



REWARD AND RECOGNITION; THE GLARE OF PUBLICITY

The company newsletter hit Ruth Kenyon's desk and there was her picture on the front page under the heading "Employee of the Month". A simple paragraph of text explained that she had single-handedly reduced the debtor days from 39 to 32 in a period of 6 weeks. If others didn't understand the significance of her work, it didn't matter, she just felt a huge wave of pride sweep over her.

Even the smallest company has a reception area. This is a great place to publicize how good your people really are. Fast food restaurants are some of the best at this form of recognition; however every company should be telling its customers and suppliers how good its people are. An A4 size sheet can provide a photograph and a little background about the reasons for choosing this individual for recognition. Keep the display fresh, don't leave the same information on display for more than a week otherwise regular visitors will think you only have one good employee.

If you have an in-company newsletter this is an ideal place to publicize the success of individuals and teams. Have a professional article written about the work that was done and include a photograph. Also make sure the CEO includes a quote about his or her interest in the work.

Every year companies produce their annual report for shareholders. Typically they will include photographs of the executives and name each one. They also feature a range of photographs of their operations showing dynamic employees doing their jobs. It gives people such a buzz if their name is included in the caption saying something like "Frank Rodgers and Mary Knight producing Zenfda components on the state-of-the-art FRANMAR digital router" rather than the usual, anonymous "FRANMAR digital router: Investment in Technology" caption.

Company websites can be very informative about products and services but rarely do they take the opportunity to talk about the people in the organization. There is sometimes reluctance to publish anyone's name on a website for fear that they may be targeted by spam mail or more sinister approaches, however this can easily be worked around by using initials or only first names. There is no good reason not to use this medium too.

If at all possible avoid publishing only a list of names as this leaves fertile imaginations to conjure up conspiracy theories about why they are not included.

There is no good reason in these days of digital cameras and camera-phones to avoid producing a photograph of the person being recognized for their contribution to the business. Purists might say that the photographs should be of studio quality but in the interests of rapid turn-around the quality of the images will be forgiven in favor of instant feedback.

Later in the day Ruth Kenyon passed by the coffee machine and was instantly recognized. She met the barrage of questions about debtor-days with aplomb and educated her colleagues. The perils of celebrity are that you must eventually face your fans.

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