

# Getting Your New Rewards and Recognition Program Approved: A Checklist

Secure internal approval and set the foundation for a successful rewards and recognition program that drives engagement, retention, and organizational success.

## Define Your Strategic Objective

- Identify and articulate the business need your rewards and recognition program aims to address. Why does your company need this program? What challenge are you looking to solve?
- Align your program with the company goals. Consider whether the program will be designed to achieve people and culture goals (e.g., improve turnover rate, increase employee engagement, etc.) or support organizational objectives (e.g., increase sales, improve customer service, increase innovation, etc.). Pro tip: Tying your program to the organizational objectives that your C-suite cares most about will improve your likelihood of getting buy-in.
- Link to HR metrics. Show the leadership team which metrics you will use to measure the ROI of the program, whether it's a reduction in turnover, a performance increase or something else.

## Conduct a Needs Assessment

- Document your existing program. How is your current rewards and recognition program managed? Highlight the gaps and inefficiencies. Paint a picture of the administrative work involved in managing spreadsheets, ad hoc gift cards, etc. Show what the program could look like with an investment in dedicated rewards and recognition software – how systematized, easy to manage, and integrated it can be, how it can improve program engagement, and how you'll be able to track its impact on business results.
- Survey employees. As a key stakeholder in the program, it's important to get employees' support. Survey your workforce or have informal discussions to understand their needs and preferences in regards to a rewards and recognition program.
- Research best practices. Look at successful programs in similar organizations or industries to identify the program structures, features, and benefits that resonate with employees. Pro tip: Check out [Bucketlist's Case Studies](#) to see how we've driven impact for companies similar to yours.

## Develop a Program Proposal

- Outline the proposed program structure.**

Define the key components, including the types of rewards available, how recognition will be given, received, tracked, and managed, and how it will integrate with your existing HRIS and communication channels (Teams, Slack, etc.). Will you provide experiences and swag? Will you launch employee awards?
- Set clear goals.**

Specify the expected outcome of the program over a given period of time. What will success look like at 3 months? 6 months? 12 months? Pro tip: Use [Bucketlist's ROI calculator](#) to estimate the financial impact of the program. Make sure your proposal shows exactly how the program ties into the organizational goals your VPs, directors, CPO, and CEO care most about. Tailor the proposal to these priorities for best results.
- Share your proposed vendor choice.**

Outline your vendor selection process, and detail why Bucketlist is your preferred choice. Show the research you've done on alternatives. Show the benefits and features that make Bucketlist your top choice.
- Budget and resource planning.**

Provide a clear budget, including setup costs, the annual cost of the platform, and the cost of rewards.
- Q&A.**

Leave room in the proposal for a Q&A period. Anticipate questions and concerns that your leadership team may have (e.g., costs, impact on processes, scalability), and proactively address them.

## Create an Implementation and Rollout Plan

- Create a timeline.**

Provide an implementation timeline from approval to launch. Include milestones for platform setup, training, onboarding, and communication efforts.
- Implementation and integration.**

Bucketlist has been ranked #1 easiest to use. Specify how the platform will integrate with your existing tools, how easy it will be to add employees to the program, and how it can be customized to your unique needs.
- Rollout plan.**

Outline how you will communicate the program launch to drive adoption and engagement, including manager and employee training and onboarding.
- Success metrics.**

Identify KPIs to measure the success of your program, including participation rates, number of recognitions given, engagement scores, etc.
- Risk assessment.**

Consider potential risks, such as low adoption or platform management challenges, and outline the strategies you will put in place to mitigate the risks (robust training, manager support, pilot etc.)
- Feedback and adjustments.**

Highlight how you will gather ongoing feedback to refine the program and ensure it evolves to meet employee and organizational needs.
- Reporting.**

Outline how the program success and ROI will be tracked and reported to leadership and how often you will provide updates (e.g., quarterly reviews, monthly dashboard).

## Present to Leadership

- Dry run.**  
Go through a dry run of your proposal with a colleague or your direct superior. Get their feedback and adjust the proposal as required.
- Schedule a meeting.**  
Arrange a formal meeting with relevant leadership (VPs, directors, CPO, CEO).
- Create a professional presentation deck.**  
Make sure your presentation includes everything you need to get buy-in, use visuals, have your deck copy edited, and use a designer if required.
- Have support docs on hand.**  
Be ready to share your vendor research, budget breakdown, employee survey results, etc.
- Adjust or celebrate approval.**  
Adjust your program proposal based on leadership feedback or celebrate program approval. Start preparing next steps in onboarding and implementation!

