

Top 30 Recognition Ideas



1. Be specific when thanking someone: "Thanks for recruiting the hospital to sponsor our Arthritis Walk – not just "thanks for doing a good job"
2. Send cards by snail mail to say "thanks"
3. Remember their birthday with a card
4. Match the reward to the person – sports fan? Coin collector?
5. Invite them to your board meeting to be recognized
6. Send info to the local newspaper to praise them
7. Recognize them WHEN it happens – not just at the end of event
8. Feature them in local newsletters
9. Have a celebration after the event
10. Send hand-written notes
11. Know everyone's name and how to spell it
12. Use voice mail after hours to leave a nice message they'll find when they get to work the next morning
13. Use "brag time" at a meeting. Brag on someone in the room and tell everyone you expect three brags to follow yours – it makes everyone feel appreciated
14. Make up your awards – "Behind the Scenes Award", "Caught in the Act of Caring Award", "Pat on the Back Award", "Brighten My Day Award"
15. Make very creative and festive email awards to send them
16. Publicly acknowledge the good advice a volunteer gives
17. Continually acknowledge the small things they do
18. Invite their spouse to a recognition event
19. Invite their boss to a recognition event
20. Recognize their spouse at any functions for allowing them the freedom of being a volunteer
21. Send their boss a letter recognizing their employee's volunteer work
22. Avoid giving the same "certificate" to everyone – it reduces the value
23. Use post-it-notes to leave messages on their car or other items
24. Create a "Wall of Fame" bulletin board with photos, etc of volunteers
25. Make them "Star of the Day" – announce their success
26. Introduce new volunteers with a profile – where they went to school, where they work, their hobbies, fun facts about them – this makes them feel welcome
27. Name a prestigious award after a volunteer
28. Honor the anniversary of them joining the Arthritis Foundation as a volunteer
29. Take them to lunch
30. Be creative by sending food items as rewards with a special message:
 - Tootsie Roll – For the Role They Play
 - Lifesavers – For Being One
 - Smarties – For Having a "Smart" Idea
 - Commit-"mints" – For signing up for a challenge
 - \$100,000 candy bar – For securing that BIG sponsorship
 - Snickers – For Making People Laugh
 - M&M's – For Being Marvelous and Motivated
 - Lollipop – For "licking every challenge"
 - Gum – For "sticking to it"