**8 Ideas for Making Your Employees Feel Special on Employee Appreciation Day**

Employee Appreciation Day falls on Friday, March 1st this year. If you haven’t taken advantage of celebrating Employee Appreciation Day in the past, now is your chance to do so! Expressing gratitude and letting your employees know you appreciate them is one of the best ways to keep employees engaged and motivated in the workplace.

However, many employees don’t feel appreciated by their employer or company. A report from [Globoforce](http://www.globoforce.com/) found that 40% of surveyed employees claimed they weren’t recognized at all over the past year. This is unfortunate because both employees and employers benefit from employee appreciation and recognition. Employees who feel appreciated tend to be more loyal to their company, view their boss as trustworthy, and feel more satisfied in their role.

If you haven’t planned something special for your employees yet, no need to worry. Check out some of these ideas to show your employees that they are appreciated:

**Health and wellness day.** Turn Employee Appreciation Day into a health and wellness day! Make it a day all about stress-relief and [self-care](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/little-ways-to-practice-self-care). Consider bringing in a meditation instructor, yoga instructor, or massage therapist for on-site chair massages. Provide employees with a healthy breakfast or lunch, and focus on the day on employee wellbeing. Hosting a health and wellness day will help your employees de-stress and focus on their health.

**Team building day.** Use Employee Appreciation Day to bring your team together. If your budget allows, take a group outing to a fun team-building activity. Some examples include an escape room, volunteering event, or bowling. Have employees brainstorm and vote on a fun activity to do together. This will help create some excitement and show employees that you care about their input. If you aren’t able to take employees out for the day, get creative and host some team building activities in the office. Check out this [article](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/6-team-building-ideas-that-your-employees-will-actually-like) for some ideas!

**Gratitude notes.** A little bit of [gratitude can go a long way](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/cultivating-gratitude-in-the-workplace-free-must-have-guide) in the workplace. Create hand-written “Thank You” notes for each employee that express why you are grateful for having them on your team. Try not to make these cards sound generic – think of the specific ways that each individual has contributed to the success of your company. If budget allows, you can also include a small personal gift or gift card with your gratitude note.

**Offer extra PTO.** Give employees a couple hours of extra PTO to leave early or consider making the day a half day, if possible. Giving employees more free time to spend with their family or friends is a great way to show them that you appreciate their hard work. Who doesn’t love a little time off?

**Take a game break.** Have employees bring in some of their favorite board games and take a game break during the day. Board games are a fun way for employees to release some stress. They also provide an opportunity for [social connections](https://www.forbes.com/sites/alankohll/2018/01/31/5-ways-social-connections-can-enhance-your-employee-wellness-program/#7c7068de527c) to take place. If your team is feeling competitive, try hosting a game tournament and offer a special prize to the winner.

**Bring in a guest speaker.** Keep things exciting by bringing in a surprise guest! Find a motivational speaker, hypnotist, or comedian to bring in for a fun break during the workday. Bringing in a guest speaker or entertainer is a great way to boost employees’ moods and [improve employee morale](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/6-easy-ways-to-boost-employee-morale). Plus, it’ll definitely leave employees with something to talk about!

**Host a healthy potluck.** Office potlucks are a great way to bring your employees and team together – who doesn’t love to bond over food? Bring in some of your favorite healthy dishes and encourage employees do to the same. Check out this [article](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/host-a-healthy-office-potluck) for some tips on hosting a healthy potluck and some delicious ideas for what to bring!

**Hold a recognition ceremony.** Employee recognition is essential is creating a strong office culture. Host a recognition ceremony for your employees to celebrate Employee Appreciation Day. Honor each employee for a contribution that they have made to the team. You can even include some fun and creative awards to keep things lively.

No matter what you decide to do on Employee Appreciation Day, just make sure it’s a day that’s dedicated to recognizing, respecting, and encouraging employees. Part of creating a culture of wellness means keeping employees engaged and happy with their jobs. Even though Employee Appreciation Day is only once a year, remember to keep up your appreciation efforts all year long to support a healthy and happy workforce.