



# The Power of Authentic Recognition & How to Use It



# Table of Contents

## The Why 4

- The Power of Recognition
- The Power of Authenticity

## A Strong Foundation 6

- Physical Safety
- Emotional Safety
- Financial Safety



## The How 8-9

- Check Yourself
- It's All in the Details
- Survey Says...
- Variety is the Spice of Recognition
- Time to Get Personal
- A Bag of Doritos
- No One is Youer than You

## What's Next

- Partnership and contact info



A woman with long, wavy brown hair is sitting at a desk, focused on her laptop. She is wearing a white and black striped sleeveless top. In the background, other office workers are visible but blurred. The entire image has a teal overlay.

# The Why

A look at why companies, leaders, and the everyday employee should all care about recognition.

# The Power of Recognition

Before we leverage the power of recognition, we must first define it.

## Recognition

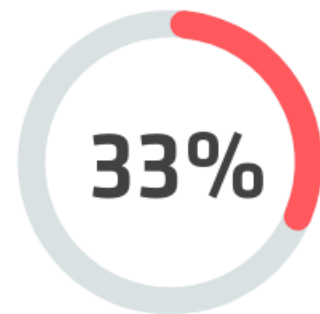
/ rek-uhg-nish-uhn / *noun*

an after-the-fact display of appreciation or acknowledgement for a behavior, effort, or accomplishment.

Simply put, it is saying “thank you” or “I see you.” Although it can take many forms, recognition can immensely impact the workplace and everyone in it. There are countless studies and surveys to back up this sentiment.



of employees say  
recognition is meaningful



received recognition  
for doing good work

GREAT  
JOB!

A whopping 91% of employees say recognition is meaningful when they receive it. Yet, a Gallup survey found only about 33% of employees received recognition for doing good work in the last week.

When recognition lacks, employers pay. Employees who do not feel adequately recognized are **twice as likely** to say they will quit in the next year, and turning over employees is **extremely costly**. But, that cost can be avoided with recognition! “High-recognition companies” have 31% lower voluntary turnover than companies with “poor recognition cultures.”

## The Power of Authenticity

To build an effective culture of recognition, it needs to be authentic. People will not buy into something disingenuous. Data reveals that the **most effective** recognition is authentic, honest, and individualized.

**Key Takeaway:** Authentic recognition can serve as a turbocharged engine to propel individuals and your organization forward.





# A Strong Foundation

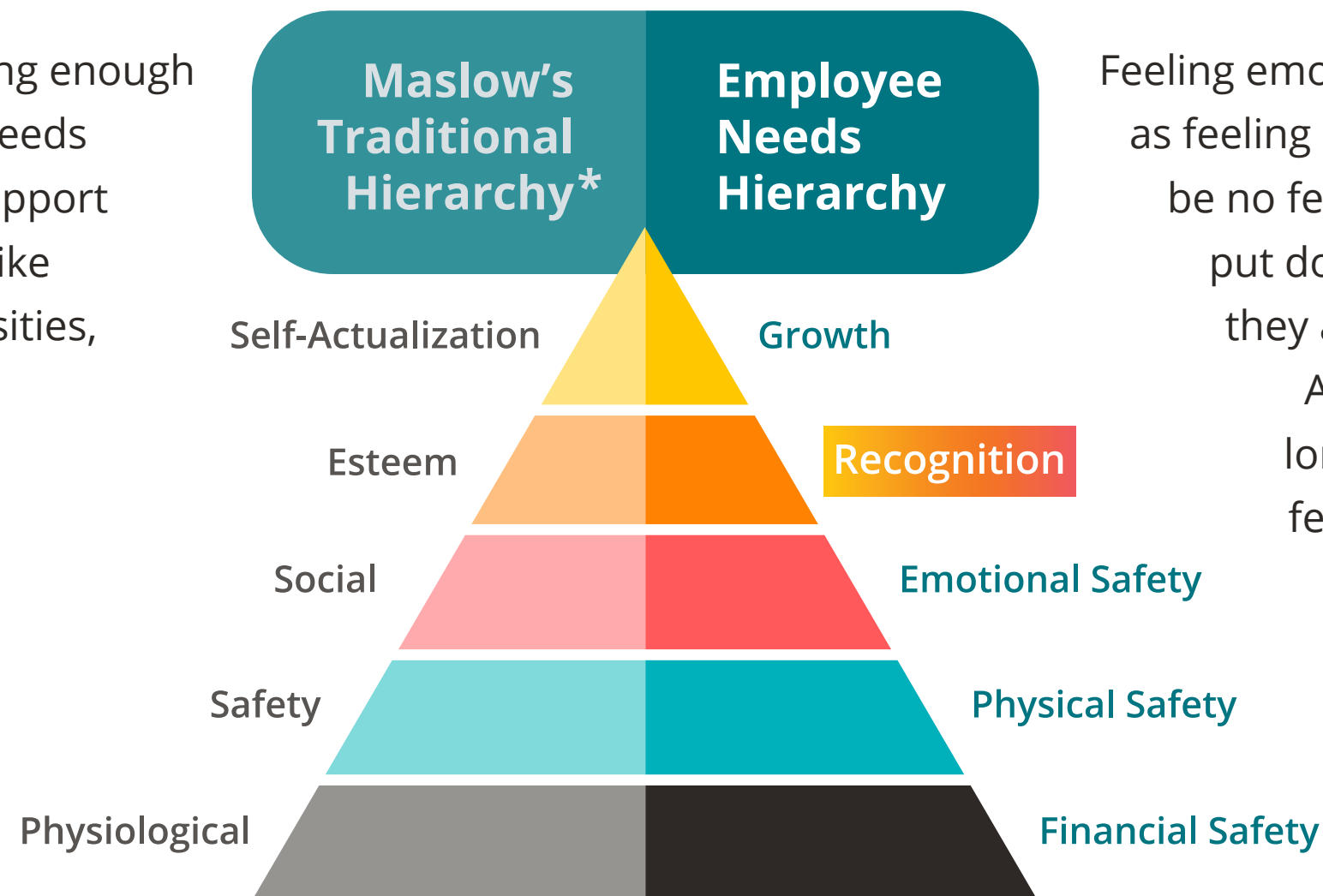
Before recognition can become authentic and effective, your organization must meet three critical human needs.

## Financial Safety

Financial safety means providing enough compensation to cover basic needs such as food, a place to live, support for any children, and benefits like health care. Beyond the necessities, make sure compensation is competitive with the industry averages. ***Recognition is not justification for underpaying your employees.***

## Physical Safety

Ensure working conditions are safe. Workspaces should be clean and set up for people to work productively. Give your employees all the physical resources they need to safely and efficiently get their jobs done. Don't forget about your remote employees! Speak with them about their needs to make their remote workspace safe and efficient.



## Emotional Safety

Feeling emotionally safe is just as crucial as feeling physically safe. There should be no fear of being yelled at or being put down. People need to feel that they are accepted and supported. A sense of belonging can go a long way in helping employees feel like they are cared for and set up for success.

*\*Still widely referred to today, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs breaks down human motivation based on different types of needs. Employee needs closely correlate with each of the levels. Recognition cannot impact individuals at work until financial, physical, and emotional safety needs are met first.*

**Warning: If your company falls short in any of these three areas, recognition may come off as inauthentic or condescending.**



A photograph of two women in business attire standing in a modern office environment. The woman on the left is wearing a red blazer over a white top and a dark skirt, holding a coffee cup. The woman on the right is wearing a white top and a dark skirt, holding a folder. They are both smiling and looking at each other. The image has a teal overlay.

# The How

Once a solid foundation has been established, follow these seven tips for authentically recognizing others.



## Check Yourself

Ask yourself, “What is my motive for giving recognition?” and answer truthfully. If you find yourself only recognizing someone for selfish reasons, then it’s simply not worth it. People are perceptive and will likely pick up on any self-serving intentions.

## It’s All in the Details


Recognition is a positive form of feedback. We know that negative feedback needs to be specific to let others know what needs to change or “what not to do.” Similarly, positive feedback needs to be specific to let others know when to “keep it up!”

Point out a specific action, moment, or accomplishment when offering up recognition. Sharing details implies that you genuinely see that person and pay attention to their efforts.

## Survey Says...

Find out how your employees prefer to receive recognition on their first day. Include a simple “Tell Us About You” survey in the onboarding process. Ask questions that will help you get to know the preferences and likes of a new employee. Consider including any of the following:

- Do you prefer to be recognized publicly or privately?
- What is your favorite snack?
- What is your favorite sweet/treat?
- What are some of your hobbies?
- Do you have a favorite sports team?



Knowing preferences from the beginning helps you start recognition off on the right foot with each employee. Especially when it comes to recognizing employees publicly or privately.





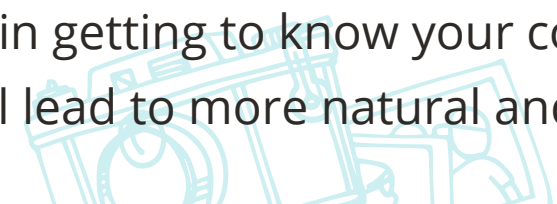
## Variety is the Spice of Recognition

Avoid constantly using the same form of recognition. Too much repetition seems robotic and less authentic. Mix it up between public and private recognition. Sprinkling in one-on-one recognition (for those that like it publicly) can add more meaning. Don't be afraid to put the shy people in the spotlight occasionally, especially for the big stuff!

Online recognition programs are effective, especially for keeping today's hybrid workplace connected. Despite the digital benefits, don't forget to show appreciation face to face when you can.

## Time to Get Personal

Work should not be transactional and emotionless. The era of "checking your emotions at the door" is quickly fading. Displaying vulnerability and building personal connections in the workplace fosters a much-needed sense of belonging. Show a genuine interest in getting to know your co-workers on a personal level. It will lead to more natural and authentic recognition.




## A Bag of Doritos

Add unique touches to recognition when you can. The "Tell Us About You" survey (see page 8) is a great place to start when you are looking for ways to personalize recognition. For example, if an employee mentioned Doritos are their favorite snack, leave a bag of Doritos on their desk with a personal handwritten thank you note.

Adding unique touches to recognition moments becomes easier as personal connections are built, too. Getting to know another employee will come along with learning fun facts.

## No One is Youer than You

Dr. Seuss wrote, "Today you are you. That is truer than true. There is no one alive who is youer than you." Since you are the youest you, embrace your youniqueness. Be yourself at work and leverage your personal strengths in the workplace. For example, if you are a naturally affirming person outside of work, use those skills to affirm others at work.



# What's Next?

Harnessing the power of authentic recognition is easier said than done. We would love to partner with you!

We're here to help organizations shine a light on all the moments that matter with a healthy blend of technology and personal touches.



**RECOGNATION**

[recognition.com](https://recognition.com)