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How to motivate and engage catering staff during

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...specially busy time for catering and hospitality workers with
...nd private parties to attend and work.



...Because the hospitality industry operates around the clock, every day, these frontline workers also

don't get the typical amount of time off that others do during this special time of year when we all want to see friends and family to celebrate the festivities.

That's why it's even more important than usual for catering and hospitality employers to engage with their staff during this busy period through intentional and consistent engagement and encouragement efforts.

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Turning to a team app can help facilitate employee engagement and streamline internal communications for frontline workers in your digital workforce.

Here are some ways to give praise and encouragement to your catering and hospitality employees this Christmas season.

Create a virtual 'nominate a teammate' box

One way to show your employees how much they and their work are appreciated is to create a 'nominate a teammate' box, hosted in your digital workplace, where team members can acknowledge an exemplary colleague. Nominations can be made via anonymised surveys, and the management team can then choose an employee or a select group of employees from this pool to receive a personalised prize such as a retail voucher or a gym membership subscription.

Ensure that all levels of the organisation get involved with this, including team leaders, supervisors, and as many higher-up staff as possible. Like any program or initiative, the success of this employee engagement effort should be led by leadership.

A [recent study](#) showed that "managers focusing on employee strengths are 30 times more likely to manage actively engaged workers compared with managers denying feedback." Giving employees positive feedback feeds the cycle of engaged and productive workers.

Post on internal communications platforms

If your team is spread across multiple locations, consider using your organisation's internal communications platform to post praise so that it's visible to the entire company, or send tailored private messages directly to specific employees.

This could be as simple as posting one to each employee, acknowledging their contributions to their respective departments over the past year with concrete examples. Or, create a group discussion highlighting each person in the team for their talents and achievements at work.

This is a positive way to build up your team using only digital resources. Also, it doesn't require you to take time away from employees' regular duties during the busy holiday rush, so they can check messages and join in when time permits, wherever it suits them.

Automate a personalised employee recognition campaign

In today's digitally-connected world many of us send and receive greetings cards in a virtual format, and you can use your organisation's internal communication platform to easily send a personalised campaign to each employee during the holiday season.

Keep it simple with a holiday greeting paired with one example of their hard work or add a reward within the body of the message. A digital gift card or online credit sweetens the message of any online greeting, but the greeting could also include an invitation to an employee party, announce a Christmas giveaway, or other perk.

Offer frontline teams christmas pay or PTO

Many catering and hospitality businesses offer enhanced rates of holiday pay when employee shifts fall on national holidays such as Christmas Day and New Year's Day. If your business doesn't already offer this perk, consider adding it for designated holidays.

Another option is to offer incentives to employees who volunteer to work rather than assigning regularly scheduled employees their same schedules. Giving all employees a set number of PTO hours is an altruistic way to approach holiday perks as they can use the time during any part of the year.

Make time to talk – online and in person

Finally, don't forget the small talk! According to a study from the University of Warwick, when employees are happy, they become about 12% more productive. How do you assess what makes employees happy? The only way to get to know your employees is to spend time talking with them, or working alongside them if you have the chance.

Getting to know your team demonstrates that you have an interest in their performance, and in their

interests and concerns as well. Make time during your regular workday or during the holiday rush if time permits to initiate a quick chat message via your internal communication platform, supervisors and managers need to help out during busy periods, so this is an ideal time to converse with employees.

Ultimately, as we have seen above, you can use a range of methods to give your catering and hospitality staff praise and encouragement. If you take the time and effort to do so, for example by using the right internal communications platform, you will see happier and more productive staff as a result, which will improve your bottom line.

By Cristian Grossmann, CEO and co-founder of workplace communication platform [Beekeeper](#)