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Effective and Motivating Ways to Appreciate Employees Year Round

**Former Southwest Airlines Executive, Lorraine Grubbs, offers tips to
make everyday Employee Appreciation Day**

HOUSTON, Texas (Feb. 27, 2017) – As companies get ready to celebrate National Employee Appreciation Day on Friday, March 3, 2017, former Southwest Airlines Executive [Lorraine Grubbs](http://www.lorrainegrubbs.com) (www.lorrainegrubbs.com) offers creative and clever ways to express appreciation to employees. Grubbs outlines tips that every company, regardless of size, can use to establish a reward and recognition program that creates loyal employees who produce results every leader is looking for.

“Employee Appreciation Day dates to 1995 when Bob Nelson, founding board member of Recognition Professional International, created the holiday for his company,” explains Grubbs, CEO of Lessons in Loyalty. “While companies know recognition is the right thing to do, embracing celebrations or rewards once a year typically doesn’t make employees feel appreciated.”

Grubbs believes company leaders shouldn’t wait for Employee Appreciation Day to let employees know they are appreciated. She identifies lessons learned in her 15-year leadership career at Southwest Airlines and her current consulting career that demonstrate how companies that put their employees first enjoy greater profits. Grubbs shares examples of ways to recognize employees this week and on a regular basis:

- 1. Cook Breakfast:** Surprise your employees by arriving early to cook and serve breakfast.
- 2. Goodie Bags:** Leave goodie bags on employee desks with a note of appreciation
- 3. Dress up Contest:** Pick an event, besides Halloween, for a dress up contest. Where Grubbs lives in Houston, Texas, Go Texan Day presents a perfect opportunity.
- 4. Cookoff Contest:** Set up a cookoff contest - chili, BBQ, fried foods, etc. - in your parking lot and give awards to winning teams.
- 5. Informal Lunch:** Set up lunch in the break room from time to time. If you have vendors who want to get in on the fun, invite them to participate by sponsoring the lunch.
- 6. \$100 of Thanks:** Have the CEO give every department head \$100 singles to be handed out to employees the manager wants to recognize. Take this a step further and encourage employees to “pay it forward” to another employee he or she would like to recognize.
- 7. Testimonial Recognition:** Use your customer newsletter, web site, and social media avenues to publish the names of employees who receive strong customer testimonials or customer satisfaction marks.
- 8. Team Building Event:** Give employees a half day off and conduct a fun team event or simply thank employees by letting them spend the time with their families.
- 9. Share your time and build relationships:** Just a few minutes of the CEO’s time walking around and talking to employees is a powerful message to employees that they are appreciated. Personally thanking employees for the work they do goes a very long way.
- 10. Place a “Thank You” advertisement:** Take out an advertisement in your local paper recognizing employees for working so hard, receiving high customer satisfaction scores, or making a difference in the community.

“What I have learned over the years is that companies who routinely recognize employees find themselves in the “Top Employers to Work For” lists and thus will have a better bottom line,” Grubbs states. One great example of how to recognize employees can be found in Grubbs’ new book, *How to Create a Happy Workplace*: Stacey Gillman, CEO of Houston, Texas-based Gillman Automotive says, “Above all, however, we believe satisfied employees are definitely our biggest asset because they create satisfied customers. As a core business philosophy, customer-oriented employees don’t just ‘happen’. It takes time and effort to create and sustain this mindset.”

About Lorraine Grubbs

Lorraine Grubbs, was part of the Southwest Airlines Leadership Team for over 15 years. She has more than 30 years of experience as a leader, author and executive coach working exclusively in the field of how to build and retain loyalty in business. She is the author of four books providing lessons about loyalty, leadership, and outrageous training tactics. Her “A Happy Workplace” system incorporates proven and validated principles that companies who put their employees first utilize. She regularly contributes articles to a variety of publications, and is a guest lecturer at Rice University and the University of Houston’s Executive MBA program. Born in Peru and raised in North Africa, Lorraine speaks four languages (English, Spanish, French and ‘Nautical’) and possesses various HR certifications. She has interviewed three U.S. presidents and was the first female owner of an American jet charter company. As a child, her favorite show was “Wonderful World of Disney. At the age of seven, she established a long-distance friendship with Walt Disney when she invited him to be her pen pal. When not working, and flying, you’ll find Grubbs living aboard her boat “Loyalty”, in Galveston, Texas. Visit her web site at www.lorrainegrubbs.com.

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