

Questions & Answers | Rewarding and Recognising your Drivers

Webinar 5 June, 2019

Q: Why is it important to recognise your drivers?

A: Drivers are responsible for the wellbeing and safety of passengers and other road users. In addition, they are in charge of high value vehicles, products and equipment. They are the most prominent public 'face' of the organisation, and often have to deal with difficult situations, bad roads, hostile environments and unfair demands. At the same time, a driver's driving style, attitude and general behaviour has a great influence on fleet costs, from fuel consumption to repairs. Being recognised has a significant impact on employee motivation, retention rates and job satisfaction. Driver recognition initiatives in the corporate sector have proven that investment in such programmes is beneficial and leads to cost savings, while at the same time reducing crashes and improving employee pride.

Q: What non-monetary awards can we use?

A: Certificate of appreciation; Paid time off, even just a few hours on a Friday afternoon; Annual driver appreciation week with various fun activities and prizes provided; Driver Appreciation Lunch / Dinner for all the drivers and their families; "Thank you" card to the drivers and their families, thanking them for their hard work and all the time they spend separated during long trips; Small gift (cake, certificate, round of applause); Lunch with the CEO / Director or other high level manager of your organisation; Professional development courses; Recognition Bulletin Board in a visible location with Driver of the Month, stories, praise.

Q: What other types of awards can we use?

A: Provide healthy snacks such as fruit; Give company / organisation branded items such as a hat or T-shirt; Give branded, reusable water bottles, then provide drinking water dispensers so that drivers can refill their bottles; Praise and positive feedback; Use the sandwich approach if you need to provide constructive criticism: Compliment; Suggest; Compliment; Having regular check-ins with Fleet Managers is one way to show drivers they are appreciated and their managers care about their welfare and performance; Send an encouraging text message once in a while; Give drivers a safe challenge, either individually or as a team (for example, encourage them to improve their fuel efficiency by 5%).

Q: What are the benefits of rewarding your drivers?

A: Drivers impact on all of fleet management's priorities. Yet despite their critical role, drivers are often the lowest paid and least visible among employees. They are seldom acknowledged in any meaningful way and are taken for granted. Being recognised has a significant impact on employee motivation, retention rates and job satisfaction. Driver recognition initiatives in the corporate sector have proven that investment in such

programmes is beneficial and leads to cost savings, while at the same time reducing crashes and improving employee pride

Q: How can we provide feedback?

A: Performance management involves recognising both positive and negative behaviours. Too often, we focus on the negative. While a fleet manager may have legitimate concerns regarding a driver's performance, this should be tempered with praise and encouragement. Use the sandwich approach if you need to provide constructive criticism: Compliment; Suggest; Compliment. Start with a compliment or an acknowledgement of the work done well. Then provide a practical suggestion and ways in which the driver can improve. Finally, remind the driver you are aware of their good work or the challenges they face on the job, so that the meeting ends on an uplifting note.

Q: How do we measure or capture the Drivers' data?

A: If you have a fleet management system, it will already be capturing some of the data you might use, such as fuel consumption, speeding, harsh braking etc. If not, use a spreadsheet to keep track of the indicators you've selected.

Q: What are the 5 key qualities for a successful Driver Recognition Programme?

A: A successful recognition programme has five key qualities:

- 1)Regular—Provide regular feedback throughout the year, rather than only during annual evaluations;
- 2)Positive—Feedback is not just negative or critical. Instead, most feedback should be encouraging and positive;
- 3)Two-way—Drivers are encouraged to provide feedback as well, and their suggestions are valued and taken seriously;
- 4)Transparent—The process for recognising individuals is clearly laid out, well communicated and transparent to avoid accusations of favoritism;
- 5) Data—Accurate measurements of key performance indicators will assist a programme to be fair and transparent.

Q: Why are regular check ins important?

A: Regular check-ins with the fleet manager, including debriefing after a long trip, will help drivers feel appreciated, engaged with the management and improve employee retention. These short, one-on-one meetings can also provide the manager with practical, real-world information on best routing, safety issues, vehicle maintenance requirements etc.