



Unit: Engaging and Empowering Others

Skill 35: Acknowledging the Team

Activity A: Appreciation Matters

Activity Skills:

Small group discussion or self reflection.

Leadership Skills:

Understanding the basic techniques for acknowledging the contributions of others.

Suggested Level:

Beginning

Time:

20-30 minutes

Supplies needed:

- Sticky notes, mid-size.
- Pens or pencils.
- Flipchart.
- Markers.

Do Ahead:

N/A

Source:

Developed by:
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Based On:

Recognizing and Rewarding Employees, 50 Activities for Developing Leaders, Lois B. Hart

BACKGROUND:

Effective leaders make an effort to acknowledge the accomplishments of their group members. They have high expectations, but recognize even small steps toward achieving broader goals. Such recognition is a form of feedback that people need to stay motivated and connected.

Acknowledgement and recognition are primary needs of everyone, although (as discussed in Activity 34A), those who are internally motivated get gratification from their own efforts and need less external motivation.

James Kouzes and Barry Posner list 3 criteria for a reward system:

- 1) State clear goals and expectations.
- 2) Provide feedback about results.
- 3) Give rewards to those who have performed according to the stated standards.

WHAT TO DO:

Write each of these categories as a large heading on a sheet of flipchart paper to get things started: **Purchased** (e.g., a plaque, a trophy, a button, a small gift), **Verbal, Written, Organizational Procedure** (e.g., at a weekly staff meeting, as part of the office newsletter, “employee or volunteer of the month” mechanisms, etc.), and **Methods Related to Performance** (e.g., performance reviews, raises, advancement, etc.)

Have participants break into small groups of 3-6 people or have participants work individually. Each group will need a pad of sticky notes or each person will need several sticky notes. Have the participants think about a meaningful acknowledgement or recognition they have received or given. Write each one down on a separate sticky note. Next ask everyone to bring their sticky notes forward to the flip chart and start to categorize the ideas.

TALK IT OVER:

Reflect:

- What ways did you identify to acknowledge and recognize the efforts and contributions of others?
- Why do you think these strategies would work?
- Do these categories cover most approaches, or did new categories come up as you sorted your acknowledgements?
- Is there a “right” way to acknowledge others? Is there a “right” time?

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Activity A: Appreciation Matters

Notes:

Apply:

- How and when have you been recognized in your work?
- How have you acknowledged others?
- Is there a mechanism in your group or organization that establishes a procedure for recognition?
- What might such a procedure involve? (hint – go back to the 3 criteria for a reward system discussed earlier).
- Why do people need acknowledgement?
- Why is recognition something that leaders must be able to provide?

BEYOND THE BOX:

Optional Homework:

Think about a situation in your own life where you received recognition for your efforts. How did the acknowledgement make you feel? Think about a time when your contributions were not recognized. How did you feel then?

Resources And Web Links:

Hart, Lois B. *50 Activities for Developing Leaders*. HRD Press, 1994.
Kouzes, James and Barry Posner. *The Leadership Challenge*.