



Building Amazing Performance Awards: Vendor Questions & Best Practices

It may seem like recognition for the high-performers in your organization is a “nice to have”—an add-on. In reality, the quality of your performance awards strategy and the awards themselves can build an effective company culture, or they can drive away the most integral people in your company.

Reaching the “top of the mountain” is when your employees will feel the most empowered, but they are also the most vulnerable. How you respond and acknowledge them will make the difference.

Performance awards aren't limited to sales—they can include areas from across your company including customer service, safety, operational excellence, etc. When considering starting or auditing your program and awards, there are some best practices to follow and key things you should consider in a vendor.

Background Questions

If you currently have a performance award program, consider the following:

- Is your performance award program aligned with both your company goals and values?
- Does your performance award represent your company culture?
- Is the award itself unique?
- Are your employees excited and motivated by the award?

Best Practices

In building your performance awards program and giving awards, be sure you emphasize, measure, and reward the right behavior effectively. Below are three core practices for a rewards program that creates an inspiring company culture.



1) KEEP THE PROGRAM ALIGNED, CLEAR, AND ENGAGING

Aligned: To be effective, your awards need to align with both your company values and priorities.

Clear: Clearly outlined parameters and metrics are essential for getting employees to buy in. What is the basis for your awards—KPI's, metrics, or objectives? Is it an award for individuals? A team award? Are you doing both?

Engaging: Get feedback from employees on what's important and what excites them. Balance company aspirations with employee feedback. Challenging your employees is important, but people will disengage if the parameters for earning performance awards are out of reach.

2) GIVE AWESOME AWARDS

Receiving a performance award is a career-defining and possibly life-changing moment. If you want the greatest benefit from your performance awards program, the award itself and its presentation should match the accomplishment. Unique, custom pieces not only create an indelible impression, but they are showcases of the values and success of your company.

3) TAILOR YOUR PROGRAM

One-of-a-kind and interesting performance awards inspire passion—customize yours to your unique organization and the employees whose hard work makes it successful.

If your performance awards reinforce specific company values, are based on ambitious but not unattainable goals, and are recognized with thoughtful, unique pieces, they can be powerful tools to build durable company culture, passion, and loyalty.

Vendor Questions

Now that you've considered best practices for an impactful performance award program, you want to make sure you partner with someone who can help you deliver. The expertise and skill of your vendor is a deciding factor in designing and delivering your performance awards and your program. Ask potential vendors the following questions:



- ☐ How experienced are they? What's their reputation? Can they provide references?
- ☐ What kind of history does the vendor have with designing and delivering on award and recognition pieces?
- ☐ What is the process for designing for your performance award?
- ☐ Does the vendor work with your company in developing an award? If so, do they work from a range of internal viewpoints?
- ☐ What materials do they offer?
- ☐ What is their proofing process like?
- ☐ Can they meet your volume requirements (both minimums and maximums)?
- ☐ Where will the awards be manufactured?
- ☐ How do they guarantee quality?
- ☐ Do they have an easy fulfillment process?
- ☐ What is their shipping process (and how do they ensure you'll get your awards intact and on time)?
- ☐ How does the vendor ensure you and your employees will be happy with the end result?
- ☐ What ongoing support is available? Will the vendor be there in the future as you continue your program?
- ☐ Can the vendor help improve effectiveness by helping you refine and grow your program over time?

Are you ready to build a performance award program that truly recognizes your highest performers and inspires every employee to elevate your organization to elite status?

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