based on a kudos the employee received from a customer or anecdotal experience a management team member saw that they would like to recognize.

The management team can discuss potential qualities they would like to celebrate and come to a consensus on who they would like to recognize.

The winner would be announced to the entire department via email (and/or posting in a common space) with a photo of the employee and a brief description of what their achievement was for the quarter.

The department may determine how to further celebrate quarterly winners, suggestions include:

- Potluck
- Lunch
- Gift card or swag

Departments may choose to participate in employee of the quarter activities based on location rather than organizational chart. For example, Modoc Hall might choose to host their own employee of the quarter, separate from the Bursar's Office in Lassen Hall. Smaller departments like, Admin Ops, Admin Services, Budget and Audit, all located in Sacramento Hall, may choose to combine forces.

ABA Appreciation Raffle

The START Committee noticed a gap in the ABA division-level recognition. The committee agreed that the annual recognition program was robust and well thought out, however it is only once a year (typically in June). Therefore, the rest of the year was void of a division-level recognition (besides the years of service awards held in December). In an effort to fill in the time between recognition programs, and to create an incentive to utilize the Appreciation Blog (formerly Thank You Blog), the START Committee is implementing an ABA Appreciation Raffle.



Process:

1. All entries to the Appreciation Blog will be entered into a division-level raffle pool
2. At the end of each calendar quarter, 5 names will be drawn from the pool
3. Winners will be announced via email and featured in the proceeding ABA FOCUS Newsletter
4. A member of the START Committee will deliver prizes and take a photo with each of the winners
5. Quarterly prizes will include but are not limited to:
 - Sac State swag
 - Movie tickets
 - Gift cards

Rules:

1. Each staff person can have unlimited entries into the pool
2. The nominator will be entered into the raffle only once (to encourage participation)
3. Non-winners in each quarterly drawing will be re-entered for the next quarter
4. The pool will be emptied after the last drawing of the 4th quarter

Launch of Program:

The START Committee members will introduce the ABA Appreciation Raffle at the ABA all staff professional meeting in the fall. We will walk staff through the Appreciation Blog, the rules, and then conduct a raffle at the Winter Luncheon.

Staff Recognition Program

ABA is committed to the full engagement of its staff and is proud to recognize those whose leadership, service, professionalism and performance exemplify ABA's values and help the division and the University succeed. The ABA Recognition Program is one of the ways in which we are currently rewarding exemplary performance and achievements within the division.

Begun in 1995, the program was one of the University's first staff recognition efforts. In fall 2005, program enhancements included two new categories and a winter awards ceremony. The new Leadership and Valued Staff awards introduced a way for managers to recognize their peers and to appreciate the performance of staff within their own units and departments.

In 2006, ABA launched a staff peer award, with criteria recommended by ABA staff professionals. ABA managers and staff are continually making changes to improve the way we acknowledge the good work of employees.



Categories:

Staff Peer to Peer

The ABA Staff Peer to Peer Award Program is an opportunity for ABA staff professionals (non-MPP/Management Council members) to recognize the work of their colleagues, annually based on the following values:

- Customer Service
- Problem Solver
- Teamwork
- Positive Attitude
- Innovation

Management Awards

The ABA Management Award Program provides ABA managers an opportunity to recognize the contributions and achievements of division colleagues and staff each year for the following awards:

- Peer to Peer
- Valued Staff Award
- Team Award

You can find more information about the program and how to submit nominations at:

<http://www.csus.edu/aba/aba-about/recognition-program.html>

Staff Appreciation Day – first Friday of March

Currently, ABA organizes two all staff celebrations, one in June (Spring Social) and one in December (Winter Luncheon). Both these events are formal and offer staff an opportunity to eat and socialize. The March event for Staff Appreciation Day will be an informal opportunity for staff to drop-in and network.

More details to follow.



Appendix A – Kudos Cards

KUDOS

TO:

FROM:

DATE:

YOU:

○ Did a great job

○ Made me smile

○ Made my day

○ Encouraged me

○ Went above and beyond

○ Gave great customer service

○ Challenged me

○ Gave me great feedback

○ Made me feel special

○ Taught me something

BUT WAIT, THERE’S MORE...

KUDOS

Dear: _____

I JUST HAD TO TELL YOU:

THANK YOU FOR BEING AWESOME:

FROM: _____

Appendix B – Thank You Note Templates

Sample Employee Thank You Letter #1

Dear [Name],

Thank you so much for your assistance during our office move. You and your staff really came through, proving what it means to be a "team player." The extra effort you all put in was really appreciated.

I really appreciate everything you are doing to help the company succeed.

Regards,

Signature

Sample Employee Thank You Letter #2

Dear [Name],

Thank you for all your help on our recent rollout. It was helpful to have your input, since you went through a similar rollout at your previous company. I am happy to have you as a part of this team. In the short time you have been here, you have really helped to make things run smoothly.

I really appreciate your willingness to help wherever needed. It is that kind of flexibility and dedication that will help this department grow to its full potential.

Sincerely,

Signature

Sample Employee Thank You Email Message

Subject line: Thanks!

Dear [Name],

I really appreciate all your help in getting this new project off the ground. I am glad that you have decided to stay with us during this time of change, and seem to be looking forward to the opportunities this new venture will bring.

Your positive attitude has made a big difference in the way the rest of the staff has viewed the coming changes, and I really appreciate your support.

Cheers,

Signature

Sample Employee Thank You Email for Covering Maternity Leave

Subject Line: Thank You

Hi [Name],

Thanks so much for helping while [name] is out on maternity leave. I really appreciate you offering to work more hours, and to help out with some of the extra things that she's had time to do up until now.

I really appreciate your assistance. It's hard in a small unit when one of us is out for a long period of time, and it's employees like you who help to make it work for us all.

Best,

Signature