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Recognition@Dow – Changing How We Recognize People

The “to do” list is long and there are many priorities, but each day Dow employees around the globe put in their best effort to deliver the results that collectively make the company successful. Each person’s accomplishments – no matter how big or small – should be appropriately appreciated and recognized. You’ve noticed the contribution, but have you taken the time to acknowledge the results each individual delivered?

Your show of gratitude tells your co-workers you appreciate their efforts and the results they produced. It reinforces for them that they are doing the right things and encourages them to continue to strive for more results. It also makes Dow a better place to work, for it has been said that gratitude is like the oil in an engine – it reduces friction and makes human relationships run smoother.

What’s Driving the Change?

We have been recognizing Dow people for their contributions. However, we’ve focused primarily on cash rewards in the past and haven’t been as good at saying thank you and showing appreciation.

Data from the Global Employee Opinion and Action Survey (GEOAS), external benchmarking and two Six Sigma projects pointed to the need to change how we recognize people. The feedback indicated that Dow people saw a strong need for more appreciation and a culture that encourages recognition – not just rewards. Also, Dow people want recognition that is timely, consistent and has a personal connection. [\[continued on page 2\]](#)

Around Dow

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Recognition@Dow

The following anecdote is an example of the type of effective recognition we'll want to work towards.

- A Public Affairs team involved in the Dow-Union Carbide merger announcement worked hard on short notice to develop and deliver the news internally and externally. In recognition of the contribution, the leader gave each of her team members a pair of socks immediately following the announcement with a special message that started with "You knocked their socks off ..."

Strategically Aligned Recognition

A new corporate approach, called *Recognition@Dow*, aligns recognition with the components of the Strategic Blueprint and with strategic business and functional goals.

Business Manufacturing leader Michel Piche said the Water Soluble Polymers Manufacturing Leadership Team has compiled a list of behaviors and results – relating to environment, health and safety (EH&S), people and operational excellence – that align with the objectives of the business and is using this list to guide employee recognition. "Recognition that's aligned with business objectives reinforces the behaviors that improve and

accelerate our performance," he added.

By focusing on changing the Dow culture to one of appreciation and gratitude for day-to-day work, and appreciation and rewards for achieving results aligned with the company's strategies, *Recognition@Dow* increases the number of employees eligible for recognition.

The new approach shifts the focus away from strictly cash rewards to also simply saying thanks and giving gifts. It also implements award criteria that are designed to be administered consistently across businesses, functions and geographies. *Recognition@Dow* is one of several steps the company is taking to build a more people-centric performance culture at Dow.

What's in it for you?

This shift to a culture that encourages people to take time to acknowledge and recognize the contributions of their fellow workers will positively impact most people's motivation. More appreciation will encourage Dow people to strive for more results. This in turn leads to more recognition.

Aligning recognition with the strategic goals of the company helps to guide Dow people to focus their efforts on those priorities that truly matter to the company. With people's goals tied to the overall results we're after, there is increased individual alignment at every

level of the company, which leads to success for the company and the individual.

Ultimately, the new approach seeks to increase employee satisfaction with more effective recognition at Dow.

A New Web-based Recognition Tool

In January 2005, Dow launched a new web-based recognition tool to facilitate the nomination and award redemption processes. The tool provides electronic thank you cards or e-cards that all Dow people can use to recognize their colleagues. In addition, people leaders can use the tool to nominate employees for gift certificates and cash rewards.

In its first month, the tool recorded fairly active usage with over 3,000 people being recognized. The majority received e-cards while 875 people received monetary awards, i.e. gift certificates and cash, for their contributions.

"The rollout of *Recognition@Dow* is a positive move. It shows that the company is aware of and committed to the recognition needs of Dow people," said Produce Product, Product manager Tom Carson.

"The on-line tool is easy to use, providing for the documentation of rewards and recognition in the system and facilitating the reward approval process," he added. "To improve on this good start, we need to continue

to listen to feedback from Dow people."

Marie-Louise Van Waes, Global Supply manager in Purchasing based in Terneuzen, the Netherlands, was one of a three-member team recently recognized for negotiating and implementing a new travel supplier for Dow Europe. Two days before the award notification arrived from the program administrator, her supervisor in Midland called to inform her that she was getting an award in recognition of her contribution.

"It's extremely important to be recognized personally," said Van Waes. "But this is often not possible with many of us now working in remote teams. The new *Recognition@Dow* process allows for timely recognition and personalization to a certain extent."

On the tool, Van Waes said everything worked well, adding that she received her gift certificate from the merchant within a week of going online to redeem her award. "The fact that you have the ability to select from different categories is very good." While she likes the categories of gifts available, an improvement she suggested is adding merchants located in or closer to Dow (manufacturing) sites.

The on-line recognition tool is available by typing the Dow Keyword: Recognition at the Dow Intranet homepage.

Redeeming Your Award

- Click on the link provided in the e-mail from Globoforce, the vendor administering the *Recognition@Dow* award nomination and redemption processes. This takes you to the award redemption site.
- Select the “redeem my award” tab and you will be asked to choose a country in the pull-down menu.
- Click on a gift category to see the list of participating merchants.
- If you are ready to redeem your award, click on the merchant of your choice to complete the gift certificate order form. The merchant will mail the gift certificate(s) to you within 12 days.

Things to Note

- An award given to you will expire a year from the date it is issued, so do take note of the expiration date stated in the award notification from Globoforce.
- As you have a year to redeem your award, you may choose to “bank” or “save” it for redemption at a later date, potentially in combination with other awards you may also receive during that 12 month period.
- You can redeem gift certificates from participating merchants anywhere in the world, but you will have to bear all taxes and shipping charges imposed by the merchants for delivering the purchases you made with their gift certificates.
- Gift certificates issued by merchants also have a valid period, so remember to use your gift certificates before they expire.

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