

35 Fun & Affordable Team Appreciation Ideas



As an effective leader, you are likely always looking for fun and affordable ideas to show appreciation to your team. Everyone enjoys recognition, and one of the most impactful ways to motivate your team is to reward behaviors that you want repeated.

As a basketball coach, our program had a “hard hat” award that was given each week to the player that had the most charges and deflections. Whatever industry you work in, there will be important statistics that you can choose to measure and celebrate.

And no matter what field you work in, it is important to remember this quote by VCU Basketball Coach Shaka Smart – *“Appreciation is the currency of success.”*



The following list of 35 ideas will hopefully inspire you to begin celebrating small victories along the way, instead of waiting until the end of your project or season.

Every team performs better when they feel appreciated for their efforts.

Consider adopting some of these fun ideas to show appreciation to your team:

1. Publish a “praise” column in your newsletter. Ask employees to submit suggestions for the honor to recognize their peers.
2. Bring in soft drinks and juices to stock the staff refrigerator for the week.
3. Use a dry erase marker to write a message to your employees on the window at the entrance of the building or office.
4. Purchase and inscribe a favorite book as a gift.
5. Create a “traveling trophy” that could represent excellence in your organization and be given to a team member to display it for a week
6. Begin meetings by recognizing accomplishments and highlighting employee successes.



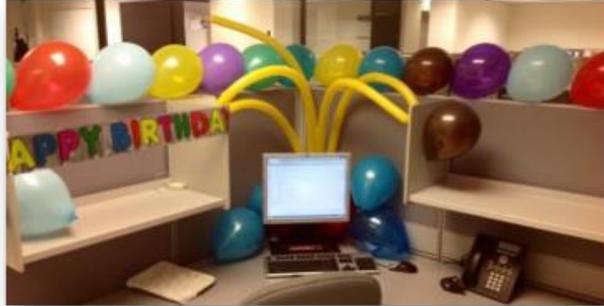
7. Give a personalized coffee cup mug filled with candy.

8. Start a peer-nominated employee of the month award, and print a certificate to honor the teammate who is voted for and why they were selected
9. Publicize the praise. If you hear a positive remark about a person, repeat it to that person as soon as possible—perhaps via email, and copy managers as an especially powerful way to help employees feel appreciated.
10. Send a hand-written thank you note to the team member's family, such as: "Please accept our sincere thanks for the support you have given to _____ as she (or he) has dedicated so much effort to our company. We are fortunate to have her (him) on the team and want you to know that she (he) is a great asset to our family as well..."
11. Photoshop a million-dollar bill with the employee's face on it, and post it around the office with a note saying, "Thanks a Million."



12. Post a birthdays and anniversaries Celebration Calendar in your office. Celebrate employees' birthdays and employment anniversaries.
13. Give "honored" employees an extra-long lunch break.
14. Complete a simple daily task for the employee – whether by surprise or as his/her choice, they will appreciate you "lightening their load."
15. Give the person a membership or subscription that relates to their work
16. Post a large "celebration calendar" in your work area. Tack on notes of recognition to specific dates.

17. Surprise the team with doughnuts or a breakfast buffet as they near completion of an important or difficult project.
18. Fill their office or workspace with brightly colored balloons and a card.



19. Give a framed poem as a thank you.
20. Send a gift card to the employee's home, signed by a manager.
21. Bring a baked gift basket (cookies, etc.) for an afternoon team surprise.
22. Allow the team to flex their schedule or work adjusted hours if possible, to allow for more family time or errands.
23. Award the teammate a coveted parking spot, set aside for the "most driven" employee of the month.



24. Give them a chance to connect with new people or learn new skills by sending high performing people to conferences or other networking events.

25. Loosen up the dress code for a day (teachers love jeans!)
26. As a manager or supervisor, have fun putting on an apron and serving THEM coffee one morning – taking orders as a “servant” leader.
27. Ask for their input and involve them in meetings that may impact them in the future to show you trust their perspectives and ideas.
28. Let them eat cake – for birthdays, or new hires, or met quotas, etc.
29. Get other employees to share a “what I appreciate about _____” sentence, and then frame and sign the it as a gift.
30. Call a meeting and have everyone give a 30 second standing ovation to the person whose efforts or accomplishments you want to recognize.
31. Contribute to THEIR cause, and make a donation or participate in a worthwhile charity that they care about.
32. Send flowers to them at their desk, compliments of the company.



33. Put together a scrapbook that clients can see as an “album of all-stars,” and publish one new page for each all-star employee behavior, including a picture and description of the achievement.

34. Play their favorite music at the office during lunch (or an entire day!)
35. Send a very formal summons to meet with a manager, then surprise them with your praise for their efforts and a picture to be included in a company-wide email.

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While planning which of these 35 team appreciation ideas to use, keep in mind that if you think you provide enough recognition, you can always do more. **It is nearly impossible to say “thank you” enough or be specific enough about what the employee did to earn your recognition.**

Great [leaders outlaw saying “good job,”](#) and are always specific with their praise - so teammates both feel appreciated and are motivated to repeat good behaviors again.

If you are looking for an even more fun and impactful event to thank your large office staff or to help prepare them for a challenging upcoming project, consider the impact that a day of laughter and lessons from team building activities could provide.

[Team development](#) is an ongoing process, and the rewards you choose to share will have a tremendous influence on morale and motivation.

I hope you also choose to [follow me on twitter](#) or to [connect on LinkedIn](#) to get additional information and teamwork resources!

