



# The Customer Communicator Web Extra

## Peer Recognition

### Find ways to recognize your coworkers

Peer-to-peer recognition can often be the most meaningful because it comes from one's coworkers.

Rewards and recognition doesn't always have to come from your manager. One of the most powerful forms of recognition and motivation is that which comes from one's peers, says Dr. Bob Nelson, author of *1501 Ways to Reward Employees*. And peer recognition is something that every customer service team should look into. For instance:

- **Pass-around award.** Even if your company doesn't have a formal recognition program, you and your team members can create what Nelson calls a pass-around award for your group — for instance, something that recognizes a particular service skill like saving customers that might have been lost, or going above and beyond for a customer.
- **Recognition board.** Another possibility is to create a recognition board of some kind, where reps are encouraged to post customer testimonials, thank-you notes to or from other reps, or simply motivational thoughts-of-the-day.
- **Thank-you notes.** You can also promote peer recognition by printing up thank-you notes that reps can exchange, or by setting up an online forum where reps can post notes and thank-yous to others who have been helpful — even those in other departments.

- **Public announcements.** Reps can also take some time at the end of their team meetings to thank others publicly for assistance and support that they have provided.

Nelson also suggests that reps go to their managers for additional support and resources for providing peer-to-peer recognition.

### The Wingspread Award

One of the peer-to-peer awards that Nelson cites for special notice is something called "The Wingspread Award" which was created by employees in the Office of Personnel Management in Washington, DC.

The award was first presented to a special performer in the office, who then passed it along to another employee who deserved it. Over time, the award has taken on great significance in the office because it comes from one's peers. A recipient can keep the award for as long as he or she wants, or until he identifies another special performer to pass it on to.

