

FACT SHEET

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EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION AWARDS PROGRAM

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Every technique practicable should be used by managers of agribusinesses and other organizations to create and maintain an employee enthusiasm which will result in more efficient use of available manpower. Although not used to any large extent, one proved approach lies in rewarding employees for their suggestions.

Defining an Employee Suggestion Program

- An employee suggestion program is an *announced* policy by an organization through which employees are invited to submit suggestions. The announcement should outline types of ideas desired. In this publication, the term "suggestion" means an idea which will help to improve operations, working conditions, administrative procedures, methods or equipment. The ideas received through an employee suggestion program may save materials or property, promote health, increase safety or improve morale. Most successful programs have defined the concept of suggestion in these terms.
- The program includes provisions for paying the originator of a suggestion a certain percentage of the savings which the organization realizes from its adoption. When benefits cannot be measured easily, realistic estimates are made.

Administering a Program

- All employees should be made aware of the employee suggestion program and the procedures for its administration. Their supervisors should encourage ideas from workers.
- Attractive locked suggestion boxes should be displayed prominently, with a supply of locally designed suggestion forms attached. Boxes should be marked so that they are immediately recognizable as suggestion boxes.

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- Suggestion boxes should be emptied weekly by management personnel. This action is one of the most overlooked items in organizations which have had poor experiences with suggestion programs.
- Management should immediately advise in writing the originator of each suggestion that his or her idea has been received and is being studied. If study of the idea extends over a long period, keep the originator advised of progress, so that he or she knows the suggestion has not been forgotten.
- Suggestions which have merit should be put into operation as soon as feasible. Long delays result in overall loss of enthusiasm and interest in the program.
- Suggestions which are not usable should be rejected in a way that will not cause the originator to be discouraged from submitting other ideas. Specific, courteously stated reasons should be given for rejection.
- The ceremony for winners of suggestion awards should be made a special event. As many employees as possible should be encouraged to witness it. Also, management should prepare and provide news releases with pictures for local mass media. This will help stimulate competitive participation.

Benefits to Be Gained

- Better methods and procedures which result in more efficiency.
- A feeling by employees that their ideas are wanted. This is always essential if progress is to be realized in any organization.
- Extra income for originators of ideas.
- An image that the organization is alert to modern personnel policies and practices. This aids in recruitment of personnel and in promotion of sales.

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