

**100 WAYS TO RECOGNIZE YOUR STAFF**

**Ideas and Suggestions for Supervisors**

1. Encourage and celebrate/recognize staff members who pursue continuing education.
2. Add peer recognition to meetings (shout-outs, core value awards, etc.)
3. Give your staff one day a quarter where they can work on whatever work project they want.
4. Allow your staff to attend Rice events (Athletics, music, lecture, etc).
5. Themed lunches or meetings (holidays, college-related, sports, talk-show, game show, etc.) with food.
6. Acknowledge individual achievements by using employee's name when preparing a report.
7. Post a thank you note on your staff's work station or door.
8. Give special assignments as development opportunities to staff who show initiative.
9. Arrange for an individual or team to present the results of its efforts to upper management.
10. Make a thank-you card by hand.
11. Give employees an extra-long lunch break to recognize their extra hard work and contributions.
12. Establish a place to display memos, posters, photos and so on, recognizing progress towards goals and thanking individual staff for their contributions.
13. Swap a task with another staff member for a day – his/her choice.
14. Establish a "Behind the Scenes" award specifically for those whose actions are not usually in the limelight.
15. Nominate a staff member for a formal department or university award.
16. Present "State of the Department" reports periodically to your staff, acknowledging the work and contributions of individuals and teams.
17. At monthly staff meetings, give an *Employee of the Month* type award or shout-out.
18. Recognize staff who actively serve the Rice or Houston community.
19. Have staff vote for top innovator, communicator, values role model, etc. Keep it meaningful, but light and fun.
20. Name a continuing recognition award after an outstanding staff or retiree.
21. Include an outstanding staff in a community meeting, a management or committee meeting or other special meeting.
22. Allow high performing staff to attend meetings in your place when you are not available.
23. Take your staff out for coffee and conduct a "Stay Interview". Find out what keeps them at Rice!
24. Ask your boss to attend a meeting with your staff during which you thank individuals and groups for their specific contributions.
25. Pop in at the first meeting of a special project team and express your appreciation for their involvement.
26. Send a letter to all team members at the conclusion of a project, thanking them for their participation.
27. Ask a high performing staff member to train or mentor a new staff member.

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28. Plan a surprise achievement celebration for an employee or group of employees. Book a park, a bowling alley or other location.
29. Start a suggestion program.
30. Privately recognize your staff's personal needs and challenges. Acknowledge graduations, births, deaths, marriages, etc.
31. Write a letter of praise recognizing specific contributions and accomplishments. Send a copy to senior management and the staff member's personnel file.
32. When you hear a positive remark about one of your staff, share it with that person as soon as possible (face-to-face is best; e-mail or voice mail are good in a pinch).
33. Call a staff member to your office to thank them (don't discuss any other issue).
34. If you have a newsletter, publish a "kudos" column and ask for "kudos" nominations throughout the department.
35. Publicly recognize the positive impact on operations of the solutions your staff devise for problems.
36. Express interest in and support for your staff's career development goals. Connect them to career resources.
37. Post a large "celebration calendar" in your work area. Post notes of recognition to specific dates.
38. Create and string a banner highlighting an accomplishment across the work area.
39. Support "flex-friendly" schedules when possible.
40. Highlight a staff member each month so everyone can get to know more about each other.
41. Encourage your staff to identify specific areas of interest in job-related skills. Then arrange for them to spend time with an in-house "expert" to learn more about the topic.
42. Encourage your staff to participate in community volunteer efforts.
43. Ask your staff how they would like to be recognized.
44. Use 3x5 cards to write "You're awesome because..." statements with stickers or other decorations. Staff can display them or collect the cards and refer to them when things aren't going perfectly.
45. Have a recognition event created by a peer group that decides what they will celebrate and how they will make it meaningful for participants.
46. Keep a supply of appropriately funny notes that can be given as immediate rewards. Keep the supply visible – in a basket or box in your office.
47. Widely publicize suggestions used and their positive impact on your department or school/division.
48. When someone has spent long hours at work, let them leave work early one day.
49. Acknowledge and celebrate birthdays and other major milestones, when appropriate.
50. Arrange for an outstanding staff member to have lunch with you and someone on the senior leadership team.
51. Allow a staff member to choose his/her next stretch assignment.

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52. Recognize a team accomplishment by designating that team as experts or consultants to other teams.
53. Recognize those committed to a healthy, inclusive workplace.
54. Say hello and good-bye to staff. Use please and thank you. And smile - it's contagious.
55. Create a Hall of Fame wall with photos of outstanding individual and team achievements.
56. Make a photo collage about a successful project that shows the people that worked on it, its stage of development and its completion and presentation.
57. Find out the person's hobby and buy an appropriate gift (a fishing lure, a golf hat, a sun visor, etc.) to recognize an outstanding contribution to achieving department goals.
58. Make and deliver a fruit basket, cookie basket, etc. to staff.
59. Inscribe a favorite book as a gift to reward an accomplishment.
60. Give the person a subscription to a journal or magazine that relates to their work.
61. Design a "Stress Support Kit" that includes wind-up toys, a stress ball, etc. – design your own.
62. Once a year, have a "Staff Appreciation Day" where the managers supply, cook and serve food.
63. Give flowers to an employee as a thank you.
64. Purchase a unique pin or a funny hat to serve as a memento for a task well done.
65. Hold informal retreats to foster communication and set goals.
66. Provide a lunch for project teams once they have made interim findings. Express your appreciation.
67. Give a personalized coffee cup or water bottle.
68. Design and give magnets with appropriate messages.
69. Give a deserving staff a logoed mug filled with healthy treats (or chocolate!).
70. Give a framed poem (poster or card) as a thank you.
71. Give a note reading, "Thank you. You are a \_\_\_\_\_!" Attach a roll of Lifesavers.
72. Give a puzzle as an award to a problem solver.
73. Have quarterly breakfasts with groups of staff.
74. If your team is under pressure, bring a bag of marbles to work and take a break to have a contest – a sure stress reliever...OR have a marble jar to add to for a longer-term project (celebrate when it fills).
75. Allow your staff time off to volunteer, give blood, or help at a food bank. Considering volunteering as a group, if possible.
76. Create opportunities for staff to share stories about the lives they are positively affecting through their work. Tell stories.
77. Treat an employee to lunch or dessert.
78. Cover the employee's work area with balloons.

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79. Give a copy of the latest best-selling management or business book or a subscription to a trade magazine.
80. At your next staff meeting, bring ice cream and all the toppings to make ice cream sundaes.
81. Set up a miniature golf course in your office, using whatever materials you have on hand. Set aside an afternoon or evening to hold a mini golf tournament. Have each area design their own "hole" and give prizes.
82. Take a video of a special event and share copies with participants.
83. Wear color-coded name tags in a staff meeting to indicate significant achievements - such as length of service, participation on a project team, etc.
84. Bake/bring a gift (healthy snack, bread, etc.) for an outstanding employee or team.
85. Give your staff some tickets to a Rice event (music, athletics, etc), for them and their family or friends to attend.
86. Purchase your staff a Rice logo t-shirt.
87. Pay for a staff member to attend a job-related training or conference of their choice.
88. Create coupons for free café items, movie tickets, time off with pay, etc.
89. Provide tickets or seats at a table for a community event.
90. Recognize a staff member or group of staff at a leadership meeting, all-staff meeting/event or community event.
91. Hand out the "Bright Ideas" award for innovative thinking. The winner gets a free dinner, tickets to the movies, etc.
92. Acknowledge employment anniversaries as they occur. Thank staff for their commitment and share their story.
93. Pay for your staff to go through a local car wash as a special treat.
94. Initiate a "traveling" award (something fun, splashy and visual) that individuals or teams can pass to one another each month or week for noteworthy achievements.
95. After a staff member has finished a project involving long hours at work, give them a note of appreciation and a gift certificate for something they can enjoy together (movie tickets, dinner out, etc.).
96. Provide yoyos, a slinky, blocks, dump trucks and other stress relief toys to lighten the mood during tense parts of the day.
97. Give staff Rice apparel as a token of appreciation.
98. Allow for flexible schedules so employees can attend a fitness class offered during the day.
99. Have a Field Day where different departments compete against each other in goofy activities for prizes.
100. Have a department retreat that includes teambuilding activities, recognition of accomplishments, fun activities, etc.

If you have ideas of other creative ways to recognize your staff, please shared them with us at

[employeerelations@rice.edu](mailto:employeerelations@rice.edu).