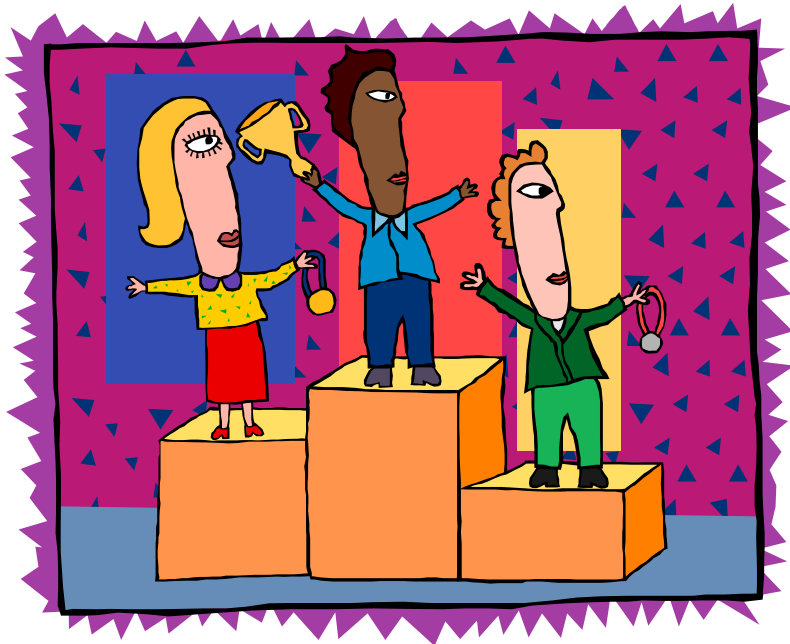# Building and Sustaining a Recognition Culture
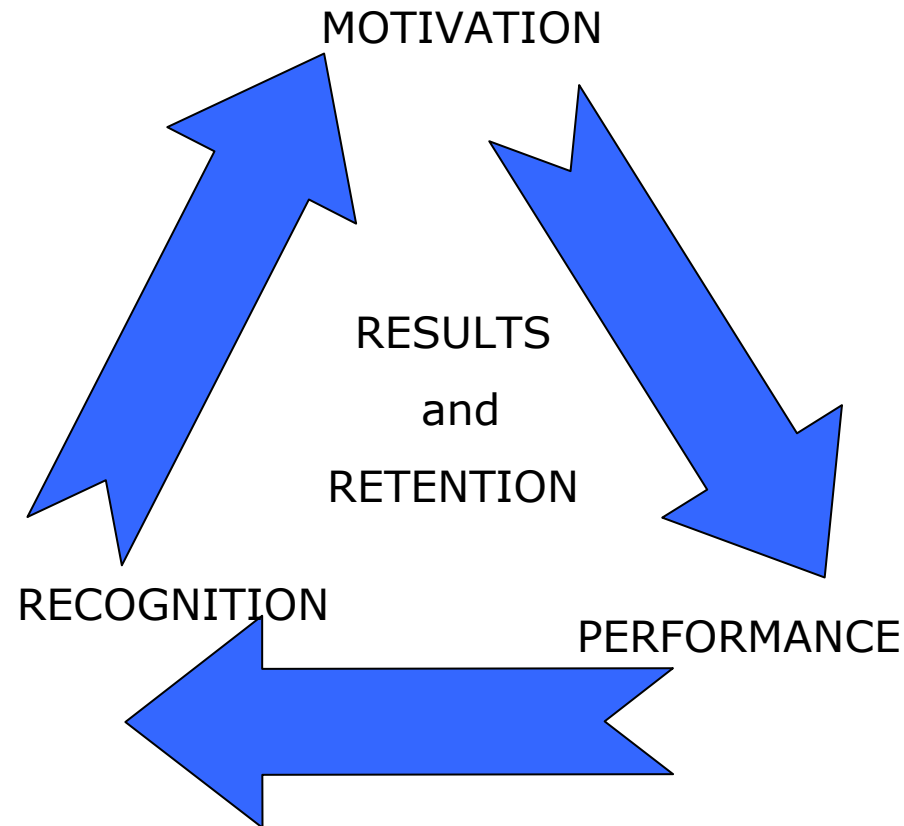
Recognition
at the
Bonneville Power Administration

Godfrey Beckett
HR/EEO/Diversity Manager
Bonneville Power Administration

DOE HR Conference
June 2004

Building and Sustaining a Recognition Culture:
Introduction

MOTIVATION

RESULTS

and

RETENTION

RECOGNITION

PERFORMANCE

- The HR community and performance managers know that recognition, motivation and retention are intertwined.

  – Recognition motivates employees.
  – Motivated employees are inspired to achieve.
  – Achievements are recognized.
  – Recognition motivates employees. . . .

- And so it continues.

Building a Recognition Culture:
The Context

BPA's Recognition Program had sponsors and champions at the top:

- Chief Operating Officer, then Steve Hickok, kicked off the revamping of the BPA Recognition System.

- Judi Johansen, Administrator and CEO, championed the High Performing Organization (HPO). Her commitment to strategic direction with HPO emphasis included recognition as one of the seven critical elements.
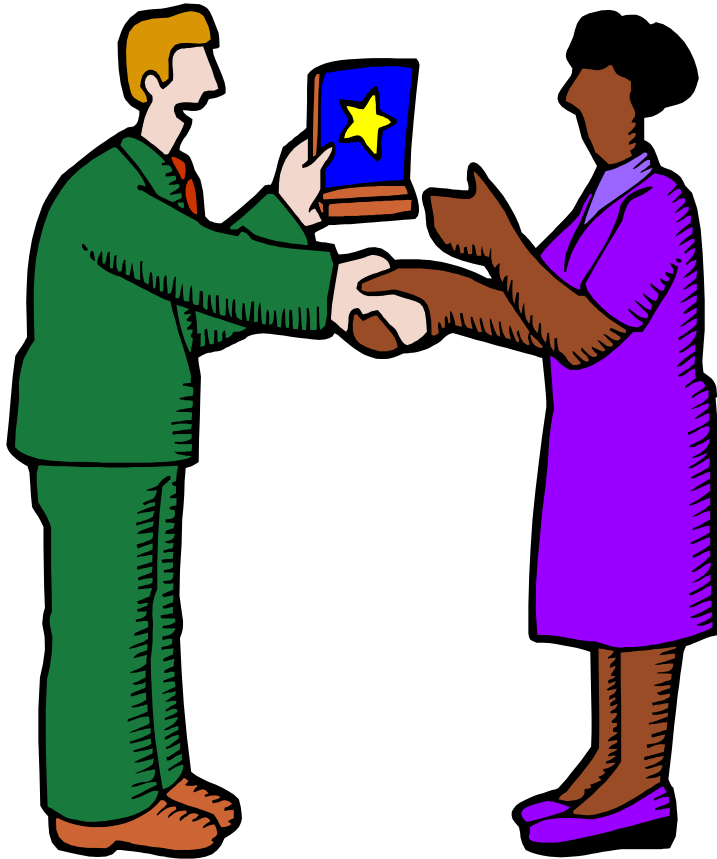
Building a Recognition Culture:
The Foundation

The ambitious project to revamp the recognition system had clear objectives. The new program would:

- Link with the HPO strategic direction

- Withstand the test of time

- Achieve a recognition-rich culture

Building a Recognition Culture:
The Vision

The 'new' recognition system would:

- Be an open, full-scale program with monetary and nonmonetary recognition
- Recognize individual and group contributions
- Value cost-effectiveness and customer/client satisfaction
- Provide immediate, sincere and respectful recognition and motivation (stimulate improvement)
- Offer immediate, sincere respectful recognition

Building a Recognition Culture:
The Tests

What is a recognition-rich culture?

- Employees say it's a "Great Place to Work."
- Employees **believe they** are compensated fairly.
- Employees say their supervisors are effective at showing appreciation for quality work.
- Employees show appreciation to their peers for quality work.
- Employees feel like 'winners.'

Building a Recognition Culture:
The Task Force

The COO chartered a task force to create a proposal. The task force:

- Conducted focus groups through the BPA's organizations.

- Benchmarked programs elsewhere –government, private sector, including utilities.

- Crafted a proposal.

Building a Recognition Culture:
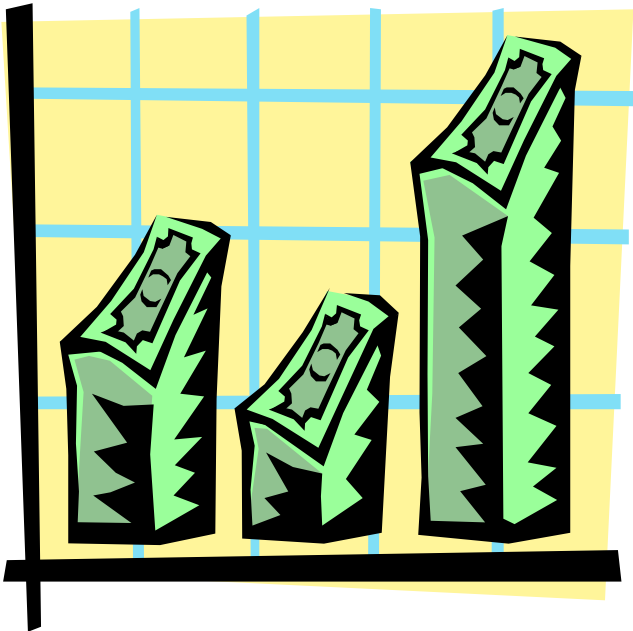## The Design

The task force met its charge. The revamped program is open and includes:

- Monetary recognition

  and

- Nonmonetary recognition

Building a Recognition Culture:
The Structure

The monetary recognition has 3 components. Each component has a separate funding pool:

Success Share

BPA-wide program

Team Share

Organizational program

Individual Results

e.g., On-the-Spot, Results and Time-Off awards, and celebrations.

Building a Recognition Culture:
The Structure

The nonmonetary structure includes:

- Informal recognition

- Honor awards including

- Administrator's Excellence Awards (added Spring 2001)

Building a Recognition Culture:
The Program

In addition to the monetary and nonmonetary recognition, the program features:

- Recognition Council
- Award funding ramp-up to peak in FY01

Sustaining the Recognition Culture:
The History

Funding of BPA Recognition Pool
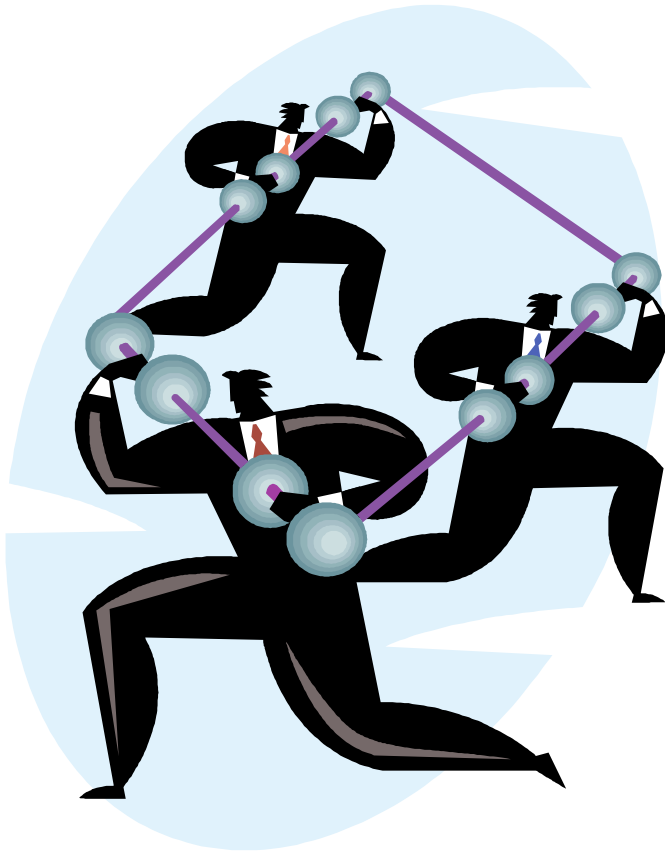### (% of base payroll)

Program	FY99	FY00	FY01 and beyond
Success Share	1.5%	1.5%	1.5%
Team Share	2.0%	3.5%	4.5%
Individual Awards	1.0%	3.0%	3.0%
TOTAL	**4.5%**	**8.0%**	**9.0%**

Sustaining the Recognition Culture:
The Challenge

In FY03, 2nd quarter, BPA suspended
Success Share and Team Share
and
Cut Individual/Group Results
budget dramatically.

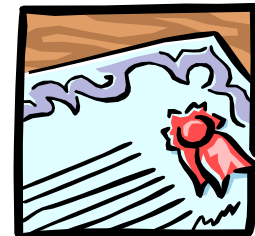# Sustaining the Recognition Culture:
The Challenge

Sustain and build the recognition culture with:

- Emphasis on nonmonetary tools and resources

- Minimal resources

Sustaining the Recognition Culture:
Rising to the Challenge

When the going got tough . . . BPA got creative!

- eCards
- Resources, tools and ideas on line (from traveling awards to a log for managers to track recognition)
- Recognition Informational Training (1-stop shopping on the web)
- Administrator's Excellence Awards

  (annual ceremony)

Sustaining the Recognition Culture:
Meeting the Challenge

eCards

- Introduced Spring 2003
- Virtually no-cost
- 8 card designs
- User-friendly
- Continuous improvement (well, quarterly, when the team reviews the program)
- Popular with employees

Sustaining the Recognition Culture:
Measuring Success

- 6,000 eCards sent since inception

- Increased Administrator's Excellence Awards participation

- Annual employee survey results

Sustaining the Recognition Culture:
The Dollars

BPA Total Individual Awards $

- In FY02, BPA awarded $5,517,890

- In FY03, BPA awarded $ 592,266

- In FY04, BPA has awarded $ 41,506

The employee survey response might surprise you.

Sustaining the Recognition Culture:
Measuring Success

Annual all-employee survey response

13. I am rewarded for providing high quality products or services to customers.

   FY02 **64%**   FY03 **49%**

   The drop of 15% acknowledges that 'rewards' diminished in FY03.

14. How effective is your supervisor at showing appreciation for quality work?

   FY02 **72%**   FY03 **78%**

   While 'rewards' are down, appreciation (recognition) has increased (is up).

Sustaining the Recognition Culture:
Measuring Success

Performance, Motivation and Pride

Survey Results

	FY00	FY03
My work has special meaning; this is not 'just a job.'	72%	
My work gives me a feeling of personal accomplishment.		84%
When I look at what we accomplish, I feel a sense of pride.	79%	
How would you rate the overall quality of work done in your Work group?		90%
People look forward to coming to work here.	54%	
My supervisor provides an environment that supports Employee involvement, contributions and teamwork.		73%

Increasing the Recognition Culture:
The Conclusion

- BPA has discovered that the desired recognition-rich culture is possible, even when resources are scarce.