Incentive Programs

This worksheet is to provide insight on incorporating incentive programs for student employees.

What is an incentive program?

An incentive program is the structured use of rewards and recognition to motivate desired behavior from a specific group of people. Incentives are a behavioral modification tool that can be used for a variety of reasons. By assigning rewards for demonstrating desired behaviors, those behaviors will be repeated more often. This is a psychological principle known as Operant Conditioning (Herbert, 2019).

Benefits of incentive programs

According to author Lisa McQuerrey, there are numerous advantages associated with encouraging staff through the use of incentives. These benefits include:

- **Increased employee motivation** - Incentive plans that reward employees for reaching pre-established goals provide encouragement and give staffers something to aim for. The advantage to the employer is increased levels of productivity – and workers tend to be happier when they are rewarded for going above and beyond their everyday work tasks.
- **Increased employee loyalty** - Employees who have the ability to positively impact their earning potential through incentive plans are more likely to be loyal to the company they represent due to gaining added benefits for their employment.
- **Reduced turnover** - Employees often look for new employment opportunities when they feel they are under-compensated or unappreciated. Incentive plans are a way of rewarding top-performing employees and showing them you appreciate their contributions to the business. The advantage to the employer is reduced turnover, which also results in time and money savings related to recruiting new hires.
- **Increase in teamwork** - When employees work together on team incentive plans, they establish a sense of camaraderie, pulling together for the common good. This can strengthen bonds between colleagues, managers and business owners. The advantage of a unified workforce is a more efficient, pleasant work environment for all. It can also enhance regular work relationships between departments and co-workers, resulting in increased productivity (McQuerry, 2019).

Types of incentive programs

- **Monetary** – a reward that requires some type of payment, such as bonuses, commission, or a tangible item (ex. A t-shirt).
- **Non-monetary** – tend to be more effective motivators of long-term behavioral change because They have social and emotional value that cash does not (Herbert, 2019).

Resources:

Herbert, M. (2019, September 23). *Incentive Programs 101: What Is an Incentive program and How Does It Work?* Incentive
      Solutions. https://www.incentivesolutions.com/what-is-an-incentive-program/

McQuerrey, L. (2019, March 4). *The Advantages of Incentive Plans.* Chron.
      https://smallbusiness.chron.com/advantages-incentive-plans-55858.html

Incentives Brainstorming Worksheet

Below are some ideas on how to offer incentives and what types of incentives you can offer. Use the worksheet to write down some of your own ideas.

Opportunities to gain incentives

1. Attending at least 2 trainings or workshops in the semester
2. Refer 15 people to a position
3. Pick up extra shifts
4. Complete Steps to Leaps modules

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____

Incentives to offer

1. Increase in evaluation rating
2. Employee of the month
3. Certificate of appreciation

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12. _____