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MORE THAN FLOWERS

IMPACTFUL AND LASTING WAYS TO HONOR YOUR ADMINISTRATIVE WORKFORCE THIS ADMIN PROFESSIONALS DAY

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Looking for something beyond flowers and lunch to honor your admin team this year?

Here's the thing – while treats are nice, the administrative professionals in your organization make business-critical contributions every single day. The real magic happens when we recognize their expertise by including them in business decisions and ensuring they have seats and voices at relevant tables.

Want to make a lasting impact? Consider these ideas that focus on development, growth, and meaningful recognition:

1. **Career Development Planning Sessions** where you support them as they map out their professional goals and create an actionable plan to achieve them

2. **Decision-Making Inclusion** by inviting them to relevant strategic meetings where they can contribute and gain visibility

3. **Cross-Training Opportunities** to expand their knowledge and value to the organization

4. **Creating an Administrative Professional Advisory Board** that provides input on company policies and processes

5. **Public Recognition of Their Contributions** during team meetings or company-wide communications

6. **Mentorship and Connection Opportunities** by supporting their involvement in a professional association

7. Leadership Opportunities by asking them to lead a project or initiative they're passionate about

8. Professional Development Dollars for conferences, courses, certifications, or continuing education related to their role

9. Shadow Experiences with executives or other departments to broaden their understanding of the organization

10. Establishing a Formal Feedback System where they can safely share ideas for improving workflows and procedures

11. Setting Up Regular Check-ins focused specifically on professional development rather than just task management

The beauty of these approaches is that they don't just benefit your administrative staff - they create significant value for your organization as a whole:

Organizational Benefits

1. Career Development Planning Sessions

Improves retention of skilled admins, reduces turnover costs, and creates a pipeline of experienced talent ready for advancement opportunities

2. Decision-Making Inclusion

Brings practical operational insights to strategic discussions and identifies potential implementation challenges before they become problems

3. Cross-Training Opportunities

Creates backup support for critical functions, improves operational resilience during absences, and reduces workflow bottlenecks

4. Creating an Administrative Professional Advisory Board

Creates a structured feedback mechanism, provides insights from those closest to daily operations, and increases buy-in for organizational changes

5. Public Recognition of Their Contributions

Demonstrates company values in action, sets performance standards, and encourages similar excellence across all teams

6. Mentorship and Connection Opportunities

Transfers institutional knowledge, maintains continuity during transitions, and cultivates a culture of collaboration across departments and industries

7. Leadership Opportunities

Discovers hidden talents and capabilities, develops future leaders, and brings fresh perspectives to organizational challenges

8. Professional Development Dollars

Brings cutting-edge practices into the organization, ensures compliance with industry standards, and demonstrates investment in workforce development

9. Shadow Experiences

Improves cross-functional communication, builds mutual understanding between departments, and identifies process improvement opportunities

10. Establishing a Formal Feedback System

Identifies inefficiencies in current processes, leverages frontline knowledge for continuous improvement, and creates a culture of innovation

11. Setting Up Regular Check-ins

Aligns individual growth with organizational needs, prevents skill stagnation, and demonstrates commitment to employee development that attracts top talent

By implementing even a few of these ideas, you'll not only honor your administrative professionals in meaningful ways but also create a more effective, resilient organization. And that helps make your company a pretty great place to work for everyone.

This list is far from exhaustive! IAAP (International Association of Administrative Professionals) would be happy to schedule a session to talk through any thoughts or ideas your organization has about how to further utilize the profession to impact experience and bottom line.