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Improving Human and Organizational Performance

Prioritizing Employee Recognition

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Possible Action Steps: Prioritizing Employee Recognition

1. Build recognition into daily systems, not just events

Recognition should be embedded into daily work rather than reserved for annual awards or formal programs. Regular acknowledgement reinforces desired behaviors and helps employees feel seen and valued.

Action: Build a brief recognition moment into toolbox talks, shift handovers, or job close-outs. Acknowledge work efforts in every leader-employee interaction.

2. Align recognition with value and behaviours, not just outcomes

Effective recognition focuses on *how* work is done, especially behaviors that support safety, learning, and teamwork, not only end results or production metrics.

Action: *Align recognition categories to core behaviors and values such as speaking up, supporting teammates, and following procedures under pressure.*

3. Make Recognition Specific and Timely

Generic or delayed praise feels transactional and loses impact. Recognition is most meaningful when it clearly connects an action to its positive impact and is delivered soon after it occurs.

Action: *Coach leaders to give recognition within 24–48 hours and to clearly describe what was done and why it mattered.*

4. Enable Peer-to-Peer Recognition

Recognition is more credible and motivating when it comes from peers who directly observe the work. Peer acknowledgement also strengthens teamwork and shared accountability.

Action: *Implement simple peer-recognition options such as shout-out boards, digital kudos, or peer-nominated acknowledgements.*

5. Ensure Recognition Is Fair and Inclusive

Recognition often unintentionally favors visible roles, day shifts, or outspoken individuals. Equity is essential for recognition to build trust rather than resentment.

Action: *Be intentional about acknowledging all members of the crew for their contributions. Recognize each member's unique strengths.*

Final Thought:

Recognition doesn't need to be expensive or elaborate — it needs to be genuine, specific, and consistent. What gets recognized is what gets repeated.