



Build Your Company Culture – One Gift at a Time

How Businesses Can Give Memorable and Impactful Gifts

It's no secret – employees who feel valued in the workplace are more likely to work harder, perform better, and are less likely to turn in their notice. Likewise, employers are more likely to attract and retain top-tier talent when the work environment fosters a sense of belonging and recognition. One proven way to create such an environment is through an employee gift-giving program.

93% of employees who feel valued say they are motivated to do their best at work.

American Psychological Association Survey

The simple but intentional practice of giving employees meaningful gifts throughout the year increases employees' positive opinions about the organization, helps them feel more connected, and reinforces loyalty. This especially benefits employees who work offsite, as they tend to feel disconnected.

The Power of Gift Giving

Think about the last time you received a memorable or meaningful gift (whether in or out of the workplace). How did it make you feel? How did it change or reinforce your impression of the gift giver? Remember these thoughts as you select gifts for your employees.



During the pandemic, Sensational Gifts saw its highest number of orders for gifts specifically for employees.

What Makes a Gift Memorable

When asked what makes a gift memorable, recipients often identify one or more of the following:

- A clearly personalized gift that fits their interests
- Includes a personalized message
- A gift that is truly unique

Personalized Gifts

A personalized gift does not have to be truly unique (though it could be), but it should be tailored to fit the recipient's passions, hobbies, interests, etc. This could include favorite foods, wine, a gift card to a preferred store, or tickets to their favorite team's game or theatrical/musical performance. A personalized gift shows effort taken to match the item to the individual.

Unique Gifts

A truly unique gift is one that is rare and/or unexpected, like seats to a sold-out concert/game/event that the recipient has been talking about for weeks. Or, an autograph from a favorite athlete or a handmade necklace from a local artisan. A truly unique gift should also be personalized to the individual. (Find out how to collect information on employees' interests in our how-to guide below.)

A Personalized Note

Recipients feel that gifts are most meaningful when a personalized note is included – a step often overlooked by employers. Writing a short but personal message to go with your gift is a simple and inexpensive way to increase the overall impact.

Branded Items

Company branded items are popular items gifted to both clients and employees. These are great gifts such as a welcome/thank-you gift during a company team-building event. Branded gifts also pair well with more personalized and meaningful non-branded items.

Food & Alcohol Gifts

When gifting food items, be sure to know the recipient's dietary preferences as well as any allergies or sensitivities. When gifting alcohol, find out if the recipient partakes and if so, what they enjoy most. A selection of cabernet – no matter how expensive – would fall flat for someone who drinks only white wine.

Gift Cards

Gift cards are a popular gift and appreciated by many employees. Sometimes, however, a gift card can feel impersonal. When giving a gift card, be sure to include a card with a personalized message and consider adding one wonderful gift.

Choosing a Memorable Gift: A How-To Guide

1. **Pay attention.** If you don't already, start paying close attention to the non-work-related things your employees talk about. Work to discover their favorite foods, hobbies, teams, interests, and more. Take notes!
2. **Create a gift-giving database.** With those notes, create a record of all things gift related using a program like Excel. One worksheet should include an inspiration bank wherein preferences and interests are listed for each employee. This will serve as a springboard for gift selections. Be sure to also include a historical log of gifts given to each employee per occasion.
3. **Designate a gifts manager or team.** This person or team will maintain and update the database and spearhead selecting and ordering gifts.
4. **Use surveys.** Send out an employee interests questionnaire when a new employee is hired and another every other year to keep it up-to-date. You can also use this information in an internal "getting to know you" or "employee highlight" e-news.
5. **Recognize all staff in similar ways.** If your goal is to make everyone in your organization feel like an equally valued part of the team, then your gifts should demonstrate as much. Spend as much time and thought selecting a meaningful gift for C-level employees as you do for junior staff.

Occasions to Remember

Companies that recognize both personal and professional occasions demonstrate an appreciation for work-life balance and recognize that employees are people first, employees second.

Personal

- Birthday
- New baby
- Well wishes (for illness)
- Bereavement
- Engagement/marriage
- Engage remote employees
- Special events
- New year
- Intern welcome/departure
- Goodbye/retirement
- Staff appreciation

Professional

- New hire/welcome
- Work anniversaries
- Professional achievements, like certifications, advanced degrees, etc.
- Engage remote employees
- Special events
- Intern welcome/departure
- Goodbye/retirement
- Staff appreciation
- Thank you for a successful year
- Holiday gifts

Despite the time, effort, and organization it requires, an employee gift-giving program is an exceptionally successful and surprisingly cost-effective strategy to increase employee satisfaction and retention.

Let's discuss how Sensational Baskets can help you design an effective employee gift program.

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