

Create a Gold-Medal Experience: Presenting Awards

Award presentations can be an awkward experience not only for the presenter but also for the award recipient. Whether you are giving an award to an employee for years of service or an outstanding contribution to the company, the recognition event needs to be prepared for.

A great recognition event can generate pride, increase employee satisfaction and establish trust between employees and managers. However, a poorly prepared and presented recognition event can reduce retention, create disengaged employees as well as hurt the company's bottom line.

According to Chester Elton & Adrian Gostick, authors of *Managing with Carrots*, *The 24 Carrot Manager* and *A Carrot A Day*, "the world's most successful organizations have learned that they must make a recognition event something memorable – with almost as much ceremony and emotion as an Olympic-medal event." Each organization can accomplish this if they remember the six tips for an effective awards presentation.

First, the right person needs to make the presentation. The highest executive of the company does not need to be the person to acknowledge the recipient. The presenter should be the highest-ranking manager who personally knows the employee and his or her accomplishments. The presenter also needs to be able to evoke emotion through anecdotal examples in order to evoke an emotion in the recipient as well as all employees in the organization.

Second, managers must be trained in making great presentations. They need to know who is being recognized and be able to talk about the specific contributions the employee made to the organization. They need to be able to focus only on the positive things that happen within the organization and also be trained not to tell "off-color" jokes or make discriminatory remarks.

Third, if an award consists of corporate symbolism, managers must be able to explain the symbolism and how it ties into the values and goals of the organization.

Fourth, invite colleagues to attend and ask two or three coworkers to comment on the recipient. By inviting others to participate in the performance being honored, employees better appreciate the organization and helps them to emulate successful behavior.

Fifth, if the recipient is willing, allow them to make their own comments. This allows them to thank people who have helped them as well as those who participated in the recognition event.

Sixth, the presenter must close with a sincere thank-you to the recipient as well as to all who attended.

Following these six simple tips ensures a Gold-medal event and will help further the goals and values of the organization.