

How to Celebrate Success

4 Tips for Making Your Team Feel Special

Celebrate team success in style.

Your team didn't do a halfway job on the project you just delivered, so you shouldn't do a halfway job in offering your congratulations. Resolve to go all out by planning to celebrate their success in style with an event that demonstrates your appreciation for the long hours and above-and-beyond effort.

Budget restraints may dictate what kind of party you throw, with choices ranging from an on-site gathering to a group dinner at a great restaurant, to an evening in your den. Make the decision based on your team: What will everyone enjoy? What will be relaxing? And what will be different enough from the usual socializing to mark this as a special occasion?

Cater to your team.

Once you've chosen a forum for your celebration, make certain that each of your choices is geared toward making everyone on the team feel remembered and valued. Food plays a major role at most events of this type. Your choice is easy if everyone on the team is a generic pepperoni-pizza-and-soda type. But consider the varied tastes of your team members and offer pizza for some, steak hoagies for others, and don't forget the vegetarians. (If you aren't keeping track of who likes what, you may want to start tracking likes and dislikes to be able to personalize your appreciation in the future.)

Let the whole world know.

Nothing augments praise like amplification. Send an e-mail or post a memo to announce the get-together as an end-of-project celebration.

Personalize your thanks.

You'll probably say a few words, when the moment comes, and you'll offer a blanket thank-you to your team. But you should go the extra mile. Write each team member a personal memo that specifically mentions an extra effort or accomplishment that you noticed. Let that individual know that you've been paying attention to their efforts.

Moreover, acknowledge how the project has changed the team. Remind them that they are not the same team they were a year ago because of what they have accomplished. Each of your team members, ideally, has grown, just as you have.

