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Paul McDonald • May. 02, 2016



Another tax season is over, and now you can catch your breath. As a manager for a public accounting firm, you may want to take off for a well-deserved vacation. But before you go, be sure to show your hardworking staff some recognition.

The effect of your “thank you” will be immediate and have a lasting impact. Appreciation from management boosts morale, enhances the workplace culture and plays a big role in [employee retention](#).

Here are ways — big and small — to acknowledge your accountants after tax season:

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with the reward.

Small but thoughtful touches – such as gourmet chocolates sent to employees' home addresses, restaurant gift cards with enough value to treat their family, or gift certificates for a facial or massage – can mean a lot. Be sure to attach a brief, handwritten thank-you note, too.

**3. Face-to-face thanks:** Gifts and notes are nice, but there's nothing quite like being thanked personally. Draw up a list of employees, and divide the names among partners and senior management. Their goal throughout the coming month would be to approach every worker on their list and offer **recognition** for a job well done. For **remote workers**, pick up the phone or have a video chat.

**4. Public recognition:** Let everyone at the firm — not just your accountants — know how much you appreciate their hard work. Some ideas:

- On your firm's Facebook page or Instagram account, upload a group photo and thank employees for another great tax season.
- Become a public radio sponsor, which often includes air time you could use to publicly acknowledge your employees.
- Call up a local radio station and dedicate a song that recognizes your staff's role during tax time. Make sure the staff tunes in so they hear the message.

**5. Funny awards:** It's good to laugh after a grueling tax season. Hold a contest in categories, such as:

- Funniest tax season story
- Craziest deduction
- The most number of times you've had to redo a return to satisfy a client
- Longest tax return

Of course, keep all anecdotes anonymous. Present award certificates and humorous

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boxes or “hero” sandwiches, or bring to the work site a couple of popular food trucks.

- Thursday: Frozen yogurt day for the afternoon break – make it fun by including all the toppings.
- Friday: Happy hour – after the work day is done (and keeping with the firm’s policy), treat the team to festive hors d’oeuvres and drinks.

Or go the non-food route by having a special activity or theme each day:

- “Massage Monday” – Bring in a team of massage therapists to give shoulder and back massages throughout the day.
- “Tuesday Tunes” – Hire a string orchestra to play in the lobby during lunch.
- “Wellness Wednesday” – After a morning of work, everyone heads to a nearby gym for an afternoon of swimming, basketball, Zumba or yoga classes, or another fun group activity.
- “Tot or Turtle Thursday” – This is the day to show off children or pets. Be prepared for lots of coos and cuddles, but workers probably won’t get much done. (That can be OK for one day after tax season!)
- “Freebie Friday” – Order goodies branded with your company’s logo and hand them out near the end of the day. Go beyond pens and mugs, and opt for popular gifts like fleece jackets, hoodies, messenger bags, power banks for boosting mobile battery life or picnic blankets.

To ensure you’re [offering perks](#) your staff will sincerely love, create an ad hoc employee fun committee. Give them enough budget and free rein to be fun and creative.

No matter what you decide to do, remember there’s no rule that says you have to spend money to thank staff. If you can swing it, though, above-and-beyond efforts go

a long way toward creating a workplace environment where people want to do their

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