

SPOILER ALERT: YOU'VE BEEN GIVING SERVICE ANNIVERSARY AWARDS NO ONE WANTS

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Whether yours resides at work or at home (or both), the ubiquitous junk drawer is often the final resting place for items too valuable to discard but unlikely to be used. Commonly, the drawer or closet becomes the place where many types of service anniversary gifts end up.

Open yours up and take inventory – it's amazing what you can collect over the years. A recent search by a colleague that has worked at a Fortune 500 company for many years yielded some interesting results.

Brand new 10K gold lapel pins

Chances are you have a whole selection of valuable emblems that you've never worn. A recent search on eBay yielded 44,000 results (most likely a result of cleaning out the drawer!) where these symbols of achievement end up being sold to the highest bidder. Lapel pins are a fine way to symbolize appreciation but Millennials won't wear them. (Frankly, neither will Baby Boomers!) Anything with precious metal content could have a significant impact on your budget because of sharp fluctuations in price.

Dust Collectors

Be it a full lead crystal bowl or a 9" world globe, these very traditional awards have lost a lot of fans over the last several years. As the demographics of your workforce continuously change, many of your participants desire awards that suit their lifestyle at work and home.

Cameras

Although once a staple in every level of the program, the camera has been overtaken by the smartphone, relegating it to the junk drawer.

Desk Sets

A mainstay for years and complete with all of the necessary desk tools, they have become another dust collector for many and have moved from the desk top to the desk drawer.

Picture Frames

Typically adorned with the corporate logo and possibly the home of the printed certificate of recognition you received, these gifts are usually pushed to a far corner of the desk until they're put into the drawer.

Knives

For years, programs featured hunting knives decorated with a corporate emblem in many levels of the awards collection. Safety concerns and changing tastes have all but eliminated knives from most programs.

MP3 Players

Like cameras, MP3 players have been replaced by smartphones as the preferred device for most of your audience.



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Certificates

These were designed to give managers a prop to distribute during a recognition ceremony. With more people working remotely or connecting with their teams virtually, certificates in many programs have been removed for cost savings and replaced with social recognition tools available from the service anniversary platform.

Leather Portfolios

Replaced by tablets in the workplace, the bulky portfolio is also passé in terms of popularity and utility.

Writing Instruments

Certainly the highest inventory item in the junk drawer, pens of all makes, models and price points are plentiful and typically out of ink.

Tie Tacks and Stick Pins

Much like the lapel pin, these jewelry pieces are subject to gold and silver price fluctuations and lost their appeal many years ago.

While these gifts were once very popular, they became outdated and irrelevant to your audience's constantly changing needs and tastes. From a behavioral economics perspective, the items in your junk drawer no longer remind you of how you earned them. Instead, imagine pulling out a Taylor Made Big Bertha driver during a golf outing and pointing out to your fellow players that you earned the club for 20 years of service with your company. You will relive that recognition and feel proud of your accomplishment each time you use it.

Build your program with a range of carefully selected, demographically appropriate awards without overwhelming your participants with too much choice. The selections should feature many items that people won't justify spending their own money on but would love to earn, like designer handbags or the latest electronics. Your awards collection should be continually fine-tuned, on a quarterly basis with one deep dive review annually. Demand the latest, popular merchandise for your audience and for your program to keep the awards out of the junk drawer.

BIWORLDWIDE can help you create a culture where loyalty is rewarded with service anniversary programs based on behavioral economics theories that offer the largest collection of brand-name merchandise, advanced technology and recognition standards that are consistent across your entire organization.

For more information, visit: BIWORLDWIDE.com or email latam@BIWORLDWIDE.com.

