



Guidelines & Protocols

Protocol/Guideline Title: Recognizing Employees		
Responsible Office: Office of the Vice President of Planning, Budget, and Human Resources		
Date Approved by President's Council: 2/28/2014		
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The following is not official university policy but rather a guideline used to facilitate the internal actions of the University or a particular unit within the University. Guidelines are not binding on the University and may be amended by the University at any time. A guideline, such as the one to follow, does not establish any contractual rights or obligations between the University and any individual.



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Executive Summary

Recognizing the growth, achievements, and extraordinary work performance of UVU employees will have a considerable impact on their job satisfaction and commitment to their job and to the University. This document provides guidance to help University supervisors, managers, and department heads recognize the hard work of their employees as well as motivate, encourage, and reward them appropriately.

Related University Policies

UVU Policy 204 *Appropriateness of Expenditures*

UVU Policy 211 *Employee Appreciation and Recognition (Gifts and Rewards)*

HR Tip Sheet *Recognizing Employees*

General Principles for Employee Recognition

The following are general principles to follow for employee recognition (for specific ideas to recognize employees, see the tip sheet, *Employee Recognition and Suggestions*):

- **Recognize What is Important to Employees:** Employees should feel that their managers care about them as valuable human beings. Employees need to feel appreciated and respected. Show employees that they are valuable assets to the University and worthy of praise. Managers should make sure that recognition is personal and they are sincere when providing it.
- **Provide Immediate Recognition:** Recognize and praise employees as soon as a job or task has been completed well. Employees may feel unappreciated if they are not recognized in a timely manner, which may cause them to lose motivation.
- **Customize Your Recognition:** Align recognition with employee goals or desires. Do they want to be involved in work decisions? Do they want to have fun? Do they want to have variety? Do they want to know their opinions matter? Make employee recognition thoughtful and meaningful and try to incorporate the employee's interests. What motivates one employee may not motivate another.
- **Recognize Small Improvements:** Even though a manager may view an employee's improvement as a small accomplishment, the employee might view the same improvement as a



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large one. No accomplishment should not without some form of positive recognition.

- ***Provide Incentives:*** Always provide some form of incentive; incentives do not always come in monetary form. There are many non-monetary ways to show employees they are appreciated and respected (i.e., verbal or written thank-you, recognition in staff meeting, etc.). See *Employee Recognition: 30 Simple Ideas* for additional ideas to recognize employees.)

Appropriate Expenditures for Awards and Incentives

Appropriate expenditures for employee recognition awards and incentives are as follows:

1) Employee recognition gifts and rewards that involve a cost may include, but are not limited to:

- Certificates of achievements
- Letters of acknowledgement
- Movie Tickets
- Food
- Bookstore gifts and apparel

2) Bookstore gifts and apparel are limited to the following:

- The value must not exceed \$50 for a one-time gift or \$75 annually per employee.
- Cash or cash equivalent gift cards/certificates are not permissible (see UVU Policy 211 *Employee Appreciation and Recognition*).
- Gift cards to the UVU Bookstore are permissible as the Bookstore will ensure the purchase of tangible gifts versus the conversion of the gift cards to cash.

Cost-free Employee Recognition Ideas

Below are several appropriate no-cost suggestions for employee recognition:

- Write a quick thank-you note to the employee.
- Create and post an “Employee Honor Roll” in reception area.



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- Acknowledge individual achievements when preparing a status report.
- Establish a place to display memos, posters, photos, etc., recognizing progress towards goals and thanking individual employees for their help.
- Swap a task with an employee for a day—his or her choice.
- Establish a “Behind the Scenes” award specifically for those whose beneficial actions are not always visible.
- Nominate the employee for a formal university award or program.
- At a monthly staff meeting, award an Employee of the Month and invite co-workers to say why that person is deserving of the award.
- Encourage employees to recognize their peers, such as creating activities/events by a peer group that decides what they will give and why they will give it.
- Send a letter to all team members at the conclusion of a project, thanking them for their participation.
- When you hear a positive remark about someone, repeat it to that person as soon as possible.
- Support “flex-friendly” schedules, where appropriate.
- Actively listen to co-workers, especially when discussing their accomplishments and contributions.
- Widely publicize suggestions used and their positive impact on your department.
- When someone has spent long hours at work, send a letter of thanks to his or her home.
- Acknowledge and celebrate birthdays.
- Arrange for an outstanding employee to have lunch with a dean or director.
- Recognize a team accomplishment by designating that team as consultants to other teams.



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Minor- to Moderate-Cost Employee Recognition Ideas

- Create a Hall of Fame wall with photos of outstanding employees. (May require Space Committee approval.)
- Find out employee's hobby and buy an appropriate gift.
- Inscribe a favorite book as a gift.
- Give employee a membership or subscription to a journal that relates to their work. (Memberships require VP approval.)
- Design a "Stress Support Kit" that includes a relaxing tea, wind-up toys and a stress ball—or design your own kit tailored to the employee.
- Design and give magnets with appropriate messages.
- Give employee a mug filled with treats.
- Give a framed poem (poster or card) as a thank you.
- Bake or bring a gift (cookies, bread, etc.) for an outstanding employee or team.
- Send birthday cards to employees' homes, signed by dean or director.

Adapted from: The University of Michigan and the University of Washington

Procedure

Not Applicable.

Related Forms

Not Applicable.