



## Employee Recognition Programs

Employers must develop and implement employee recognition programs that meet the needs of the organizations culture.

Organizations continually transform due to the change in employee demographics. In fact labor force projections reveal employee ethnicity and age differences will continue to impact organizations. It is expected that the number of non-white Hispanic workers will decrease while the number of Black, Hispanic, and Asian workers will increase. Also the number of employees between the ages of 55 to 64 is expected to increase while the other age groups are expected to decrease.

As the employee demographics change so do the employees needs which ultimately impacts the organization.

Many employers decide to reward employees by meeting the employees basic need. For example, many employee recognition programs promote anniversary based programs which are often not

quantifiable. Or some employers provide employees with plaques, souvenirs, or money. Employers who establish this pattern fall short by only meeting the basic needs of the employees.

Organizations that accept this type of reward system are not taking into consideration the changing cultural needs of the organization. It is the equivalent of keeping a process that worked for the '70's organizational culture while the organization is in the 22nd century. It is an indication that the organization itself has not embraced a growth process caused by changing employee demographics.

Many employee recognition programs purpose to motivate or make employees feel valued for behavior that has increased the organizations productivity. While the employee will gladly accept this reward it does not guarantee continued employee productivity or retention.

Instead of implementing employee recognition programs that only meet the basic needs of the employee, the employer should develop and implement employee recognition programs that take into the consideration the changing culture of the organization.

In order for an organization to institute an employee recognition program that embraces the changing demographics the employer should:

- ▶ Assemble an employee recognition team that represent the organization's culture.
- ▶ Each team member should develop a personal vision for the employee recognition program.
- ▶ Develop a team vision focused on developing an employee recognition program.
- ▶ Meet weekly until an employee recognition program is developed.
- ▶ Meet annually to evaluate the impact of the new program and ensure that the team demographics represents the organization.