



FORMAL RECOGNITION CEREMONY HAS ITS PLACE

Louise Erdmann felt like Gwyneth Paltrow at the Oscar ceremony. She had only been with her current company for a few months but here she stood, at the Christmas Party, receiving a reward for being the "Best Newcomer of the Year" and fighting back the tears. The awards were partly serious and mostly light-hearted but, for some reason, it meant a lot more than getting a 2+ in your appraisal. Research has uncovered the fascinating fact that recognition is the number one motivator. More than money and extra overtime, it produces effects in your workforce well beyond the cost of your actions. However recognition is not always as simple as saying "Good job!" The phrase "Different strokes for different folks" was never more accurate. The world is made up of so many complex personalities that one piece of recognition cannot possibly fit all circumstances. Fortunately, those who know their co-workers well will instinctively understand what gives them that extra rush of blood to the head. Individual performance By far the biggest motivation any individual can get is to see their name in lights. People are very attached to their names; just try spelling anyone's name wrong and you'll understand. Now attach their name to a piece of work they have done with some sort of understanding of the skill required to produce it and you have just about cracked formal recognition. In the UK, the Queen recognizes talented people twice every year. She has a New Year's Honours List and a Birthday Honours List which are published in almost every newspaper. The list takes up four or five pages of the newspaper in very small print but you can be sure that every single person who is mentioned will be able to point out their name to their friends and colleagues. The fact that it is the Queen (and the Prime Minister) who selects the names to be honored attaches great kudos to this type of recognition. The same principle applies inside your organization. Recognition gets better if it comes from someone with status in the company. The Queen's recognition system does not stop at printing out a list of names. She invites each person to a ceremony held in lavish surroundings, pins a medal on their chest and makes it a day out for the family to get dressed up and to enjoy. You don't have to live in Buckingham Palace and you don't have to hand out medals to do something similar. If you think people have helped your company to be successful, they probably deserve more than a pay rise. Louise Erdmann felt she had landed on her feet. Not only had she joined a company where she felt her talents were appreciated even at an early stage, she now felt that the whole company knew who she was. She was also acutely aware that she was paying very close attention to the other award-winners. They were obviously role-models in the company to watch and learn from.

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