Incentives and Recognition

Incentives, both formal and informal, recognize faculty contributions and excellence and build morale, motivation, and a positive work environment. Formal rewards include such programs as lump sum or base pay merit increases. The University Mentor Policy specifies that, at minimum, mentoring excellence will be considered in the annual review of faculty. There are innumerable ways in which to recognize faculty. The following is a list of possible rewards that can be given formally or informally; one time or regularly; planned or spontaneously. The idea is to make it consistently clear that good work is valued. Most of the rewards listed require very little or no funding.

Why are incentives and recognition important? When done correctly, they can result in:

- Improved performance and productivity
- Improved morale and motivation
- Increased sense of self‐respect and confidence
- Increased retention
- Enhanced relationships
- Open channels of communication
- Reinforcement of university/unit values and culture
- Mutual commitment

Incentive Principles:

- **If-Then:** If a performance meets or exceeds expectations, then reward it.
- **ASAP:** Give the reward as soon as possible after the performance has occurred.
- **Tradition and Variety:** Although there is value in tradition and receiving a time-honored reward shared by prior luminaries, there are times when change should be considered. Changing the reward may help maintain its effect.
- **Spontaneity:** Unexpected rewards convey that good work is continuously noticed and valued.

Keys to Selecting the Right Reward

- Find out what the faculty member will find rewarding.
  - **Watch what they do** - Pay attention to how they spend free time or their hobbies.
  - **Listen to them** - By listening, you learn about their interests or work place concerns.
  - **Ask them** - If you’re unsure, ask them!
- Create a large list of reward ideas from which to choose.

Ideas for Incentives and Recognition

- Praise, "thank you" in person and/or in front of others
- Email thank you
- **Letter of appreciation** with copies to the faculty member's file and top administrators
- Publicity - mention in newsletter/MSU News Bulletin/Local newspaper
- Regular paycheck delivered in person, with note recognizing accomplishments
- Electronic message boards recognizing accomplishments
"Behind the scenes" Award - for those not normally in the lime light
Note recognizing anniversary of start-date or some other milestone
Lunch with top departmental administrator
Opportunity for advanced training/attendance at seminars or conferences
More frequent assignment of responsibilities the faculty member enjoys
Reassign work that faculty member does not enjoy
Release time from teaching or some other responsibility
More autonomy to determine how a project is completed
Additional staff for project development
Ability to work off-site
Flexible work schedules
Increase work space privacy
Upgrade of computer
Special parking space near the office
Regular recognition lunches
Tickets to local events
Tickets to sporting events: basketball, football, hockey
MSU t-shirts, jackets, hats, cups, desk accessories
Restaurant certificate
Tour of university gardens/facilities during work hours
Contribution to a favorite charity
Food basket
One month club membership
Cash bonus - with taxes pre-paid
Baked goods, balloons or flowers delivered to work place
Gift certificate to MSU Dairy Store or MSU Bakers
Appreciation day - with banners, lunch, etc.
Photo boards or "Hall of Fame" - with kudos provided by peers
Certificate of accomplishment
Faculty of the month or year. award
Training in mentoring
$1,000 non-recurring salary increment upon completion of assignment
A plaque at awards banquet
A medal to be worn with formal academic robes
March first at graduation
Get creative and think of others

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