



Stanford eCorner

Give Thoughtful Recognition and Praise

Mari Baker, *PlayFirst*

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Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/2234/Give-Thoughtful-Recognition-and-Praise>

Be conscious of the in-house messages that you send. Mari Baker, CEO of PlayFirst, encourages business leaders to think about the values of a company that are reflected in its communications; for example, celebrating employees who work deep into overtime or who find the least expensive resources. The way you praise your workers is a declaration of your company values, and if not handled carefully, they can send the message that long days and bottom-rung pricing are the only way to succeed. Be certain that praise is allocated carefully and that its an accurate representation of what's expected and desired on the job.



Transcript

One of the key things as you get in a company as a CEO is to be very purposeful, to be conscious of what you do and how you do it, even as a cofounder, as a leader in an organization. Some organizations that I've seen, so there's the company wide emails that go out, recognizing people who stayed in and worked all weekend, recognizing the people who were there all night long to get something done. There's nothing wrong with that but to be conscious of the message that it sends because that sends the message of that's what we expect, that's what we want to have happen. I've been at companies where the company-wide emails that go out are the ones around congratulating somebody for negotiating the heck out of a service contract and we got the pricing possible, congratulating somebody for doing something the cheapest way possible. That really breeds a culture of people being really conscious about spending, being really conscious about value, being really conscious about how they're using the company's money. And that's okay, too. There's another company that I've been out where all the emails that go out are about congratulating around product launches, all about products. That's great, too. There's nothing wrong with that. The thing that I want to ask you think about when you get into those roles is being conscious.

What do you want to be valued in the company because what you do, what those company emails are set the tone for the whole company. And you want to be conscious about those things. You want to be conscious about those messages that you're delivering because those are the cues that the team will take to know what it takes to be successful in the organization and where that focus is going to be.