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Employee recognition programs
shape corporate culture

Employees want to feel appreciated and an employee recognition program plays a key role in improving the employee experience.

Results from BI WORLDWIDE's 2023 New Rules of Engagement® study indicate that **employees whose employer had a formal recognition program were 3.2 times more likely** to say they have a **great company culture.** Similarly, employees who received recognition with a quarterly award indicate that they are more engaged, inspired and satisfied with their compensation. They also feel more included and are more likely to recommend their employer.

While recognition programs impact how employees feel about their job and their employer, **does recognition influence the behaviors** that are recognized? Recognition programs are usually designed to reward behaviors a company wants replicated in its corporate culture – inclusiveness, innovation, teamwork, collaboration, etc. While these can be seen by others, they can be difficult to express as a specific individual objective. By recognizing these behaviors in employees, does a recognition program increase their frequency? Essentially, **can a recognition program help shape company culture?** And ultimately, does rewarding behaviors increase the frequency of those behaviors?

To examine this question BI WORLDWIDE reviewed **10** random recognition programs. The programs were from companies of various sizes and industries and differed in the specific behaviors rewarded. If the program increased behavior frequency, we would expect that, at the individual level, employees would get recognized more often from one year to the next as they were being recognized for these behaviors.

We performed our analysis in two ways:

1. looking at the first two years of employment
2. looking at two years (2021-2022) across all employees regardless of tenure

Both analyses showed that recognitions increased – **25%** over the first two years of employment and **16%** across all employees.

This reinforces the premise that recognition programs give employers a powerful tool to shape their culture.

Recognition programs often reinforce behaviors such as "Teamwork," "Extra Effort," "Creative Thinking" and "Inclusivity." These are characteristics of a positive culture and, while easily identified by managers and other employees, can be challenging to articulate into a formal objective. By calling them out and including them in a formal recognition program, companies can help build the corporate culture they desire.