

How Does Your Company Recognize and Reward Great Service?

A Guide to Helping You Achieve Service Results with Engaged and Appreciated Employees

Service recognition matters. It's a way to say, "Thank you," "Job well done," and, "Please do it again." It ensures that employees don't feel taken for granted and reinforces service behaviors you want them to repeat. It helps you focus attention on your company's service mission and values, and shines a spotlight on why service behavior is integral to your company's success.

The way you recognize service, matters too. Many companies rely on monetary rewards—but to your service providers, cash (while appreciated) can feel impersonal, too. (And sometimes extra cash isn't available at all!)

There are more powerful ways to provide heartfelt recognition for service delivered from the heart. Gratitude from customers, admiration from colleagues, strong approval from leaders, and specific and strategic rewards can drive service commitment and behavior to even higher levels. They are also more memorable and emotional than simply receiving money.

Here are a few examples of highly effective service recognition and rewards:

- NTUC Income recognizes its contact center employees with paper stars and hearts on the office wall. Each paper cutout includes an employee's name and what an appreciative customer or colleague said about him or her. It's an ever-changing, always-current "Hall of Fame" that uplifts everyone every day.
- Singapore Airlines gives a coveted yearly award to staff members and teams who deliver on the company's highest aspiration: "Service even other airlines talk about."
- American Express recognizes employees worldwide with an entire week that spotlights employee achievements on social networking sites.
- Arby's restaurants get their customers involved in recognition by hanging a brass bell by the doorway with a sign that reads, "*If our service was GREAT, please RING the bell.*"
- When employees go above and beyond to help a client (for instance, sacrificing personal time), a global accounting firm rewards them with tickets to sporting events or concerts.
- When an employee at a software start-up solved a difficult problem for an angry customer and landed an impressively large new contract in the process, she was given a standing ovation from the entire company and an extra week's vacation.

Questions to Evaluate Your Service Recognition and Rewards

At many companies, service recognition and rewards programs evolve organically over time. An award is added here; a bonus is bestowed there. However, if you want to optimize the effectiveness of your actions, it's important to consciously review and align your programs from time to time.

Here are some categories and questions to consider. You can use these to evaluate what you are doing now and design actions to be even more effective in the future. Each of these questions is intended to spark new conversations, so discuss them with colleagues at all levels, and, if you wish, with the team at Uplifting Service.

Understand Your Current Service Recognition and Rewards

Before changing or creating any new service rewards or recognition programs, it's important to understand what you've already got:

1. Does your company rely on bonuses, raises, stock options, and/or other monetary rewards to thank and recognize employees?
2. Does your company have an established process to convey customer praise and appreciation to the appropriate employees?
3. Do your employees feel comfortable praising their colleagues for a job well done? Or is competition the name of the game?
4. Do your leaders personally convey approval and appreciation to subordinates? Are they encouraged to do so? What's the ratio of compliments to criticism?
5. Are your employees and teams motivated and inspired by the service rewards and recognition your company currently provides? (Have you asked them how they really feel?)
6. Does your company have a formal award system

in place to recognize great internal and external service? (e.g., "Highest Number of Customer Compliments Received," "Greatest Service Improvement," "Most Outstanding Service Recovery")

Consider the Many Ways You Can Recognize and Reward Great Service

When you are creative with your service recognition and rewards, your team members will give your customers, and each other, more creative and better service. Which of the following recognition techniques might work best within your company?

1. Prizes (e.g., tickets to a concert or sporting event, a box of specialty chocolates, a restaurant gift certificate, a bouquet of flowers)
2. Extra vacation days
3. A logo on the business card (e.g., Service Employee of the Year)
4. A certificate of achievement framed in your company's Hall of Fame
5. A feature article on your company's website and/or newsletter
6. A standing ovation at a company-wide meeting
7. A handwritten thank-you note from a leader
8. A special parking space
9. Publicly posted praise from customers
10. Publicly posted praise from colleagues
11. Formal appraisals and promotions

Remember to Include Internal Service Recognition and Rewards

Service recognition is often associated with customer-facing employees, including salespeople and customer service representatives. But service recognition can extend beyond these frontline team members to include everyone else on the team.

1. What is the best method for your employees to acknowledge and praise colleagues who give them uplifting internal service?
2. How can your company recognize internal service providers for upgrading their department's service, improving service procedures, or streamlining service systems?
3. If your company works with outside suppliers or distributors, how can you recognize them for the service they provide to you?
4. What is the best way for your company to recognize and reward loyal customers?
5. How can you include supportive family members in your team member rewards and recognition?

Establish an Official Rewards and Recognition Framework

Once you've decided how to improve and update your company's service recognition and rewards programs, make sure the changes are widely adopted.

1. How will your plans for improved service recognition be communicated throughout the organization?
2. How can your employees provide feedback about your service recognition and rewards?
3. How often will your service recognition and rewards be reviewed and refreshed?
4. How will your company benchmark service recognition and rewards with other organizations?

Want to See the Bigger Picture? Uplifting Service Can Help You Assess and Improve Your Service Culture.

“Service Recognition and Rewards” comprises only one building block of a proven architecture that you can use to create an uplifting service culture. Contact UP for a more in-depth cultural assessment, to compare relevant case studies, and to learn more about the proven path to building a sustainable cultural advantage.





Uplifting Service is a global consulting and education firm based in Singapore, serving multi-national clients worldwide. We help clients develop a culture of service excellence, aligning the entire organization to win the hearts and minds of customers. We work with leaders who seek to harness the power of service excellence and seek the impact of a strong and sustainable service culture.

UP's proven proprietary methodology aligns, integrates, and accelerates organizations in three essential areas: Service Leadership, Continuous Service Improvement, and The 12 Building Blocks of Service Culture. This proven approach leads to an action-oriented culture, empowering everyone to delight customers and colleagues with consistently uplifting service.

Client Results

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"We use the proven Uplifting Service tools and methodology to design our global customer centricity program. UP has an unrivalled approach, enabling companies build a strong and sustainable culture of service excellence."



"Uplifting Service addressed the problem we were trying to solve – getting over 10,000 employees to all move in the same direction. UP is really good at understanding our challenges and helping us address these by leveraging a highly effective methodology."



"I appreciate the change. I can see and feel a shift in the way Crown approaches our team, in the way they speak and the way they ask. They focus on what we are working on to achieve as a business and how we can become better partners to move our agenda forward."



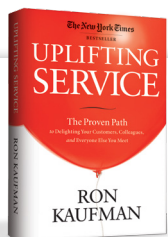
"UP gives insights to change mindset. Now we focus on end to end thinking. I can put myself in someone else's shoes and evaluate what is important."



"Uplifting Service helps us create a culture of obsession for the customer for the entire organization, inspiring everyone to work as one to take the next step up."



"Uplifting Service is the cornerstone that helped STERIS revitalize focus on our Customer, helping us differentiate our offers in a price-sensitive marketplace and drive customer loyalty."



The New York Times
BESTSELLING AUTHOR

Ron Kaufman founded Uplifting Service in 2003. He is one of the world's most sought-after educators, consultants, thought leaders on the topic of service excellence and customer experience. He is the author of the *New York Times* bestseller, *Uplifting Service*.

