

Willow Grove Park Mall

One way to acknowledge great employees....instantly!

“Instant Recognition”

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Maya Angelou said it best. People don't remember what you said but they do remember how you made them feel.

Five years ago I took a page from “Total Quality Training” that I received many years ago and created an Instant Recognition initiative at Willow Grove Park Mall. The purpose was to acknowledge and motivate employees who go the extra mile for customers and teammates. Employees are always surprised when their Supervisor congratulates them and awards a \$10 Chick-fil-A Gift Card and a certificate with the headline **Instant Recognition, “Lunch Is On Us” Willow Grove Park.** It's a small gesture but it appears to go a long way toward warming the hearts of employees who do not expect to be acknowledged or even noticed for what they consider just doing their jobs.

As the General Manager of Willow Grove Park Mall, I witness many examples of good and bad customer service. While I do not have a great deal of influence over the behavior of store employees, I firmly believe that rewarding positive behavior generates more positive behavior, which makes me a believer in these types of positive human connections.

A simple gift, a free lunch in this case, can go a long way to brightening someone's day. Instant Recognition initiatives like this one, are easy to implement, are minimal expense, and can be used to recognize great customer service as well as exemplary teamwork.

All employees who work for Willow Grove Park Mall Management are empowered to recognize a fellow employee with an Instant Recognition Award. If employees notice another employee going out of his or her way to provide outstanding service all they need to do is send an email message to the General Manager. They simply state the reason they believe an employee deserves an Instant Recognition Award, and the next day the \$10 Gift Card and award certificate is hand delivered to that employee's supervisor. The mall's Bookkeeper is a real “people person” and also appreciates this initiative. He gladly tracks all of the Gift Card purchases, awards, and reminds the Office Manager when it is time to replenish the Gift Cards. Every person who has been nominated for an award has been approved. There have been over 50 awards thus far and we look forward to many more.