

FAST COMPANY



LEADERSHIP

38 SHARES



WHAT YOUR EMPLOYEES REALLY WANT FOR THE HOLIDAYS

SKIP THE GIFT CARDS. WHAT YOUR EMPLOYEES REALLY WANT FROM YOU IS TO STRESS LESS.

BY RANA FLORIDA

Your employees don't work just for the money.

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Kenneth Kovach's classic paper "[What Motivates Employees](#)" examined 40 years' worth of surveys and concluded that workers rank being fully appreciated for their hard work above the size of their paycheck.

So this holiday think beyond a fruitcake or even the traditional end-of-year bonus (unless it's really substantial) and give them something that shows your respect.

Here are 10 gifts that will never stop giving:

1. Flexibility

Trust your people to manage their work commitments; don't infantilize them by making them turn in a request every time they want to spend a day with their family or go to the doctor.

2. Control

Between [smart phones](#) and the global scope of so many of our jobs, we are on-call or in demand 24 hours a day. At least let your staff control their own schedules.

3. Mentorship

Give your workers the benefit of your experience; show them that you believe in them, and give them the space to grow.

4. Professional Development

Encourage your people to take advantage of every opportunity for professional development. Send them to conferences and courses where they can learn vital skills and network.

5. Empowerment

The top down approach to leadership is outmoded. Allow your teams to step up and take the reins whenever they can.

6. Praise

Feedback matters. When your people deliver, show them that you recognize their accomplishments, and make sure their peers hear you praising them, too.

7. Tools To Do Their Jobs

Give your people what they need to succeed, whether it's a better laptop, the use of an intern or temp, a [travel grant](#), or just the time and space to complete a demanding project.

8. A Way Up

Nobody wants to feel stuck in a dead end job. Make sure that everyone who works for you knows they are on a ladder.

9. Not To Be Micromanaged

Perhaps your team might not do things exactly the way you would but skip the micromanaging; it's demotivating. The end result is what really matters.

10. Stress Relievers

Whether it's a day at the spa, distributing workloads more fairly, or loosing up deadlines, stress can lead to burnout and can be a huge productivity killer.

—*Rana Florida* is CEO of [Creative Class Group](#), and author of [Upgrade: Taking Your Work and Life from Ordinary to Extraordinary](#).

[Photo: Flickr user [Bert Heymans](#)]