

Incentive Planning

By Mary Paige Forrester

The following information is a compilation from many sources and reflects my personal experience in management in the call center industry. The author takes no credit for creating these ideas, only in compiling them in a manner consistent for use in a customer service/call center environment. Originally developed for use at Bedford Fair Apparel, Inc. in Wilmington, NC, it is hoped that these ideas can be used to increase morale and build employee loyalty in many other customer contact centers. It is ever-evolving and not all-inclusive.

(NOTE: Due to the success in the contact center, this was eventually adapted and rolled out in the Distribution Center at the request of the Vice President, using goals and objectives suited for that unique environment. It has also been published in portions by the periodical, "The Customer Service Advantage", and is therefore copyrighted/protected in its current form.)

When implementing an incentive program, there are various considerations to be made. Management needs to be cognizant of the physical cost, as well as the time involved for staff members responsible for maintaining the program. Incentive programs do not require a massive amount of staff time or monetary resources. This plan, like many others, allows for flexibility based on company resources and budgetary constraints.

Initially, it is easy to be motivated and to aggressively start an incentive plan. To be aggressive at initiation, however, can cause too much expectation and can later result in loss of interest. Remember this when starting your incentive plan. Too much too soon can be detrimental. Continuous variety and an element of surprise are fundamental to success. If the program begins with a bang and then loses momentum, the positive effects are also lost. Employees may begin to expect incentives, in which case the program can actually add to lowered employee morale. Start slowly. Build steadily. Keep it fresh.

Looking at published studies regarding what employees say motivates them versus what management thinks motivates employees, the difference in desire of the employees and assumption of management is apparent. Take a look at the study results below.

What motivates Call Center Professionals?

| <i>What Employers Think</i> | | <i>What Employees Say</i> |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Appreciation | 4 |
| 2 | Involvement/planning | 7 |
| 3 | Sympathy | 10 |
| 4 | Job Security | 5 |
| 5 | Higher Wages | 1 |
| 6 | Interesting Work | 3 |
| 7 | Promotion Opportunity | 6 |
| 8 | Employer Loyalty | 8 |
| 9 | Working Conditions | 2 |
| 10 | Tactful Discipline | 9 |

Considering this, think about what might work in your company's environment.

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Important things to keep in mind when building your plan:

- Keep goals attainable for all employees. If every employee does not have a chance to reach at least some of the goals, you will see only the top performers participating. The employees who need the motivation the most will be the least likely to take an interest in participating.
- Have a wide variety of goals and incentives that will include all employees at all levels of performance. Include incentives that do not focus entirely on productivity.
- Start small and then add. Starting big can spell disaster. Staff members must be able to maintain the program itself and employee interest in the program - without having employees grow to expect additional rewards.
- Make the reward process “fun” so employees will want to be included.
- Publicize winners in your company newsletter. Post winners names on the company bulletin board for all management and staff to see.
- Have senior management announce new program ideas and distribute rewards. It will make employees feel noticed, and will prove that the company takes recognition seriously.
- Encourage incentive program ideas from the front-line staff. They know best what they want, and they can provide you with the most successful ideas. (You can even incorporate an incentive for employees who provide usable ideas!)
- No incentive should ever detract from the customer or the ultimate goal of providing exceptional sales / customer service.
- If you do not already have a company suggestion box, get one ASAP. Have forms designed specifically for company suggestions, policy suggestions and incentive ideas. (Samples included.)
- Remember that incentives do not all have to be a contest/reward scenario. There are lots of perks you can provide your employees to express gratitude for their hard work that have nothing to do with competition.
- **BE CLEAR TO EMPLOYEES WHAT THE INCENTIVE PROGRAM IS AND HOW EACH INCENTIVE WORKS!** Nothing puts a damper on things faster than employees not knowing about an incentive or how it works. Use whatever means best suits your company environment. At Bedford, we often used a memo regarding new or ongoing incentives. This way, the staff had a written explanation of the purpose, the goal and any associated rewards.
- It is not recommended that individual stats be displayed for all to see. The preferred method is a weekly/monthly “report card” given to each representative showing his/her stats in comparison to the whole group being evaluated. Your top “calls per hour” performer may not be as customer-oriented as one who takes fewer calls. The focus should be for the employee to be aware of their personal performance and how it compares to the group, not to be concerned about what other individuals might be doing – or not doing. Posting all employee stats for everyone to see can cause undue animosity, lack of morale and poor relations between teammates.

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GETTING STARTED

There are so many types of incentives! Your company may already have company wide incentives in place – maybe even some of those mentioned here! But, there is always room to grow, expand and modify these in order to keep interest flourishing and motivation high.

Team Names:

Most contact centers are already organized into “teams” within each department. If your center is not, then consider establishing teams right away. ~ Teams can be established as part of the structure of an organization, or just as tool to be used in incentive programs. However, in order for employees to take “ownership” and feel they are a part of a team, they need to be involved in the formation of the team. Even if teams are already formed, there are ways to make new and existing members feel “part” of the team.

- Start with a competition to name the team!
- Make sure the leader of the group is involved with their group’s competition.
- Have everyone in each department submit ideas for possible team names. (They should be allowed to submit name ideas for ANY team – not just their own.)
- Have each team member vote for a team name based on the suggestions made for their team name.
- Once a name has been determined (via vote counts), reward the employees who submitted the names that were eventually selected.
- Have the named teams decide on a team “mascot” and colors.
- Ask one or more team members from each team to make a poster for their team. This should be displayed in the section where this team is normally seated.

(EXAMPLES: Names used at several former employers have included: Robbie’s Raiders, Veronica’s Vikings, Angie’s Angels, Todd’s Tenacious Tricksters, Bonnie’s Beanie Babies, Rachelle’s Rugrats, Ken’s Killer Bees, Mel’s Maranders, The Front Paige’s, Jeff’s Jumping Beans, Michael’s Lean Mean Machine, etc.)

Team Competition:

- Invest in an erasable marker board for each department with different colored pens.
- Have a team/group leader or supervisor list the statistics for each **team** for the previous day/week/month (in different colors) so each team can be compared to all other teams.
- Keep a record of which team “wins” with the best statistics each day/week/month.
- Depending on your budget and time constraints, award a team prize to the team who most consistently has the best stats. (Team Lunch Party works well for this one.)

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Individual Stats Competition - #1 (Productivity)

- Within each department, each *individual* should also have an opportunity to be recognized.
- Have the team leader maintain weekly “report cards” informing each individual employee how he/she is doing in relation to all other staff members in their department. (See example form.)
- When an employee meets or exceeds all of the established goals for a week, place the rep’s name in a raffle drawing. For each week within the month/quarter a rep makes productivity, they get an additional “chance” in the raffle.
- NOTE: Even if a rep does not meet goal each week, they are still eligible for the drawing as long as they make productivity at least one week out of the month/quarter.

Individual Stats Competition - #2 (Improvement)

- In order to include those employees who may not necessarily be the top performers in productivity, but are none-the-less good employees, have a competition for the “Most Improved” in each productivity statistic each month, or for “the most customer compliments received”.
- A certificate of recognition can be awarded to representatives. These are great motivators, especially if employees are allowed to display awards at their workstations.

Individual Stats Competition - #3 (Mystery Goal)

- Make it exciting! Don’t let them know WHICH particular statistic will be the one reviewed the following day/week/month for a special incentive.
- Select one statistic from the many you monitor. Make sure several management members KNOW the mystery statistic beforehand.
- Announce the criteria after the period in review. Reward the individual(s) who excels in this mystery category.

Trainee Incentives:

- Start the mood off right by incorporating “fun” into learning with new employees. (See incentives CROSSWORDS & Other Games.)
- Present each new employee with a certificate of completion following classroom training that they can display at their workstation.
- Have a “last day of training” pizza party for each training class.
- Make sure to reward those who cross-train as well.

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Crosswords & Other Games:

- Have a new product or other “new” item for employees to know, learn, sell, etc.? Make it FUN!
- Use graph paper to write in words that can connect. Use descriptions relating to new or existing products, catalogs, etc. Make these into “word jumble”, “crossword puzzles” or “hidden word puzzles”.
- Each employee who participates in the learning game gets a chance in a drawing for a prize.

Bingo:

- Create several different BINGO cards using whatever you wish in the squares. (We used the 50 states a lot. You can also product names, SKU numbers, etc. – especially for upsells.) The center square is still a “free” square – just as in normal bingo. It is important to have at least a few different card designs.
- Distribute BINGO cards to employees taking calls. When they speak with someone from a specific state or sell a specific product, they can “mark” the appropriate box.
- As an employee gets BINGO, he/she gets a “grab bag” prize – and also gets a chance at a raffle for a larger prize at the end of the game.

(NOTE: To ensure honesty, have employees write the order / customer ID number of the order or customer that corresponds with each bingo square. This way, winners can be verified.)

Birthday Recognition:

- Keep a record of the birthdays of employees. Recognize this special day.
- Have the team leader for an employee with a birthday be responsible for this recognition.
- Provide a balloon/mug/etc. of some sort with a card – HAND SIGNED – by the employee’s leader, supervisor, manager and the company’s upper management.
- If the employee will be off on his/her birthday, do it the day before...

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Holiday Fun #1 – Decorating Contest

- For major holidays, have each department decorate their work areas. (If the company cannot afford a budget for each department, consider allowing those employees who wish to, donate a dollar or two each. The Dollar General store will have LOTS of decorations!)
- The department with the best decorations (judged by a group from upper management) receives a department pizza or sub party.
- For Halloween, a “Best Costume” party is always fun! Include prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place – as well as for “Most Creative”, “Scariest”, and “Honorable Mention”.

(NOTE: This can be done minimally, but personal experience has taught me employees really have fun with this! The credit and customer service departments at Bedford Fair were always at odds during decorating contests. One year, the C/S department actually built a graveyard in the corner of the call center! It included tombstones with witty epitaphs of our most horrid customers!)

Holiday Fun #2 – Games

- For each holiday, have employees who wish to participate take part in a holiday-theme game. An idea below for St. Patrick’s Day will give you a place to start. Be creative in your ideas!
- Just as crosswords and puzzles can be used for training, they can also be used to learn about exciting new holiday promotions.
- EXAMPLE: “Wear Green to Win Green” on St. Patrick’s Day.
- Halloween Mask Designing Contest or Scary Story Writing Contest

St. Patrick’s Day Game: Give each employee a log sheet made for the holiday in order to write down order or customer ID numbers. For each of the following scenarios, the employee can list the customer ID or order #. The employee with the most entries at the end of the day wins a reward. Any employee who participates at all gets entered into a drawing/raffle for a prize. (NOTE: Have one winner for part-time and one winner for full-time employees.)

1. A customer has one of the following in their name/address/phone/ customer ID: **“317”, “March”, “Saint”, “Patrick”, “Green”,** etc.
2. The customer **PURCHASES** any item with **“317”** in the style number or **GREEN** in the name of the product or color.

Department Fun Days

- Once a month or quarter, encourage each department to plan their own Department Fun Day.
- This is an ideal time for employees to share recipes (with a potluck), as well as to bond as a group. The employees can decide what – if any – special games they want for their day.

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Company Picnic

- Invest in your employees. Give them a day on you.
- Allow workers to bring immediate family members (spouse, children).
- Close your facility...or do it on a “day off”. It’s worth the investment. Employees get to see managers “off-duty” and as “real” people. Management gets to meet the families and learn more about their staff. Upper management becomes real and approachable to employees from top to bottom.
- SUGGESTIONS: One former employer used to close early (send calls to outsource facility), rent a theme park for the evening and have a barbecue. Another would provide company shirts for all employees and have a picnic at the local park with everyone bringing a covered dish and the company providing hotdogs and burgers.

Holiday Party

- Whether an individual celebrates the holiday season as Christmas, Hanukkah or any number of other cultural events, it is one of the most significant times of the year. Have a holiday party for your employees.
- If budgets allow, play party games for prizes, and include door prizes and a raffle.

Company Breakfast

- One former employer – as a company benefit – provided Monday Morning Breakfast. Even though it meant arriving early for work on a Monday, nearly every employee made it in for breakfast. The owner and the management staff cooked breakfast for the employees at the start of each week as a way of saying “thank you for working here”.

Busy Day Goodies or Peak Season Perks:

- If your company is in peak season or your departments are understaffed and overworked, show your appreciation on those days when everyone is chipping in and working extra. Have bagels for breakfast, pizza for lunch and sub sandwiches for dinner. If it means the staff will take a 30-minute lunch instead of an hour (and work that extra time for you), it is worth the investment.

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Guess the Number

- Have a jar of candy. It can be jelly beans, gummies, hard candy...whatever. Place it on a table in the cafeteria, or on the counter at the reception desk. Let employees who want “guess” the number of items in the jar. The person who guesses closest to the actual number gets the jar and its contents. (Of course, someone does have to count the items when they go IN the jar!)

Lucky Gumball:

- Pick a criteria or goal.
- Each time an employee meets or reaches the criteria or goal, he/she gets a penny to put in the gumball machine.
- The gumball machine is filled with gumballs of all colors – except there is only ONE in a particular color! That is the LUCKY GUMBALL and the person who gets that gumball gets a big prize!
- These gumballs have varied values in all ranges: some are worth a small token prize, some are worth Company \$\$\$s (see that section please), and others are worth...well...a good chew.

Company \$\$\$ or Bonus Bucks:

- Establish criteria to win bucks.
- Establish amount of \$\$\$s for specific goals.
- As each goal or criteria is met, employees get Company \$\$\$ or Bonus Bucks.
- These Company \$\$\$s or Bonus Bucks can be “cashed in” for prizes in the “Company Store”. Items in the store can include: a candy or drink item, a really cool pen, various office supplies not normally provided for rep work stations, all the way up to an extended lunch or extra break!

“Who, What, Where?” Poster Contest:

- Select a poster or picture. (The best type for this game is one with one, large picture...or one with lots of small pictures that make up a big scene.)
- Cover the poster completely with post-it notes. Hang it in an area accessible to all that will be participating in the game.
- Establish a criteria.
- Each time an employee meets the defined criteria, he/she gets to remove one of the post-it notes from the picture. At the time a post-it is removed, the person who removes it is entitled to a “guess” as to what it is.
- The employee who ultimately guesses the picture/poster contents, gets to keep the picture/poster.

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Balloon Pop:

- Blow up balloons with paper slips inserted inside with names of prizes – both small and larger. (Sorry, try again is also an option).
- Tack, tie, tape or staple balloons randomly on a large board.
- Establish criteria to “win” a chance to pop a balloon.
- Once an employee meets the criteria, they get to “pop” a balloon and are entitled to the prize inside.

Concentration:

- Just like the game you played as a kid... Make a board with boxes. In each box, write a prize. Cover each box with a post-it note. Number the post-it notes/boxes. As employees meet the established criteria, they get to pull two post-its from two boxes. If they match, they get the prize!

Employee of the Quarter:

- Everyone should have an employee of the quarter who is recognized on a plaque in the front office/reception area. Purchase a plaque holder so that several years worth of recipients’ names can be displayed simultaneously.
- Upper management should establish criteria for this honor. Nominees should come from supervisors and managers. The employee selected for this honor should be one who sets an example for others.
- Management is not eligible for this award. Rewards can include a polo shirt with the company name and the award honor on the shirt, a printed certificate OR a plaque for the employee, and a token of appreciation such as a nice dinner for two.
- Notify your local newspaper for a write-up! And be sure to include a “segment” on this employees good work in your next company newsletter.

Employee of the Month:

- This award must be very different from Employee of the Quarter.
- Allow employees to nominate their co-workers, managers, etc. (Anyone can be nominated by anyone.) Make sure to include on the nomination form a space for a description of why this person deserves this award.
- Determine how the nominations will be reviewed and the recipient of the award selected.
- Honor this employee with a certificate and reserved parking space up front for the month, as well as mention in the company newsletter.

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Perfect Attendance Incentive:

- Reward employees for outstanding attendance. This would be based on the company attendance policy and independent of any performance issues other than attendance.
- Savings bonds are a good choice for this:
 - A. \$25 for one month perfect attendance.
 - B. Increase to \$100 for perfect attendance for the Quarter.
 - C. Increase to \$250 for perfect attendance for the year.
- If your company has numerous employees who achieve perfect attendance for the year, consider a dinner cruise for each employee and a guest who has reached this exceptional goal.

Cross-Training Incentive:

- Reward the employees who take the initiative to learn the work in another department to help your business during stressful times!
- Each time an employee works in another department for a full shift, he/she should receive a “point”. At the end of the quarter (or year), the employee with the most “points” should receive a special reward.

(NOTE: Employees who did not meet acceptable performance criteria in the additional department would not get a point.)

PayDay / Monday / Saturday Incentive:

- Ever notice that employees like to call in sick on PayDay? Or is the first Monday of the month?
- Whatever the issue, make it more fun to come to work! Anyone who works his or her full shift on PayDay (or Monday, or Saturday) gets entered in a monthly raffle for a \$50 or \$100 gift certificate!
- One chance per employee per each “problem” day.

Good Samaritan Award:

- See that person who casually picked up the paper in the parking lot and threw it in the trash can?
- Did you notice the employee who wiped down the breakroom counter because someone else left a mess?
- Notice the supervisor who moved that stick away from the entrance where the delivery person enters?
- Allow employees to recognize the “Good Samaritan” they see going above and beyond to keep the company clean and safe.
- Recognize the best “Good Samaritan” deed of the week/month/quarter with a special something.

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Outstanding Monitor Award:

- For some employees, the numbers are what put them ahead of the rest. They shine in productivity. For others, it is the attention to detail and customer satisfaction....accurate and complete information....an appropriate and timely upsell offering...calming an irate customer....
- Most contact centers monitor employees on a routine basis. Make it more fun!
- Each time an employee has a call monitored that results in a “perfect” score for that call, they get one entry in the monthly “Perfect Monitor” raffle.
- Each and every perfect monitor results in another chance in the drawing.
- “Successories” team and motivational catalog items are popular for this incentive.

Upsell Incentive:

- Employees should always be rewarded for successful salesmanship – including upselling. Even if your company has a commission on upsells, you may wish to consider a “game” to inspire those not as adept as others.
- Reward the “most improved” over last week., last month, last quarter.
- Recognize the employee who has made the most ATTEMPTS, not just the most sales.

Overtime Incentive:

- There are many times when companies expect employees to work overtime – just for the extra cash. Sometimes this is incentive enough, but other times it is not.
- Make sure employees know you appreciate the extra time they put in – time away from their home, family and friends – to help the company grow in success.
- For each extra half-shift an employee works, they earn one chance in a monthly/weekly raffle. (Determine how long this extra work will be available. Use that as your guideline for the length of the contest/raffle.)
- If they work an extra full-shift, give them 3 chances per each full extra shift worked.
- Make the raffle prize worth the extra effort! How about a day off with pay?

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Promptness Incentive:

- Incentives can be used for almost anything. How about the employee who is always signed onto the computer and logged onto the phones and ready for that first call at the top of their shift?
- How many call center staff members do you have who arrive in a timely manner, but aren't ready to take calls at the start of their shift? Reward those who are with a monthly raffle....one chance for each week they are ready at the top of their shift every day they are scheduled to work.

Company STARS:

- Reward those in your organization who “shine”.
- Request and graciously accept any and all employee suggestions. If the suggestion is not a viable one, thank the employee and explain WHY it is not a valid option at this time.
- Recognize those who suggest/provide ideas that are used with a special lunch – how about lunch with the VP? (On company time, of course.)
- If you prefer, you can modify this to the “A*B*C*D*” Award – as in Above and Beyond the Call of Duty.

Compliments Abound Award:

- When a customer calls to compliment an employee, give them a star next to their name on the team board.
- If you hear a customer sincerely grateful for the excellent assistance given when you are monitoring a call, give the employee a star next to their name on the team board.
- Every written letter complimenting an employee should count for TWO stars!
- Stars add up! If each star equals one hour of paid time off....seven compliments = an extra day off with pay.

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New Employee Referral Incentive:

As the turnover in call centers can be high, it is important to recruit and keep good team members. Offering a reward/bonus for referring a new employee who becomes a permanent staff member can be a great tool in battling high turnover rates.

On your application for employment, include a section (if you don't already have one) asking the potential job candidate how they heard about your company. If it was a current employee, request the name of the employee. If the candidate is hired AND completes probation and becomes a permanent employee, the company staff member who referred the new employee receives a reward of \$50 or a \$100 savings bond. NOTE: If the employee leaves or is terminated prior to completing probation and becoming a permanent/regular employee, no the reward for the referral is forfeited.

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NEW IDEAS SINCE THIS WAS FIRST IMPLEMENTED:

These are additional/new/adapted ideas that were considered/implemented while leading the Employee Recognition Team for the State of NC's Child Support Enforcement Customer Service Center. Some are fundraising events, since there was no budget and the ERT was funded by its own endeavors.

CAUGHT CARING:

Employees were asked to “catch” co-workers in the act of caring – doing something above and beyond the normal scope of their job duties. Examples included an employee who watched for the closing supervisor to leave the building each night (for safety) and an employee who noticed it was an irritated customer’s birthday and after successfully handling a difficult call wishing the caller a happy birthday. Others included one employee giving away her ERT raffle prize of a new DVD player to a co-worker who is a single mom and tried hard to win it for her daughter. Another example was an employee who went above and beyond in tracking CTI problems for the technical staff while they worked on an on-going problem. All nominees had their nominations posted on the break room board and all received discount coupons to a favorite local eatery. The top 3 (voted by the ERT Committee) received Wal-Mart gift certificates.

WHO’S THAT BABY:

A dozen staff members were selected at random and had a recent digital photo taken. A baby photo of each of these selected individuals was then obtained. These were randomly placed on the break room bulletin board. Staff were asked to “guess” which baby photo belonged to which employee. The person(s) with the most correct won a prize. Photos were rotated quarterly until all staff members were eventually included in the project.

STAR PERFECT MONITORING:

A variation on the Outstanding Monitor Award: Each representative has 8 calls per month evaluated. Each one is a potential perfect monitoring. Each time a Rep gets a perfect monitor, he/she gets a “star”. The STAR is placed next to his/her NUMBER on a board (so it is anonymous) on the bulletin board. At the end of the month, the reps can “cash in” their stars for prizes. One star = piece of candy or gum. Two stars = candy bar or soda. Three stars = bag or microwave popcorn or 2 bottled waters. Etc....

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE CALL CENTER:

Employees are asked to submit examples of funny incidents that happen at work – including humorous phone calls, incidents at lunch, etc. The funniest examples are voted on at the end of the month by secret ballot. The winning entry wins a prize.

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OPERATION CARE PACKAGE:

This was a program sponsored by the ERT to support our troops during the War in Iraq. We had staff who were opposed to the war effort and staff who supported the war effort. But regardless of their stance on the WAR, there was no debate that the staff was supportive of the TROOPS. We had several employees who had relatives stationed in Iraq. We collected requested items and mailed them to the individuals, who then dispersed the goods among their entire units.

ADOPT A CO-WORKER:

Being a close-knit group, we always knew when a co-worker was in need. We would often select and “adopt” a co-worker for a holiday or during a special need (surgery, long illness of family member, etc.) and provide support in many ways – with food, finances, friendship, etc.

EMPLOYEE OF THE WEEK:

The State of NC’s “Employee of the Month” program had become a popularity contest. As a result, it was not a program we wanted to pursue at the Customer Service Center. In an effort to make it more “fair” and also to allow co-workers to get to know each other better, we re-worked the premise behind the program. The Employee of the Week would be selected from a hat. (Eventually, everyone in the CSC would get to be the Employee of the Week.) This title meant your cubicle was cheerfully decorated and you were given colorful Hawaiian lei to wear to signify you were the Employee of the Week. The goal of every other employee that week was to learn one NEW thing about the Employee of the Week that they did not know before.

SAFETY AWARENESS DAY:

In conjunction with the local Police Officers and their “Click It or Ticket” campaign to promote seatbelt use and road safety, we had a designated ERT rep watch as our staff drove into the parking lot one morning. If the employee (and any others in the vehicle) were wearing their seat belt, they received a roll of lifesavers – for wearing their seat belts and promoting life saving techniques. If they were not wearing a seat belt, they received a sucker – because they are a sucker to get hurt in an accident.

FOOD ON FRIDAYS:

In the spirit of the holidays, the employees all wanted to do a big day of food and fun for Thanksgiving or Christmas. However, there are so many employees that we would have food for days! So, we decided to use this good fortune to our advantage. We divided the call center into four random “teams” of staff who were each assigned a Friday in December. They were responsible for determining what type of food would be made and brought for that Friday. One group did an Italian Friday. Another did a Southern Friday. Yet another, a “Pot Luck”. Each Friday was filled with more than enough food and fellowship for all to enjoy throughout the entire day (breaks and lunches). Great food and fun for all and only 1 dish per person!

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WATER ANYONE?

As mentioned before, ERT funds its award and incentive programs with other fundraising programs. Water sales were the first BIG hit at the Child Support Customer Service Center. The water was the first drink to run out in the soda machines, despite the small bottles and high cost. On the suggestion of an employee, ERT began buying water by the case at Wal-Mart and selling it. We keep it stocked in the refrigerator and employees deposit their change for a bottle whenever they take one. ERT spends 25 cents per bottles and sells it for 50 cents per bottle – a cost less than the vending machine and a larger bottle of water. ERT profits about \$45 per month on water sales.

SILENT AUCTION:

The Employee Recognition Team solicited donations from employees – handmade items (quilt, jewelry, home furnishings), baked goods (coupon for birthday cake and a homemade cheesecake), odds and ends (case of beer with chips & dip, never-been-worn prom dress, mantel clock), etc. – and held a silent auction. Bids were taken for three days. Employees were assigned a bid number, so no one knew who won the final bid until winners were announced on the final day. ERT raised hundreds of dollars for their programs, the employees had a great time and this project was the first one to be requested as a semi-annual “tradition”.

EMPLOYEE BAKE SALE:

Employees bake their specialties and package them for sale – as either individual items (bags of cookies) or as whole cakes/pies. The baker sets the price. All proceeds go to fund future ERT projects. With so many great cooks, need I say more?

HOLIDAY SPACES:

The best decorated work space (no candles, please!) was voted on by all staff members. The winner received a weekend get-a-way (meals included) to Emerald Isle, NC.

FUNNY HAT DAY:

No prizes required. Seeing your co-worker in a hilarious hat is reward enough! Photos required for the work scrapbook.

CHILI COOKOFF / SOUP DAY:

Four cooks – each with different recipes. One bowl = \$2.00 or TWO bowls for \$3.00. Chili included chips, cheese, onions, crackers and sour cream. Soup included oyster crackers and saltines. GREAT motivators for cold, wintry days! Also great on BUSY days when agents need to take short lunches to help cover call volumes.

YARD SALE:

In the spring, everyone brought in their “Spring Cleaning” items. These items are ready for a Saturday morning yard sale as soon as the weather permits. Sale advertised locally in newspapers.

COOKBOOK PROJECT:

The staff put together over 450 recipes from the great cooks on site. ERT funded the initial printing, and cookbooks were sold for \$10 each. They were advertised through the SEANC web sit, as well as at the state and national conventions. Half of the proceeds went to the NC Child Support Council Scholarship Fund. The remainder went to fund future ERT projects.

Incentive Planning

By Mary Paige Forrester

LETTERS FROM SANTA AND THE EASTER BUNNY:

Create personalized letters from Santa and The Easter Bunny for the children, nieces, nephews, grandchildren of your staff! Offer to send them for a set dollar amount (\$3 per letter). Gather information on a personalization form about each child, and tailor the letter to them.

SOUP, HOTDOG or CHILI DAY:

In order to help raise funds to pay for prizes and also to provide lunch for reps on the busiest of work days, have your incentive team organize cooks to make lunch.

- Chicken & Rice and Veggie Beef - with crackers - \$2 a bowl or \$3 for two bowls
- Chili with Cheese/Onions/Crackers - \$2 a bowl or \$3 for two bowls
- Hot Dogs with all the fixins' – 2 Hot Dogs and a bag of chips for \$3

Other Fun Theme Days:

Hawaiian Beach Party Dress Day

March Madness/Team Spirit Day

Favorite Movie or Book Character Day

50's Day

60's Day

Patriotic Day

Cross Dress Day

Favorite T-Shirt Day

SCAVENGER HUNT

Lifesavers & Suckers Safety Day (To promote Seat Belt Usage)

Novelty Prize Ideas:

These are items that can be awarded to an employee and then passed on to the next person the following day/week/month/etc. who then needs or deserves the extra attention. They “float” around the center and people usually notice whose desk it has landed upon!

1. A Pillsbury Dough Boy : For the top seller!
2. A California Raisin: For the person who raises his/her stats the most! Or even for the people who have beaten their own best record....
3. A Ketchup Bottle (to help Catch Up!) or a plastic Dragon (Draggin' Behind): For those lagging behind a bit!
4. A “Heart” – i.e. “Have a Heart”: For the employee who goes the extra mile for a customer.
5. A Troll Doll : For the person who just dealt with a Troll of a Caller!

Incentive Planning

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Quality/Productivity Goal Examples:

Calls Per Hour
Packages Shipped/Scanned/Picked/Packed/Returned/Stocked per hour
Perfect Monitored Call
Occupancy Rate
Lowest AUX or ACW
No Pending Work
Lowest Error Rate (Data Entry, Sales, Returns, Shipping)
Most Additional Hours/Extra Shifts Worked (when needed)
Perfect Attendance (many variations)
Best staffed time
Highest \$\$\$ per order average
Highest \$\$\$ per hour average
Customer Compliments
Peer Recognition
Cleanest Workstation

Incentive Prize / Raffle Prize Suggestions:

Extra 10-15 minute break
Small tokens which can be ordered (in bulk) from Oriental Trading Catalog
Stickers/Candy/Gum
Award Certificate to display at workstation
Grab Bag (with candy and/or goodies from the Dollar Store)
Picture frame with magnet (for use on metal workstations)
Polo Shirt or Mug with Company Logo
Tickets to a movie theatre OR Dinner for two at a local restaurant
Team, Department or Company Lunch (Pizza, Subs, etc.)
Gift certificate to local grocery store, major department store, gas station, book store
Gift certificate to Wal-Mart or other super-store
Gift Certificate for company merchandise
Car Wash or Dry Cleaning Certificates
“Successories” Motivational Items (from their catalog)
Pre-paid phone card
Local sporting event tickets
Balloons, Flowers, Fruit Baskets, Candles
Newspaper Subscription
Fast Food Gift Certificates
City Bus or Train Passes/Tokens
Free Video Rental
Free passes to any local attraction/event
Savings Bonds
Extra HOUR towards leave time
Extra Day Off with Pay