A BIG LITTLE BOOK BY BI WORLDWIDE

HOW TO ELEVATE
EMPLOYEE
RECOGNITION
IMPACT

BI
WORLDWIDE

WHAT'S INSIDE...?

01. WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

THE RECOGNITION PROGRAMME MATURITY MODEL

Not all recognition programmes are created equal. Some are just getting started, while others are embedded into the fabric of the organisation. Don't leave value on the table. Use this model to assess where your organisation sits today and where you could go next.

Stage		Characteristics	Opportunity
	Fragmented	Ad hoc recognition, low visibility, inconsistent manager participation	Introduce structure, launch a consistent platform, and build awareness
	Structured	Consistent programme, tracked usage, aligned to values	Personalise experiences, integrate with EVP and performance goals
	Embedded	Embedded in culture, data-driven, global, linked to business outcomes	Innovate with behavioural science, AI, and real-time feedback loops
	Strategic	Recognition supports broader business goals and integrates with other technologies	Link to wider business KPIs, onboarding, L&D, and partner programmes
	Optimised	Recognition is fully integrated across the employee lifecycle, delivering ROI	Use data to drive strategy, prove impact, and future-proof the employee experience
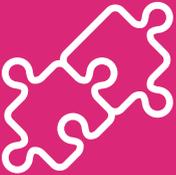
Tip: Most organisations are in the first three stages. The key is to continuously evolve based on data, feedback, and business needs.

02.OPTIMISE EXISTING PROGRAMMES

In a market where most organisations already have a recognition programme, the opportunity for HR leaders is not to start from scratch but to evolve. Recognition must move beyond participation metrics and become a strategic driver of culture, performance, and retention.

At BI WORLDWIDE, we help organisations shift from transactional recognition to transformational impact. That starts with optimising what you already have:

AUDIT AND ALIGN

- Review usage data: Are certain teams or demographics underrepresented?
- Assess alignment: Are you recognising behaviours that support your values and goals?
- Gather feedback: What do employees and managers really think about the programme?

LINK TO BUSINESS OUTCOMES

- Tie recognition to KPIs like retention, engagement, and performance.
- Use storytelling to connect recognition to real business impact.
- Share success stories with leadership to build advocacy.

REFRESH AND REIGNITE

- Introduce new recognition moments (e.g. wellbeing, innovation, DEI).
- Update reward options to reflect employee preferences and regional relevance.
- Rebrand or relaunch to reignite interest and participation.

PERSONALISE AND LOCALISE

- Offer choice in how employees are recognised and rewarded.
- Tailor communications and experiences by region, role, or generation.

Discover the Moments that Matter

With a solid foundation in place, you can activate five **Moments That Matter,** the pivotal points in the employee lifecycle where recognition, connection, and culture have the greatest impact.

Decision Day　　**First Day**　　**Every Day**　　**Achievement Day**　　**Referral Day**

Each moment is a behavioural trigger. An opportunity to shape how employees feel, perform, and advocate for your organisation. When designed intentionally and delivered consistently, these moments become the building blocks of a high-performing, values-driven culture.

03. ACTIVATE THE MOMENTS THAT MATTER

CLICK ON EACH STAGE TO READ MORE...

DECISION DAY: INSPIRE THE YES

The employee experience starts before day one. The moment a candidate accepts your offer is your chance to build trust and excitement. Use storytelling, virtual tours, and personalised welcome messages to showcase your culture and values.
69% of candidates are more likely to stay three years if they have a great onboarding experience.

FIRST DAY: CREATE BELONGING FROM DAY ONE

First impressions last. A structured, welcoming first day builds confidence and connection. Use branded welcome kits, buddy systems, and early recognition to make new hires feel they belong.
Strong onboarding boosts retention by 82% and productivity by 70% (Glassdoor).

EVERY DAY: BUILD A CULTURE OF RECOGNITION

Recognition should be part of the everyday experience, not just reserved for milestones. Use platforms to enable peer-to-peer and manager-led recognition, and train leaders to make it meaningful.
Recognised employees are 4x more engaged and 5x more connected to culture (Gallup).

ACHIEVEMENT DAY: CELEBRATE EXCELLENCE AND MILESTONES

Milestones matter. Celebrate tenure, promotions, and big wins with personalised, public recognition. Use storytelling to highlight the behaviours behind the achievement.
Reminding new hires how they impact the company mission makes them 2.1x more likely to stay.

REFERRAL DAY: TURN EMPLOYEES INTO ADVOCATES

Your best recruiters are your most engaged employees. Recognise those who refer others, promote your brand, or leave on good terms.
Referral hires are 55% faster to hire, 25% more profitable, and 45% more likely to stay (Jobvite).

04. COMMON PITFALLS TO AVOID

TREATING RECOGNITION AS A ONE-TIME CAMPAIGN

- Integrate recognition into daily workflows.
- Automate reminders for managers.
- Set up quarterly experience reviews.

LACK OF LEADERSHIP BUY-IN

- Engage leaders in strategy development.
- Highlight recognition's impact with data.
- Honour leaders who advocate the approach.

INCONSISTENT MANAGER EXECUTION

- Equip managers with resources and training.
- Track recognition activity via dashboards.
- Celebrate managers who create great experiences.

OVER-RELIANCE ON TECHNOLOGY

- Blend tech with personal interactions.
- Guide managers to use the platform effectively.

GENERIC RECOGNITION

- Promote meaningful, value-driven recognition.
- Enable employees to personalise rewards and messages.

IGNORING DATA AND FEEDBACK

- Measure KPIs at each stage.
- Gather employee feedback through surveys.
- Refine approaches based on insights.

ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL APPROACH

- Tailor rewards and messaging to local contexts.
- Provide employees with recognition options.
- Factor in generational and cultural preferences.

FOCUSSING ONLY ON BIG MOMENTS

- Foster frequent, small moments of appreciation.
- Empower employees with peer-to-peer recognition.

05. GLOBAL AND CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Recognition is universal—but how it's received and valued can vary widely across cultures. For global organisations, a one-size-fits-all approach risks alienating employees or missing the mark entirely.

To ensure your strategy resonates across regions:

THINK LOCAL, ACT GLOBAL:
- Offer rewards that reflect regional preferences (e.g. experiences in Europe, branded merchandise in the US, group recognition in Japan).
- Use local fulfilment partners to ensure timely and relevant delivery.
- Translate communications into local languages to maximise inclusivity.

UNDERSTAND CULTURAL NUANCES:
- In some cultures, public recognition is highly valued; in others, private praise is more appropriate.
- Team-based rewards may be more effective in collectivist cultures, while individual awards work better in individualist ones.

NAVIGATE COMPLIANCE:
- Be aware of local tax laws, data privacy regulations, and employment standards when designing global programmes.

Tip: Use regional champions to gather feedback and adapt your strategy for local success.

How to celebrate service anniversaries on a global scale

06. MOMENTS THAT MATTER IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST

1 MAP THE EMPLOYEE JOURNEY
You can't improve what you haven't visualised. Mapping the employee journey helps identify emotional highs and lows, uncovering where recognition and engagement can have the most impact.

2 AUDIT CURRENT EXPERIENCES
Before designing new experiences, understand what's working and what's not. This ensures your strategy is grounded in reality.

3 DESIGN SIGNATURE MOMENTS
Memorable, emotionally resonant experiences drive loyalty and advocacy. These moments should reflect your brand and values.

4 ENABLE MANAGERS
Managers are the frontline of engagement. Without their buy-in and consistency, even the best-designed programmes will fall short.

5 LEVERAGE TECHNOLOGY
Technology enables scale, consistency, and personalisation. It also provides the data you need to measure and improve.

6 COMMUNICATE THE WHY
Employees need to understand the purpose behind the strategy. Clear, consistent communication builds trust and participation.

7 MEASURE WHAT MATTERS
Data turns engagement from a "soft" initiative into a strategic asset. It also helps you iterate and improve.

8 CELEBRATE AND SCALE
Recognition breeds recognition. Celebrating success reinforces the behaviours you want to scale.

Inspiring your employees

Inspiring **people.**
Delivering **results.**

BI WORLDWIDE

RECOGNITION | INCENTIVES | REWARDS | LIVE EVENTS

BI WORLDWIDE helps organisations solve critical business challenges by driving positive behaviour change and engagement. By applying our talent and expertise in behavioural economics we deliver complementary recognition, rewards, incentives and live event solutions.

Our full-service portfolio offers clients a unique blend of consulting expertise and proprietary technology solutions that drive value from programme design to implementation and beyond.

Working with over 2000 organisations worldwide, across 183 countries, BI WORLDWIDE has been inspiring people, partners, and customers since 1950.

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