

# Managers' Handbook

OCTOBER 2014



## HAVE YOU THANKED SOMEONE TODAY?

**Employee recognition is an essential component of employee engagement.**

**As a supervisor/manager, you play a key role in creating a workplace culture of appreciation and recognition.**

### Introduction

Employee recognition is the acknowledgement of an individual or team's behaviour, effort and accomplishments that support the County's goals and values, and is a very powerful tool to motivate your team.

When an employee feels that someone believes in them it makes a difference in their work performance. Recognition offers a confidence boost to your team, and when a supervisor or manager offers encouragement they are demonstrating a leadership style that most people respond to in a positive way. Providing meaningful recognition is a way to show mutual respect to the people in your work life.

The ACE (Applauding Commitment & Excellence) program is a way for all of us to make a difference every day. This program has been created to help promote a workplace culture that strives to recognize and appreciate the commitment, dedication and contributions of all employees at Oxford County.

By providing positive feedback, you are not only impacting the way your team feel and act but you are impacting the department as a whole. Positive recognition strengthens positive performance and behaviours that will continue into the future.

This guide provides an overview of Oxford County's formal and informal recognition programs.

*"When someone comes along who genuinely thanks us, we will follow that person a very long way."*

*Alan Loy McGinnis*

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## TYPES OF RECOGNITION

**To create and sustain a culture of recognition, both formal and informal (day-to-day) recognition must be practiced.**

The following outlines the County's formal and informal (day-to-day) recognition programs:

### Formal recognition

Formal recognition includes planned events that can be corporate wide or department specific. The County's formal recognition program includes Long Service Awards and Awards of Excellence, which are presented each year during a special recognition ceremony.

*"Recognition is the greatest motivator."*

*Gerard C. Eakedale*

#### Long Service Awards

Employees are recognized as they celebrate 10, 20, 30 and 40 years of service. They are provided with a gift and invited to a special recognition ceremony.

#### Awards of Excellence

Oxford County Awards of Excellence recognize outstanding achievement in demonstrating our corporate values. Award recipients are nominated by a peer and/or supervisor and could be an individual, department or team. Each recipient is chosen for demonstrating outstanding achievement in one of the following areas:

- Customer Service
- Leadership
- Accountability
- Innovation
- Integrity
- Teamwork

Visit [www.oxfordcounty.ca/ace](http://www.oxfordcounty.ca/ace) for more information on our formal recognition awards and to nominate someone for an Award of Excellence.

## TYPES OF RECOGNITION *continued*

**Research shows that spontaneous recognition is one of the most powerful motivators for employees.**

**Become familiar with what type of recognition motivates your staff – the recognition be meaningful to the individual.**

### Informal (day-to-day) Recognition

The ACE (Applauding Commitment & Excellence) program is also designed to promote informal, day-to-day recognition to Oxford County employees.

This is an unscripted and spontaneous form of recognition, given on a regular basis. It can be anything from a hand written note of thanks, words of praise and gratitude or another form of encouragement or acknowledgement.

Here are some tips to keep in mind as you work to promote a culture of appreciation and recognition within your teams.

#### Reasons to informally recognize your team

- 👍 A job well done
- 👍 Going out of their way to help another
- 👍 Staying late
- 👍 Taking on a new project
- 👍 Improving their performance and/or behaviour
- 👍 Helping or showing a colleague how to perform a task
- 👍 Ideas that improve how we provide our service
- 👍 A solution to a difficult issue

*“Meaningful recognition is sincere, regular and based on mutual respect. It can be as simple as a verbal “thank you,” a written note or an appreciative email.”*

*Amy Smith*

## The recognition should be

### Timely

The recognition is given in a timely manner. preferably right after a positive action or behaviour has taken place.

### Sincere

The recognition, whether it is verbal or written, should come from the heart and be genuine. Mean what you say.

### Relevant

The acknowledgement should be equal to the success. Don't go overboard.

### Meaningful

The recognition is in alignment with Oxford County values, as well as the preferences of the person receiving the applause. Everyone is different and unique and utilizing a variety of approaches to recognize and applaud the person goes a long way and relates back to being sincere.

### Specific

The recognition needs to be attached to a specific action or behaviour that you observed or was observed by someone else. If possible recount the accomplishment about what is being recognized.

*"Make it a habit to tell people thank you. To express your appreciation, sincerely and without the expectation of anything in return. Truly appreciate those around you, and you'll soon find many others around you. Truly appreciate life, and you'll find that you have more of it."*

*Ralph Marston*

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## Informal recognition suggestions

- 👉 Use the recognition note template available on the intranet and at [www.oxfordcounty.com/ace](http://www.oxfordcounty.com/ace). Complete directly on the template or print and handwrite your note.
- 👉 Send an e-card. Suggested link: <http://www.care2.com/send/catthankyou1.html>.
- 👉 Smile and say thank you - instant reward!
- 👉 **Sometimes just simple acknowledgments such as “I noticed what you did.”** will go a long way. Your team members want to know that you notice and value all parts of their jobs, not just the big wins and achievements.
- 👉 Bring chocolate or other treats to share – leave on desks or in common areas, with a small note of thanks.
- 👉 Acknowledge contributions of employees through departmental communications and/or staff meetings
- 👉 Encourage employees to bring forward ideas. Take action on ideas where appropriate and give credit where credit is due. If an idea is not possible, explain why.
- 👉 Have a break together. Talk about things other than work and bring chocolate or other treats to share.
- 👉 Remember your teams' birthdays. Send a quick note saying happy birthday
- 👉 Remember your teams' special work anniversaries and send a quick note of congratulations.

*“Appreciation is a wonderful thing: It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well.”*

*Voltaire*

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## Great words to use when showing recognition

### Words for Effort

*Overcome, succeed, excel, achieve, grasp, generate, develop, design, productive, accomplish, volunteer, produce, discipline, create, resolve, execution, triumph, victory, complete, masterpiece, conquest, initiative, outcome*

### Words for Quality

*Organize, improve, excellence, exceptional, striking, aware, brilliant, elegant, eloquent, intuitive, strong, outstanding, merit, talent, distinction*

### Words for Attitude

*Thoughtful, responsible, creative, energetic, enthusiastic, resourceful, motivated, dedicated, innovative, reliable, vibrant, wise, flexible, versatile, consistent, considerate, commitment, confidence, imagination, passion, tenacity*

*"No one who achieves success does so without acknowledging the help of others. The wise and confident acknowledge this help with gratitude."*

*Unknown*

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