

Title:

Recognition! What's In A Name?

Word Count:

494

Summary:

Cameron Timpson is CEO of a medium-sized electronic assembly operation. He makes a point of making a weekly recognition award to the best assembler on the factory floor. "Today," he shouts to the gathering crowd "it is Lavinia Argot's turn" and he turns to her to present her prize. Her mouth is smiling but her eyes are not. "My name's Davina Urquhart" she whispers. Cameron smiles and tells her not to worry about it.

The ability to connect with people at a personal level is...

Keywords:

employee, recognition, employee recognition, motivation, employee motivation, rewards, staff rewards

Article Body:

Cameron Timpson is CEO of a medium-sized electronic assembly operation. He makes a point of making a weekly recognition award to the best assembler on the factory floor. "Today," he shouts to the gathering crowd "it is Lavinia Argot's turn" and he turns to her to present her prize. Her mouth is smiling but her eyes are not. "My name's Davina Urquhart" she whispers. Cameron smiles and tells her not to worry about it.

The ability to connect with people at a personal level is such an important skill that all supervisors, managers, vice-presidents, directors and CEOs should possess it. Even the most trivial oversight can have a massively de-motivating effect on employees.

Recognition is not only some sort of formalized award ceremony; it is not contained only in a pay-check; it is part of the fabric of interpersonal relationships within the entire organization.

Personal details

In his book "How to Win Friends and Influence People" the best selling author Dale Carnegie tells us that a person's name is the sweetest word they will ever

hear in any language. Remembering someone's name, especially if you meet them infrequently, sends a message that they are important to you. Forgetting names or getting them wrong sends completely the opposite message.

But surely there is a point beyond which it is impossible to remember every name in the organization. Well, the simple answer is "No". Your brain has a capacity in bits of 10 followed by 8741 zeros. A Gigabyte is 10 followed by 8 zeros (1,000,000,000) bits. So, compared with the average computer hard drive your memory capacity is enormous and there is no physical reason why anyone cannot learn 300 or a thousand names, given time. The only barrier to a manager learning the names of everyone in the organization is whether they think it is important enough.

Add to this list of names, details of where people live, their wives names, how many children they have and their interests outside work and you have a highly valuable motivation database at your disposal.

## Projects

When there is no senior management attention paid to projects they can often drag along and suffer from under-funding, understaffing or both and they may end up producing poor results. There is a fine line to be drawn between "breathing down their necks" and being motivational but that is the true skill of being a thoughtful leader.

Project teams need the same sort of collective recognition that an individual desires. As part of the team, each member can benefit from words of praise aimed at the whole project. In these circumstances, it can actually be more destructive to heap recognition on one particular team member when they may have achieved their success through collaboration with their colleagues.

Of course, Davina (or is it Lavinia?) was pleased that she had been recognized for her hard work by the CEO but his lack of attention to the small detail of her name took the shine off just a little.