

**Understanding the Impact of Recognition on Employees,  
Their Work, and Feelings Toward Managers**

A dissertation submitted

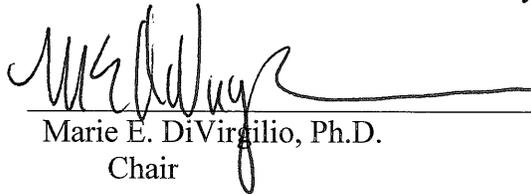
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## **Abstract**

This study explored how manager recognition of employee contributions impacts employees, their work, and their feelings toward managers.

This qualitative study examined the effects of recognition revealed through 35 interviews of participants who were employed at the same Fortune 500 company. Participant narratives guided the findings and revealed an association between recognition and increased levels of manager respect. In addition, the study showed that the absence of recognition is detrimental to several factors, but most notably, manager trust. Research findings were constructed from the voices of the employees.

The goal is that findings from this qualitative study will strengthen leaders, improve training materials related to effective leadership, and inspire future research efforts that explore the topics of employee recognition, manager respect, and trust within the manager-employee dyad.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## ***Effects of Employee Recognition***

Research has demonstrated that employee recognition, which can come in many forms, can have a lasting positive effect on an organization's employees, their work, and their feelings toward their manager:

Employee recognition is as much an organizational management issue as it is one related to the basic needs of individuals. Although it is gaining wider and wider currency in sociology and organizational psychology circles, this complex notion is still fairly vague in the management world. (Brun & Dugas, 2008, p. 716)

Herzberg (1966) noted that consistently and frequently applied formal and informal recognition programs provide management with a powerful tool to influence employees to live the company's values and implement its focused mission. Herzberg recognized the importance of reinforcing behaviors that contribute to organizational success: "By specifically reinforcing expected behaviors, leaders signal to employees that their efforts are noticed and appreciated" (Luthans, 2000, p. 34).

However, Hansen, Smith, and Hansen (2002) have noted that there are misconceptions that rewards and recognition are regarded as synonymous. They regard them as distinct and clear representations of two different forms of motivation:

Despite the overwhelming theoretical and research support for this duality, it continues to be ignored in the actual practice of designing and implementing employee motivation initiatives. Motivation programs are ineffective and may even erode employees' ability to engage with their work. More important is the adverse impact on the ability to understand and learn about human motivation. Only when

recognition and reward are treated as two distinct phenomena will the effectiveness of employee motivation initiatives be improved. (Hansen, Smith, & Hansen, 2002, p. 72)

A meta-analysis of behavioral management studies over the past twenty years found that social rewards (i.e., recognition and attention) had as big an impact on employee performance as did monetary rewards (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1997).

A recent survey by Robert Half International reported that 25% of HR executives indicated that a lack of recognition was the most likely factor causing a good employee to quit his or her job (Wallsten, 1998). In addition, a study from the Hay Group indicated that factors such as recognition for a job well done, respectful treatment, and coaching through constructive feedback were considered more important than pay in terms of worker commitment (Stum, 1998, pp. S9-S10). Implications from these and similar research findings signal a need for a greater understanding of the impact on recognition within a workgroup context.

Although the surveys define non-financial rewards a little differently, the common theme is that recognition and social rewards do not cost anything. According to Graham and Unruh (1990), these powerful, non-financial incentives can be easily incorporated into daily workplace in the following ways:

1. A manager personally congratulates an employee for a job well done.
2. A manager writes a personal note for good performance.
3. A manager publicly recognizes an employee for good performance.

4. A manager holds morale-building meetings to celebrate successes.
5. Kerr and Slocum (1987) noted that organizations that recognize and respect their employees tend to retain their workers for longer periods of time because of increased loyalty and commitment.

In 2012, AON Hewitt conducted a worldwide survey on Trends in Global Employee Engagement. The survey included 9.7 million employees representing more than 3,100 organizations and covered a broad range of company sizes and industries. The survey spanned four primary regions: Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America, and North America. Results indicate that career opportunities, recognition, and organization reputation are key drivers of employee engagement on a global scale. Recognition in the survey was defined as employees' perceptions of the acknowledgement and favorable notices they receive from others for their contributions and accomplishments in their work:

In addition, the survey noted that recognition provides employees with the needed feedback and positive reinforcement to consistently go above and beyond. It is critical to the motivation and the engagement equation. Data shows that the "Strive" component of engagement is increasing slightly despite the strain many organizations have been under as they manage cost and growth pressures. Recognizing this extra effort employees have given in a tough business climate will pay dividends—and it often comes at no cost to the organization (p. 18).

### **Effects of a lack of employee recognition**

Conversely, the lack of recognition can yield negative results. According to

Appelbaum and Kamal (2000), lack of recognition is cited as a major and reoccurring

source of employee turnover. This lack of recognition has resulted in firms losing disenchanted innovators and even encourages low levels of effort, sabotage, and espionage (Dutton, 1998). It also proves to be pivotal to the mental health of a workplace environment (Brun & Dugas, 2008). A lack of recognition constitutes the second-largest risk factor for psychological health in the workplace: “People who suffer lack of recognition at work are four times likelier to experience severe psychological distress” (Brun & Cooper, 2009, p. 31). Appelbaum and Kamal suggested that a manner in which this cycle may be broken is through creating challenges in employees’ jobs and by recognizing their efforts toward those challenges. Work has taken on excessive importance in employee’s quests for identity and their need for personal fulfillment. Consequently, their recognition expectations tend to be much higher in the area of work specifically (Brun & Dugas, 2008).

#### Recognition and its Potential Impact on Leader Trust

A 2014 study examining the behaviors that impact managerial trust was designed to answer two key questions: 1) whether leaders are trustworthy from the perspective of their employees, and 2) what behaviors in leaders could be identified to have the greatest impact on managerial trust from the employee’s perspective (Gordon, Gilley, Avery, Gilley, & Barber, 2014). The quantitative study of 409 respondents concluded that the behaviors to establish trust in leaders, as perceived by employees, included the following: leaders who are ethical, leaders who positively influence culture, leaders who encourage employee growth and development, leaders who treat employees fairly and consistently, and leaders who promote work-life balance.

Ethics/integrity and fairness toward others have been previously associated with trustworthy managers; however, the Gordon et al. study (2014) contributed to the literature by identifying the creation of a positive culture, the encouragement of employee growth and development, and the promotion of work-life balance as significant influences on perceptions of trustworthy management. In my opinion, creating a positive culture and encouraging employee growth and development can be seen as acts of recognition.

Followers' trust in their leader has been found to facilitate the achievement of organizational goals, the implementation of organizational changes, and the ability to guide organizations through challenging situations (Barnard, 1938; Hernandez, Long, & Sitkin, 2014; Jung & Avolio, 2000; Selznick, 1957; Weber, 1947). Although meta-analytic studies have established direct links between a range of leadership behaviors and follower trust, it remains unclear how multiple types of leadership behaviors might have simultaneous and distinct influences on the development of trust (Colquitt, Scott, & LePines, 2007; Dirks & Ferris, 2002; Hernandez et al., 2014). Because leadership behaviors typically do not occur independently, but rather occur contemporaneously and jointly, it necessary to conduct a more precise examination of how some leadership behaviors might "have stronger relationships with trust than others" (Dirks & Ferris, 2002, p. 615; Hernandez et al., 2014).

Trust in authorities is based not only on the competence of the authority, but also on the exhibition of fair and respectful treatment that foster feelings of relational ties to the person in the position of authority and to the legitimacy of the institutional context within which the authority operates (Hernandez et al., 2014, p. 1868).

#### Leaders ability to impact change

Managers control the flow of certain types of information and the opportunities to share or withhold key information in ways that influence the level of trust between or across organizational levels or units (Pfeffer, 1992). Managers are the primary designers of the total organizational form employed—the combination of strategy, structure, and internal mechanisms that provide the overall operating logic, resource allocation, and governance mechanisms of the organization (Kramer, 1999).

Maintaining an effective support system of trusting advocates is crucial for leaders. Wong and Boh (2010) note that there are two ways for managers and leaders to increase their support system of advocates who place trust in them. The first way increase trusted support is to increase the number of peers in the firm who view them as trustworthy. This can be accomplished by directly providing more support to peers. No one can personally demonstrate trustworthiness to every individual in a community, and acts of trustworthiness may go unobserved. Therefore, advocates can play a powerful role in demonstrating and enhancing a leader's reputation for

trustworthiness in a community (Wong & Boh, 2010, p. 129). The second way to increase trusted support, as noted by Wong and Boh (2010), is to rely on advocates.

In an effort to generate trusted support, managers should directly provide support to more peers and should confidently rely on more advocates. Advocate identification was defined as the following:

1. Advocates whose contacts do not overlap with their own, and whose contacts span different social circles: this expands the range of peers who can be informed about the managers' trustworthiness.
2. Advocates' whose contacts do not overlap with the managers': it is advantageous for advocates to have densely tied networks—this increases the probability that the advocates' contacts will be persuaded to evaluate the managers positively.
3. Advocates who complement a manager's support: managers should not view advocates as a substitute for providing support—rather, advocates are complements to their own reputation-building efforts. (Wong & Boh, 2010, p.146)

The experience of psychological safety is described as feeling able to invest oneself without fear of negative consequences (Kahn, 1990). Individuals feel safe in organizational contexts perceived to be trustworthy, secure, predictable, and clear in terms of behavioral consequences. Kahn suggested that employees experience psychological safety, in part, as a result of supportive management and trustworthy

interpersonal relationships with others in their organization. Individuals with trusting interpersonal relationships in supportive organizational environments are able to take risks, expose their real selves, and perhaps fail without fearing the consequences (Kahn, 1990). Kahn further suggested that individuals feel safer when they have some control over their work and that managerial reluctance to loosen its control sends a message that employees are not to be trusted and should fear overstepping their boundaries. Thus, supportive management and interpersonal relationships foster feelings of psychological safety that increase willingness to engage fully in work roles (Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010). Promoting a sense of psychological safety (Kahn, 1990; May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004) and emphasizing fairness and other factors of trust may be critical to the development of a productive and engaged employee.

### ***Dissertation Purpose***

The research set out to understand the impact of recognition on employees, their work, and their feelings toward their managers. Findings will help educate managers and leaders so they can better lead productive, healthy work environments where their employees flourish. In addition, human resource practices and training materials can be improved with increased levels of education on this topic. And given the current economic environment, retaining a committed, smart, and engaged workforce will be a competitive advantage.

The research findings were constructed from the voice of the employee, in this case employees at the same Fortune 500 company in the Midwestern section of the United States. The result of this study will outline how employees are affected by acts of recognition from their manager. This is a qualitative study consisting of 35 participant interviews.

### **Rationale**

Given employees' urgent need for workplace recognition and the growing organizational challenges in the areas of human resource management, workplace quality of life and worker engagement, all of which share recognition as a contributing factor, it is critical that we achieve a better grasp of this concept (Brun & Dugas, 2008, p. 716).

Recognition of work performance focuses on employees' work process, most notably the creativity, innovation, and continuous improvement they bring to their work methods. In the context of the work process, the main indicators for this type of recognition manifest themselves when individuals (or teams) feel recognized for their expertise, skills, ingenuity, and professional qualifications in the way they perform their duties, solve problems, and contribute to the organization. Subjects usually come away with a heightened sense of self-esteem and personal competency (Brun & Dugas, 2008, p. 722).

It is important that the impact of recognition be understood to further motivate and retain employees. “As leaders continue to look for ways to meet the productivity, motivation, and retention challenges of today’s organizations, the increased recognition of their human resources must be of primary importance” (Luthans, 2000, p. 38).

A literature review of recognition and manager/leadership trust can be found in the next chapter.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### ***Review Purpose***

The purpose of this literature review is to further explore recent concepts, definitions, and theories related to recognition and trust within the manager-employee dyad. An exploration in trust is included as a fundamental basis for establishing the manager-employee relationship. Literature explored suggests that trust sits at the foundation of the manager-employee dyad and, from there, interactions manifest into relationships and productivity within the work environment. Working together often involves interdependence, and people must therefore depend on others in various ways to accomplish their personal and organizational goals (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995, p. 710).

Previous research has shown that trust has a positive impact on organizational effectiveness (Golembiewski & McConkie, 1975; Munn, 1995; Robinson, 1996).

Mayer and Gavin (1999) propose that subordinates will be distracted from performance if they believe they cannot trust their leaders. Kramer (1999) concludes that trust reduces social transaction costs in organizations (Gordon, et al., 2014).

Bijlsma and Koopman (2003) claim that trust facilitates discretionary effort on the part of subordinates. Sharkie (2009) argues that discretionary effort, or performance beyond organizational expectations, is vital because employment contracts cannot contemplate all of the demands on employees in the very competitive environment

that is the current reality. Furthermore, it is postulated that subordinates who feel trusted are more motivated and energized (Fairholm, 1994). Dirks and Ferrin's (2002) meta-analysis of trust in leadership led them to conclude that trust in leadership resulted in favorable work attitudes, citizenship behaviors, and job performance as they had hypothesized (Gordon et al 2014).

### **Leadership recognition**

The idea that employee recognition can serve as a powerful reward was noted by Herzberg (1966). He explained that consistently and frequently applied formal and informal recognition programs provide management with a powerful tool to influence employees to live the company's values and implement its focused mission.

Hertzberg recognized the importance of reinforcing behaviors that contribute to organizational success. By specifically reinforcing expected behaviors, leaders signal to employees that their efforts are noticed (Luthans, 2000, p. 34).

A survey conducted by the Society of Inventive Travel Executives Foundation discovered that 63% of respondents ranked a pat-on-the-back gesture as a meaningful incentive (Lovio-George, 1992). In another survey examining the value of 65 potential incentives, four out of the top five rewards ranked by employees as the most motivating were initiated by their manager, were based upon performance, and required little or no financial reward.

Results from a study in 2000 focused on the effects of non-financial reward systems, such as recognition and attention. Two hundred and fifty four respondents within the nonprofit organization were a part of the study and the findings indicated that highly valued social recognition rewards can be used as an effective leadership tool for rewarding employees. Social rewards may be even more valued than tangible recognition rewards, such as gift certificates, because they are highly personalized and more meaningful (Luthans, 2000). Additional findings focused on the preference for recognition based upon efforts that contribute to organizational success and not superficial recognition like length of time served.

According to Graham & Unruh (1990), powerful non-financial incentives can be operationalized, as explained in Table 1.

**Table 1. Non-Financial Incentives**

Manager Action 1	Personally congratulates an employee for a job well done
Manager Action 2	Writes a personal note for good performance
Manager Action 3	Publicly recognizes an employee for good performance
Manager Action 4	Holds morale-building meetings to celebrate successes

*Source:* Adapted from Graham & Unruh (1990)

Kerr and Slocum (1987) noted that organizations that recognize and respect their employees tend to retain workers for longer periods of time because of increased

loyalty and commitment. Nelson (1995) distinguishes an effective employee recognition program in Table 2.

**Table 2. Effective Employee Recognition**

Recognition Principle	Application of Principle
Recognition Delivered Immediately	Recognition should be given as soon as possible after a desired behavior has occurred. Increasing the time between the target behavior and reward devalues the reward and diminishes the reinforcement value.
Recognition Delivered Personally	The power of social rewards derives from the way they are delivered. The fact that a manager is taking time to recognize or praise an employee underscores the importance of the activity to the employee. Time taken by peers or subordinates to recognize a job well done can also be very effective. In fact, these types of upward recognition can serve as even greater rewards because they are unexpected and not required of the colleague.
Recognition Adds Value to the Individual	Social rewards should be valued and meaningful to the individuals who receive them. For example, some employees may value their autonomy and would prefer to be thanked in private. Other employees may be interested in having the recognition highly visible to increase their promotion. Some may prefer rewards that recognize the team or group's contributions. Managers tailor the rewards to the needs of the recipients.
Recognition Reinforces Desired Behavior	Recognition should not be phony or given superficially. Give rewards which positively reinforce desired behaviors.

*Source:* Adapted from Nelson (1995)

Brun and Dugas (2008) define recognition by five components:

1. It constitutes a constructive, authentic response, preferably one that is personalized, specific, consistent, and short-term. It is expressed through human relationships against the backdrop of various types of work- and company-related interaction.
2. It is based on recognition of the person as a dignified, equal, free, and unique being who has needs. It recognizes the person as an individual who is a bearer and generator of meaning and experience (ethical and existential nature of recognition).
3. It represents an act of judgment on workers' professional endeavors (recognition of work performance) as well as their personal commitment and collective engagement (recognition of job dedication). It also consists of an evaluation and celebration of results produced by employees and valued by the organization (recognition of results).
4. It is furthermore a regular daily or ad hoc exercise expressed through a set of practices that are formal or informal, individual or collective, private or public, and monetary or non-monetary in nature.
5. Finally, for its beneficiary, recognition represents a reward experienced primarily at the symbolic level, but may also take on emotional, practical or financial value.

The literature further examines recognition within a scholarly context. Table 3 captures the most prevalent definitions of recognition found in recent literature.

**Table 3. Scholarly Recognition Definition Table**

<b>Scholarly Recognition Definition Table</b>	
Bradler, Dur, Neckermann, & Non, 2013, p. 13	An important source of employee motivation
Brun & Dugas, 2008, p. 728	Represents a reward experienced primarily at the symbolic level, but may also take on emotional, practical or financial value
Daniel & Metcalf, 2005	Awards and incentives that validate and value outstanding work and keep employees motivated
Gostick & Elton, 2007	Praise or a personal note acknowledging achievements including small gestures that are important to employees
Greenberg & Arakawa, 2007	Frequent encouragement and reward for employee accomplishments
Kouzes & Posner, 1999, p. 6	Expressing genuine appreciation for the efforts and successes of others
Luthans, 2000, p. 34	Reinforcement of expected behaviors that signal to employees that their efforts are noticed and appreciated
Maslow, 1943	Act of an employee's acceptance and worth by the organization
McAdams, 1999, p. 242	Honor of outstanding performance after the fact and designed for awareness, role modeling, and retention of recipients
Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Fetter 1993, pp. 7-8	The degree to which the leader administers positive rewards, such as recognition, positive feedback, and approval, contingent upon high performance levels
Ventrice, 2003, p. 12	An acknowledgement of specific accomplishments and an act of sincere appreciation of an employee's personal value to an organization
Wilson, 1994	Having to be earned by efforts and which is gained by some sense of achievement of an action or result

### Recognition Importance

Numerous researchers have examined the impact of motivation to work on

performance (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959; McGregor, 1960; Vroom,

1964; Porter & Lawler, 1968; Brun & Dugas, 2008). These authors stipulate that organizational performance is determined by gaining intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. Several studies are in line with this theory, which can be referred to as motivation as a predictor of organizational performance (Deci & Ryan 2000). The goals of research on motivation are no longer limited solely to the achievement of work performance, but have evolved to respond to new management concerns related to employee commitment (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001), turnover (Richer, Blanchard, & Vallerand, 2002), mental health in the workplace (Locke, 1997) and recognition (Browne, 2000; Franco, Bennett, Kanfer, & Stubblebine, 2004; Saunderson, 2004; Brun & Dugas, 2008).

Authors highlight the essential nature of employee recognition as an element of motivation (Dutton, 1998; Appelbaum & Kamal, 2000; Saunderson, 2004; Grawitch, Gottschalk, & Munz, 2006) and a component of meaningful work (MOW, 1987; Brun & Dugas, 2008). Recognition has been recognized as one of the most important sources of organizational mobilization and engagement (Wills, Labelle, Gue´rin, & Tremblay, 1998; Tremblay, Gay, & Simard, 2000; Brun & Dugas, 2008), and it plays a key role in the success and continuity of organizational change (Atkinson, 1994; Fabi, Martin, & Valois, 1999; Evans, 2001; Brun & Dugas, 2008). Recognition also contributes to employee job satisfaction, so it has a positive impact on organizational productivity and performance as well (Appelbaum & Kamal, 2000). Admittedly, most employees express a need to be recognized by their supervisors, co-workers, and

clients, regardless of their job status or the type of work they do (Brun, 1999, 2000; Brun & Dugas, 2008).

Luthans' (2000) research reinforces these concepts: "Considerable basic research has supported the notion that non-financial rewards can be a potent leadership tool which can have a significant, positive relationship with organizational performance" (p. 34). A 20-year meta-analysis study of behavioral management found that social rewards (i.e., recognition and attention) had the same impact on employee performance as financial reinforcement awards. The study recommended the use of social, nonfinancial awards like recognition and attention given to the employee, considering that the costs associated with financial awards yielded the same results (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1997).

#### Approaches to recognition

Brun and Dugas (2008) define four non-exclusive approaches to employee recognition, as shown in Table 3. First is the ethical perspective, which promotes the principle that recognition is a question of human dignity and social justice, and not just an organizational performance or workplace mental health issue. "Human dignity and respect for the irreducible, inalienable nature of the person go hand in hand. In this perspective, the worker cannot be designated merely as a number, case or file" (Brun & Dugas, 2008, p. 719). Second is the humanistic and existential view concerned with recognizing people, their being, their unique character, and their

existence. The belief underlying this perspective is a fundamental trust in humanity and the potential of people and communities. Here, the notion of justice is not central. The theory states that if you provide people with the proper working conditions—financial and material, of course, but chiefly in the area of relationships, communication, power, and independence—it will be easier for them to approach their work positively and align themselves with organizational objectives (Brun & Dugas, 2008, p. 720). Third is the concern with people’s subjective experience in the workplace, as well as the individual and group defense strategies they employ to maintain their psychological balance in disconcerting working conditions. The economy of suffering and pleasure in work also falls within its ambit. According to the work psychodynamics theory, recognition is a reward expected by the subject that is largely symbolic in nature. It is recognition of the employee’s contributions to the company. Fourth is the principle that behavioral based recognition becomes a method for positively reinforcing observable on-the-job actions and behaviors (Brun & Dugas 2008, p.723).

### Exploring trust

Trust is the relinquishing of one’s personal control or power to another in the expectant hope that the other party will honor a duty or social contract inherent in the relationship (Caldwell, Davis, & Devine, 2009, Caldwell & Hansen, 2010). However, the relinquishing of one’s personal control is shaped by one’s subjective, personal views. Trust is a concept that has received attention in several different social science literatures—psychology, sociology, political science, economics, anthropology,

history, and sociobiology. As can be expected, each literature has approached the problem with its own disciplinary lens and filters. Kramer (1999) points out that little effort has been made to integrate these different perspectives or articulate the key role that trust plays in critical social processes (e.g., cooperation, coordination, performance). Worchel (1979) proposes that these different perspectives can be aggregated into at least three different groups:

1. The views of personality theorists, who have focused on individual personality differences in the readiness to trust and on the specific developmental and social contextual factors that shape this readiness. At this level, trust is conceptualized as a belief, expectancy, or feeling that is deeply rooted in the personality and has its origins in the individual's early psychosocial development.
2. The views of sociologists and economists, who have focused on trust as an institutional phenomenon. At this level, trust can be conceptualized as both a phenomenon within and between institutions, and as the trust individuals put in those institutions.
3. The views of social psychologists, who have focused on the interpersonal transactions between individuals that create or destroy trust at the interpersonal and group levels. At this level, trust can be defined as the expectation of the other party in a transaction, the risks associated with assuming and acting on such expectations, and the contextual factors that

serve to either enhance or inhibit the development and maintenance of that trust.

Throughout the literature, definitions of *trust* vary. Deutsch (1958) defined *trust* as an expectation of interpersonal events; however, Lewis and Weigert (1985) argue that trust is not mere predictability but confidence in the face of *risk*. Schlenker, Helm, and Tedeschi (1973) defined trust as the “reliance upon information received from another person about uncertain environmental states and their accompanying outcomes in a risky situation” (p. 419). They explain that the following must be present for trust to be demonstrated: (a) a risky situation with regard to whether certain outcomes will be derived in the future; (b) the presence of cues that provide some information as to the probability of various uncertain environmental states occurring, such as the communication of another’s intentions; and (c) the resulting behavior of the person demonstrating reliance on this uncertain information.

Trust is further defined by Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman (1995) as a propensity or attitude reflecting a willingness to take a risk, and they further explained that trustworthiness was the antecedent to trust (Caldwell, Hayes, Bernal and Karri, 2008). Authentic trust embraces the possibility of betrayal (Solomon & Flores, 2003, p. 6) but chooses to invest in others despite the risks that may be present (Caldwell & Clapham, 2003). Mayer et al. (1995) further described the behavioral nature of trust

as the “risk taking in a relationship” and noted that “one must take a risk in order to engage in trusting action” (p. 724).

Trust is both the specific expectation that another’s actions will be beneficial rather than detrimental (Gambetta, 1988). Furthermore, trust, as described by Grafinkel (1967) and Zucker (1986), is the generalized ability to “take for granted, to take under trust, a vast array of features of the social order” (as cited in Creed, Miles, Kramer, & Tyler, 1996). Trust can be conceived as a simple function, with the amount of trust varying as the result of some combination of characteristic similarity and positive relational experience, with broad societal norms and expectations setting a baseline or intercept-the initial expectations of general trustworthiness (Kramer & Tyler, 1995, p. 19).

It is important to understand how trust is first formed in a manager-employee relationship. A list of trust antecedents, as described by Schoorman, Mayer, and Davis (2007), are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4. Trust Antecedents**

<b>Trust Antecedents</b>	
Boyle & Bonacich, 1970	Past interactions, index of caution based on prisoners' dilemma outcomes
Butler, 1991	Availability, competence, consistency, discreetness, fairness, integrity, loyalty, openness, promise fulfillment, receptivity

Cook & Wall, 1980	Trustworthy intentions, ability
Dasgupta, 1988	Credible threat of punishment, credibility of promises
Deutsch, 1960	Ability, intention to produce
Farris, Senner, & Butterfield, 1973	Openness, ownership of feelings, experimentation with new behavior, group norms
Frost, Stimpson, & Maughan, 1978	Dependence on trustee, altruism
Gabarro, 1978	Openness, previous outcomes
Giffin, 1967	Expertness, reliability as information source, intentions, dynamism, personal attraction, reputation
Good, 1988	Ability, intention, trustees' claims about how (they) will behave
Hart, Capps, Cangemi, & Caillouet, 1986	Openness/congruity, shared values. autonomy/feedback
Johnson-George & Swap, 1982	Reliability
Jones, James, & Bruni, 1975	Ability, behavior is relevant to the individual's needs and desires
Kee & Knox, 1970	Competence, motives
Larzelere & Huston, 1980	Benevolence, honesty
Lieberman, 1981	Competence, integrity
Ring & Van de Ven, 1992	Moral integrity, goodwill
Rosen & Jerdee, 1977	Judgment or competence, group goals
Sitkin & Roth, 1993	Ability, value congruence
Solomon, 1960; Strickland, 1958	Benevolence

*Source:* Adapted from Schoorman et al. (2007)

As mentioned earlier in this review, the literature also further defined trust within a scholarly context. Within the top 25 journals over the last decade, the following captures prevalent definitions of trust found in recent literature, as shown in Table 5.

**Table 5. Trust Definition Table**

<b>Scholarly Trust Definition Table</b>	
Caldwell, 2003	The relinquishment of one's personal choice or power in the expectant hope that another party will honor the elements of the social contract between the parties
Dirks & Skarlicki, 2004	A psychological state of individuals involving confident, positive expectations involving the actions of another
Doney, Cannon & Mullen, 1998	The willingness to rely on another
Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975	A complex set of cognitive and effective perceptions that impact one's assessment of the likelihood that control-relinquishing behavior will produce a sought after result
Mayer et al., 1995	The willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party
Morgan & Hunt, 1994	The "confidence" in the other party's "reliability" and "integrity"
Rotter, 1967	An expectancy held by an individual or a group that the word <i>promise</i> —verbal or written—from another individual or group can be relied upon

Of all prominent definitions within the journals, the most widely accepted definition surrounds the concept of vulnerability on the part of the follower. Mayer et al. (1995) was the most widely referenced scholar definition throughout the publications:

Willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party. (p. 712)

### Conditions of trust

Coping with risky situations is an important dimension in the definition of trust throughout the different approaches and disciplines. Only when risk and uncertainty exist is there a need to trust (Hardin, 2006; Mayer et al., 1995). Therefore, vulnerability is central to this understanding. Trust is built on evaluations of the trustee's ability, integrity, benevolence, and information quality by the trustor. Trust is a construct that enables people to cope with risks and, therefore, to interact with other people, despite an existing informational imbalance (McAllister, 1995). The trusted party has more information regarding the topic and, thus, the trustor has to expect that the trustee will act according to the benefits of the trusting person. (Ingenhoff & Sommer, 2010).

Within the literature, there are similarities in the conditions in which trust occurs. The first and most prominent condition surrounds the idea of *risk*, which is considered essential in psychological, sociological, and economic conceptualizations of trust (Coleman, 1990; Rotter 1967; Williamson, 1993). Risk is the perceived probability of

loss, as interpreted by a decision maker (Chiles & McMackin, 1996; MacCrimmon & Wehrung, 1986). The path-dependent connection between trust and risk taking arises from a reciprocal relationship: risk creates an opportunity for trust, which leads to risk taking (Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998). Rousseau et al. (1998) also noted that trust would not be needed if actions could be undertaken with complete certainty and no risk (Lewis & Weigert, 1985).

The second necessary condition of trust is *interdependence*, where the interests of one party cannot be achieved without reliance upon another (Rousseau et al., 1998). Also noted was that the degrees of interdependence actually alter the form trust may take. Finally, because risk and interdependence are necessary conditions for trust, variations in these factors over the course of a relationship between parties can alter both the level and, potentially, the form that trust takes (Rousseau et al., 1998).

Caldwell also suggests that the decision to trust, ultimately, is manifest by one's actions, and that one's behaviors reflect the depth of their core beliefs and assumptions (Schein, 1995) and the degree of their personal commitment (Senge, 1990). And while there is correlation between the relationship trust beliefs and trust intentions within individuals (McKnight, Cummings, & Chervany, 1998), the intention, as we have likely experienced personally, does not always result in the behavioral outcome desired.

## **Summary**

This research is important because it was developed to provide findings that will strengthen the manager-employee relationship. As noted by Kerr and Slocum (1987), organizations that recognize and respect their employees tend to retain their workers for longer periods of time because of increased loyalty and commitment. However, it is also important to note that the lack of recognition constitutes the second-largest risk factor for psychological health in the workplace (Brun & Cooper, p. 31). It was important to introduce *trust* into the literature review because employees experience psychological safety as a result of supportive management with trusting interpersonal relationships (Kahn, 1990). In addition, Galford and Drapeau (2003) described the ability of leaders to earn the trust of followers as “the crucial ingredient of organizational effectiveness.” (p. 95). However, the constructs associated with trust are elusive and difficult to pin down (Caldwell, Hayes, & Long, 2010). This research helps to provide more insight into this area.

Although there are quantitative studies that have explored the impact of recognition, qualitative research is scarce. I was unable to source qualitative recognition studies that produced research results constructed solely from the voice of the employee. In addition, I did not find research results that utilized narratives as the primary data collection tool.

In Chapter 3, I will detail my approach to this qualitative study, the methods used to collect data, and the process followed to ensure the integrity of the study and its findings.

## **Chapter 3: Methods**

### ***Introduction***

This chapter contains the research methods used in this study. Within the chapter, the significance of the study, research questions, research design, analysis, setting, participants, data collection, and the researcher's assumptions are included.

### ***Significance of Study***

This study is significant based on three factors:

1. It is designed to add to the body of literature from an employee's perspective. Much of the existing literature focuses on the manager/leader position within a work group context, and there are gaps related to studies designed to enrich knowledge solely from the employee's point of view.
2. There is also a gap in the existing literature that focuses on the aspects of employee recognition and its impact on the employee, their work, and their feelings toward their manager. As defined earlier in this document, leadership is multidimensional, and this study will help to identify an avenue that leaders can consider in relation to recognition needs within their organization and teams.
3. Findings from this study can benefit companies and organizations. These findings can be used to design more insightful leadership development programs, and Human Resource departments can leverage the findings when developing and/or strengthening existing employee training tools.

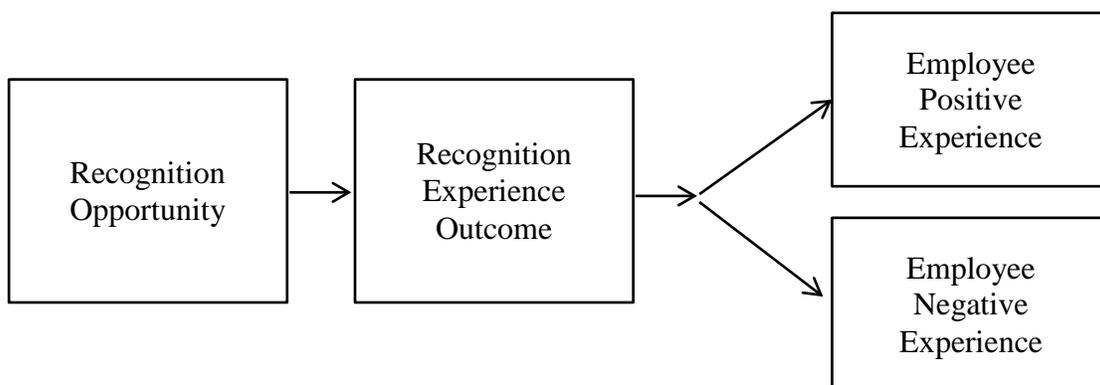
## **Research Questions**

To help frame the study, I identified three key questions to act as my guide. Although explored in greater detail during the participant interviews, the key questions served as the conceptual framework for the study. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the process of having a conceptual framework represents the “current version of the researcher’s map of territory being investigated” in qualitative studies (p. 18). The authors further explain the methods of their study:

The framework identifies who and what will and what will not be studied. Some and not all of the actors will be studied and some and not all of their activities...the framework explains graphically or in narrative form, the main ideas to be studied—the key factors, constructs or variables—and the relationship among them. (p. 19)

The conceptual framework in qualitative research can be used as a guide, but it cannot assume the outcome.

The following figure depicts the base model from which all research questions are derived.



**Figure 1: Illustration of Base Research Question.**

For all questions, the “Manager-Employee Relationship” is the Independent Variable (IV) and the “Employee Response to the Recognition Experience” is the Dependent Variable (DV). Data obtained from employees of a Fortune 500 company located in the Midwestern United States will be analyzed to provide answers to the research questions.

The initial research question focused on the employee as an individual and the impact recognition had on them personally. Maslow (1943) reinforces the need for this research question:

All people in our society (with a few pathological exceptions) have a need or desire for a stable, firmly based, (usually) high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect, or self-esteem, and for the esteem of others. By firmly based self-esteem, we mean that which is soundly based upon real capacity, achievement and respect from others...desire for reputation or prestige (defining it as respect or esteem from other people), recognition, attention, importance or appreciation. (p. 381)

The second area of exploration focused on how recognition impacted the employee’s attitude toward their work. Employees are more willing to take risks when they trust organization leaders (Mayer, Davis, & Shoorman, 1995), and it is this willingness to take risks that enables organizations to achieve creative solutions (Baucus, Norton, & Baucus, 2008). Empowered employees take ownership of their jobs (Bandura, 1986), becoming owners and partners in striving to maximize organizational performance (Block, 1993; Caldwell & Dixon, 2010).

The final area of exploration sought to understand how recognition impacted the employee's feelings toward their manager directly. Trust is acknowledged as a critical leadership factor in organizational and interpersonal relationships because the act of trusting empowers others and communicates that the leader believes in their abilities (Solomon & Flores, 2003).

### ***Research Design***

The research was an analysis of a qualitative study and consisted of two rounds of participant interviews to capture narratives related to their experiences with manager recognition. Round one of the study identified general themes related to employee experiences, and round two further explored the themes identified in round one and then expanded the research to include a broader population of participants.

Round one consisted of 10 semi-structured appreciative-style interviews as the data collection tool. Appreciative Inquiry establishes a dynamic in which people can speak freely about their experiences rather than react out of a presumed need to defend or justify their bad experiences. Appreciative Inquiry advocates claim that an appreciative approach can often yield a more nuanced understanding of both the positive and the negative in an experience than would a problem-solving approach starting at the level of the negative (Michael, 2005). Appreciative Inquiry also makes extensive use of storytelling as a method of discovery and, in its traditional

organizational applications, is said to work best when an environment of “narrative-rich communication” is created (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999; Ludema, 2002).

Round two utilized The Critical Incident Technique (Flanagan, 1954) while conducting 25 interviews as the data collection tool. This technique is further explained in the following:

The Critical Incident Technique consists of a set of procedures for collecting direct observations of human behavior in such a way as to facilitate their potential usefulness in solving practical problems and developing broad psychological principles. The Critical Incident Technique outlines procedures for collecting observed incidents having special significance and meeting systematically defined criteria. An incident is any observable human activity that is complete in itself to permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act. To be critical, an incident must occur in a situation where the purpose or intent of the act seems fairly clear to the observer and where its consequences are sufficiently definite to leave little doubt concerning its effects. (Flanagan, 1954, p. 327)

### **Process**

The ten participants in round one were all within the same, intact work team.

Working with participants within the same intact work team allowed me the opportunity to isolate conditions and variables so that I could better recognize potential themes surrounding recognition and its effects.

Eligible participants were recruited via an invitation through their work email account (Appendix A). The email included information about the general purpose of the study and the general study procedure. The consent form (Appendix B) was provided to

each participant, and each participant consented to the study. At no time during the study was participant employment status at risk. On the day of the interview, I arrived a few minutes early and waited for the appointed time. I greeted the participants and reiterated the purpose of our time together and how their responses will be used. The participants were informed that the conversation would be audio recorded as an added measure to ensure accuracy of data received. All participants were offered the option to review the finished transcripts. Once participants agreed to the protocol, I began with the recordings.

An interview guide was used (Appendix C) to help steer and document the interviews. I recorded dates, times, and participant information on the guide. During the interview, I took copious notes as the participants spoke. This was helpful in two ways—to jog my memory later, and in case I experience problems with the recorder. At the end of each interview, I expressed appreciation and reminded the participants that their interviews would be transcribed and analyzed.

Round two consisted of 25 semi-structured interviews utilizing the critical incident technique to gather narratives that dug deep into concepts that emerged from round one interviews. The 25 participants expanded my knowledge by learning from people who worked across different teams and functions. Expanding round two to 25 participants provided a greater depth of understanding regarding the themes that emerged from across workgroups within the same Fortune 500 company. Participants

were informed that their participation was voluntary, they could withdraw from the study at any time, and that their personal data would be kept confidential. Steps were taken to ensure the anonymity of all participants including de-identifying data, coding and using aliases in place of participant's names.

A round two Interview Guide (Appendix D) was used to conduct and document the 25 interviews. A semi-structured questionnaire was developed based on the outcome from round one. Interviews dug deeper into the concepts that emerged from round one. The interview process, as previously indicated for round one, was also used in round two.

### **Setting**

Although all interviews were live, the setting of each interview was either face-to-face or via telephone. The face-to-face interviews were in a conference room setting. The conference rooms were small to accommodate no more than five people at one time. The use of small conference rooms was intentional to create an environment of intimacy and closeness.

### **Participants**

The participants in both round one and round two of the qualitative study were all employed at the same Fortune 500 company. Participants were recruited via an email invitation, and all who agreed to participate were accepted into the research study. The participants were not related to the researcher and did not report to the researcher within their work function.

Round one consisted of 10 employee interviews. The interviews were conducted to better understand their experiences with recognition holistically. The fact that they were members of the same intact work group created the opportunity to isolate a group that shared the same management structure and a relative common work purpose. Although the participants represented various skill-sets and levels within the company, they all shared a common vision and common performance goals. The round one plan was to isolate variables that inherently exist across multiple work groups. In addition, isolating an intact work group provided a better opportunity to identify emerging themes related to recognition. Seven of the interviews in round one were conducted face-to face, and three were conducted over the phone. Eight of the participants were women and two were men. Each interview was approximately one hour in length. Round one interviews were conducted over a one week period. Voice recordings and copious note writing captured all participant stories. No incentives were offered, expected, or received by any of the participants in round one. The participants were not related to the researcher, and the participants did not report to the researcher within their work function.

Round two consisted of 25 interviews with members of the same Fortune 500 company as in round one, but these participants represented various disciplines and skill-sets within the company. It was important that I leveraged the findings from round one and expanded the study to include a more diversified participant base.

Expanding the participants to include members of the broader company was important to understand whether the themes identified in round one were also experienced within the company as a whole, or if they were isolated events attributed to work group norms or cultures, as opposed to being part of a broader company norm or culture. Round two participants consisted of 4 men and 21 women. Their length of employment at the Fortune 500 company varied from 1 year to over 35 years. Each interview lasted 45 minutes on average. Three participants were from round one and 22 were new participants to the study.

Round two interviews consisted of multiple stories shared by participants related to both positive and negative recognition experiences. Round two interviews were conducted over a two-week period. Voice recordings and copious note writing captured all of the participants' stories.

An analysis was conducted after both rounds of interviews to seek themes and commonalities related to recognition and its impact on the employee, their work, and their feelings toward their managers.

### **Anonymity of participants**

Steps were taken to ensure the anonymity of all participants, including de-identifying data, coding, and using aliases in place of participant's names.

Anonymity is the most secure means of protecting confidentiality and occurs when others cannot link participants to their data (Polit & Beck, 2012). Procedures were implemented to ensure that information obtained from participants in this study was kept strictly confidential. I took the following three steps to ensure participant anonymity: 1) no personal identifying indicators were saved on participants, 2) transcripts of interviews were sent to an independent consultant who stripped identifying indicators and sent the transcripts back for coding, and 3) analyzed data was collected at the aggregate level only. The independent consultant aggregated the data and presented it back to me for analysis. Under the confidentiality section of the informed consent, participants were informed that although information obtained was kept confidential, the data may be published or presented at professional conferences and that their individual identity would never, under any circumstances, be disclosed.

### **Data management**

One process to avoid bias and protection of human subjects is to clearly explain that the researcher will conduct the study with the highest level of integrity. An email including information about the general purpose of the study, general study procedure, and inclusion/exclusion criteria was sent to each eligible participant to their work email account (Appendix A). The participants were instructed to complete the consent (Appendix B) at the time of the interview.

## **Assumptions**

This study made the following assumptions:

1. Participants willingly shared their experiences related to recognition for the sake of academic findings.
2. Participants willingly shared their experiences related to recognition on the condition of personal anonymity.
3. Participants were able to recall, in detail, experiences specifically related to recognition that affected them.
4. Participants were willing to be active contributors to the process of recovery through idea sharing and identification of solutions.

### Ontological and epistemological philosophical assumptions

The philosophical approach to the research is ontological in nature, as described by Creswell (2013):

Ontological (The nature of reality): Relates to the nature of reality and its characteristics. Researchers embrace the idea of multiple realities and report on these multiple realities by exploring multiple forms of evidence from different individuals' perspectives and experiences. (p. 20)

The ontological approach addresses the diversity of the subjects considering the age, race, gender, and length of time working in the work group. These factors can shape the realities of the subjects to the effect that each could have a very different viewpoint or reaction to a shared group experience. It is important that I capture the individual emotions and interpretations of each participant.

**Role of the researcher**

My role as researcher was to interview participants in an effort to collect data for the purposes of this study. I examined the documentation, identified patterns, and built themes based on the experiences reported by the participants.

**Limitations**

This study has limitations that are acknowledged below:

1. Number of Participants: There were only 35 interviews and 32 participants in total that represented this study. As a result of the small number of interviews, the low number of participants, and the qualitative in nature of the research, the results cannot be generalized.
2. Lag time: The impact of recognition occurred over a period of time, and the research will be solely reliant on the accuracy of the participant's recollection of events.
3. Gender Skewed: Twenty nine of the 35 participants were women. Although not intentional, the heavily weighted female participant base was a result of the total population of employees within the Fortune 500 company who agreed to participate in this study.

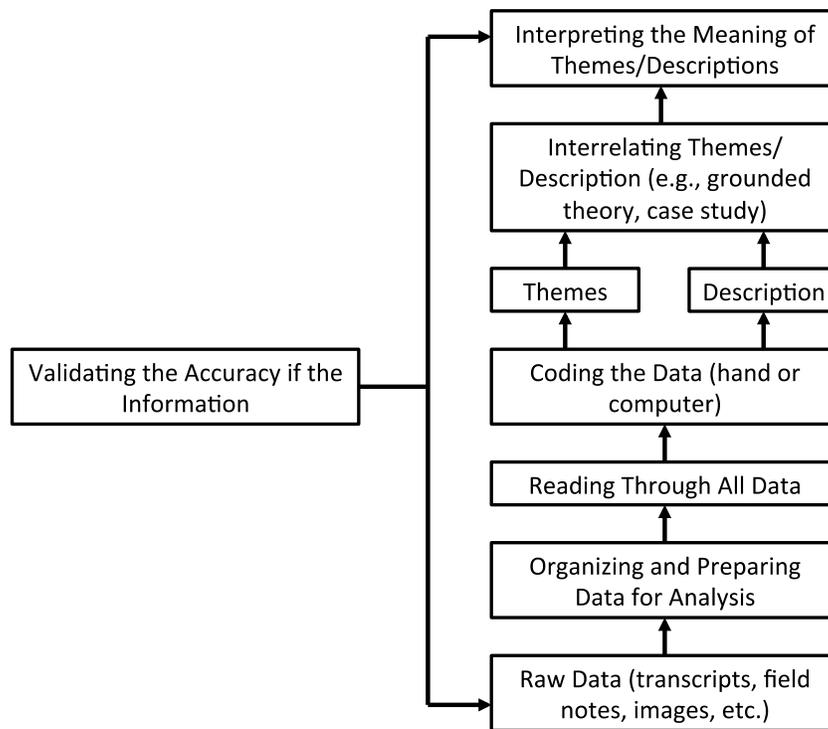
**Delimitations**

This study has acknowledged delimitations. The study only captured the experiences from the perspective of the employee in a manager-employee dyad. It did not capture experiences from the manager. This intentional design was developed to add to the

body of recognition literature generated from the experiences and narratives of employee recognition specifically.

### **Data Analysis**

I utilized John Creswell's (2009) 6-step process, as shown in Figure 2., to analyze the data



**Figure 2: Creswell's Data Analysis Process**

Although the model suggests that there is a hierarchical approach building from the bottom up, it is more interactive in practice. The various stages, presented below, are interrelated and are not always applied in the order presented (Creswell, 2009).

- Step 1: Organize and prepare the data for analysis. This involves transcribing interviews, optically scanning material, typing up field notes, or sorting and arranging data into different types depending on the sources of information.
- Step 2: Read through all the data. The first step is to obtain a general sense of the information and to reflect on its overall meaning. What general ideas are the participants saying? What is the tone of the ideas? What is the impression of the overall depth, credibility, and use of the information?
- Step 3: Begin detailed analysis with a coding process. This involves text data or pictures gathered during data collection, segmenting sentences or images into categories, and labeling those categories with a term, often a term based on the language of the participant.
- Step 4: Use the coding process to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis.
- Step 5: Advance how the description and themes will be represented in the qualitative narrative. The most popular approach is to use a narrative passage to convey the findings of the analysis.
- Step 6: Make an interpretation or meaning of the data. What are the lessons learned? These lessons could be the researcher's personal interpretations, couched in the understanding that the inquirer brings to the study from their own culture, history, and experiences.

The first major analytic phase of the research consists of coding the data. Coding is the process of defining what the data are all about (Charmaz, 1996). For coding of my data, I adopted the Charmaz (1996) outline of coding principles as my guide:

### **Step 1: Initial line-by-line coding**

The researcher starts initial coding by examining each line of data and defining the actions or events that occur in it or as represented by it. Line-by-line coding helps begin to take an analytic stance towards the work. Line-by-line coding keeps the researcher close to the data. Through line-by-line coding, analysis building begins, and helps to refrain from imputing the researcher's personal motives, fears, or unresolved personal issues to respondents and to the collected data. Line-by-line coding forces the researcher to think about the material in new ways that may differ from the research participants' interpretations. Codes should be framed in as specific terms as possible in order to begin to see processes in the data that otherwise would likely remain implicit.

### **Step 2: Focused coding**

Focused coding begins to create the categories for capturing data. A category is part of developing the analytic framework. By categorizing, certain select codes have an overriding significance in explicating events or processes in the data. A category may subsume common themes and patterns in several codes. Categories should be conceptual while simultaneously remaining true to and consistent with the data.

Focused codes should also be active (to reflect what people are doing or what is happening) and brief so that the researcher can view them as potential categories. By keeping codes active, processes can be seen more readily. Raising a code to the level of a category treats it more conceptually and analytically. Categories may be in vivo codes that are taken directly from the respondents' discourse, or they may represent theoretical or substantive definitions of what is happening in the data. Focused coding refers to taking earlier codes that continually reappear in your initial coding and using those codes to sift through large amounts of data. Thus, focused coding is less open-ended and more directed than line-by-line coding.

### **Step 3: Memo-writing**

Memo-writing is the intermediate step between coding and the first draft of the completed analysis. Memo-writing helps to elaborate processes, assumptions, and actions that are subsumed under codes. Memo-making leads directly to theoretical sampling; that is, collecting more data to clarify your ideas and to plan how to fit them together. Theoretical sampling helps to fill out categories, to discover variations within them, and to define gaps between them. When memo-writing, coding is assumed as processes to explore rather than solely as a way to sort data into topics. Making codes as active as possible helps to define how various categories are connected in an overall process by looking for patterns. Memo-writing consists of taking categories apart by breaking them into their components, looking for its underlying assumptions.

I used the online tool Dedoose (<http://www.dedoose.com>), a qualitative analysis software application to help organize the first three rounds of my data.

### ***Intercoder Reliability***

There were two points of this study where my coding was validated and checked for its reliability. For round one, I provided two of the 10 transcripts to outside coders for a reliability check. The second coder was my PhD chair and my third coder was a colleague who has over 20 years of consumer and business insight and research experience. Both coders were sent a Guide for Inter-rater Reliability Checking (Appendix F). Also called cross checking, inter-coder reliability is an agreement based on whether two or more coders agree on codes used for the same passages in the text (Creswell 2009). Miles and Huberman (1994) recommended that the consistency of the coding be in agreement at least 80% of the time for good qualitative reliability. The formula used for code checking was to add all agreements and then divide that total number by the number of agreements added to the number of disagreements. After review of my round one codes compared with the second and third coder results, the first transcript had a 100% code agreement and the second had a 90% code agreement.

Round two followed the same process as round one. I provided two of the 25 transcripts to outside coders for reliability check. The second coder was my PhD Chair and the third coder was a fellow PhD student. After a review of my round two codes compared with the second and third coder results, the first transcript had an

80% code agreement and the second had a 47% code agreement. Given the disagreements from the second transcript were well below the Miles and Huberman (1994) 80% threshold, I met with both the second and third coder together to discuss their coding results. During the conversation, it was noted that my third coder had not fully and thoroughly coded the original document. After dialogue among all three coders, an agreement was reached and the alignment of codes was unanimously accepted at 100% agreement.

In Chapter 4, I will present my research results.

## Chapter 4: Results

### ***Overview***

This chapter presents this study's findings on what participants reported as their experiences related recognition. The participants have reported on how the experiences have affected them, their work, and their feelings toward their managers. This section begins with the profile of the participants, then explores the analysis, evaluation, and discussion of what the study discovered and what the data reveals.

### ***Round One Analysis***

Round one interviews were voice-recorded and transcribed by an independent transcriptionist. The interview transcripts were then entered into the online tool, Dedoose (<http://www.dedoose.com>), to help categorize the qualitative data. Once the transcripts were entered into the program, I used the Charmaz method, as explained earlier, to analyze the data. I began my initial line-by-line coding based on the areas of my research that I sought to better understand:

1. Did the employee express satisfaction with their level of manager recognition?
2. Did the employee express disappointment with their level of personal recognition from their manager?
3. Is the employee affected by the degree to which they are recognized?
4. What are the employee's expectations regarding recognition?
5. What are the employee's desired acts of manager recognition?

6. Has the employee's attitude toward their manager been affected by an occurrence related to recognition?

While in Dedoose (<http://www.dedoose.com>), 27 codes were identified. However, I found that I was far more efficient in coding in a free hand manner using tables that I created. I identified an additional 22 codes through further examination. Some researchers have found it useful to hand code qualitative transcripts or information (Creswell, 2009). I read each transcript a minimum of seven times each to ensure that the patterns and themes that began to emerge were accurate.

Creswell (2009) defined codes as materials organized into chunks or segments of text in order to develop a general meaning in each segment. Forty nine codes were captured both by handwritten notations and through the use of the online data collection tool. Next, as outlined in the Charmaz method, I began to identify my focused codes as shown in Table 6. After engaging the consolidation process four more times, 19 narrow, focused codes were identified. To help add more clarity and definition to the 19 focused codes, I included supporting data points from the participant narratives to align with each code.

**Table 6: Round One Codes with Support Data**

ROUND ONE CODE	SUPPORT DATA
Managers Not Meeting Expectation of Recognition	“I want to see more open recognition. What I've seen managers do is crack the whip on the people under them, and then they take credit for everything.”
Verbal Acknowledgement Desired over Tangible Awards	“The little things go a lot farther than big things, like I said, awards, trophies get broken. They take, that's one more thing to clean. And I know somebody that got let go that said, toss them all.”
Employees Equate Recognition with Manager Advocacy	“They're there to represent you and to fight for you, and so I don't know how much that is going on.”
Peer Recognition is Important to Employee	“Recognizing me in front of the group for doing an awesome job in front of your peers goes a long way too.”
Recognition Strengthens Connection	“Just showing me that you have some level of connection to what it is that I'm doing.”
Employees are Skeptical if Recognition is Perceived as Private Exchanges Only	“My manager recognizes me privately, but I don't know if it ever goes beyond that.”
Recognition Outside of Immediate Work Team Viewed as Employee Support	“I also don't know how much cheerleading is going on, and I know as a direct, you know, as your manager, they really need to lead the charge and cheerlead for you.”
Lack of Recognition Negatively Impacts Performance	“Makes you not fully invested in what you're doing or want to do.”
Recognition Strengthens Sense of Belonging on Team	“It would be great to hear when someone does a very excellent job, and they are recognized for the work they've put in. Then they would know that they are a valuable part of the team.”
Recognition Opens Doors for More Opportunity	“Hey, you did a good job. You can go do this now, like you can talk with these people.”

ROUND ONE CODE	SUPPORT DATA
Managers are Expected to Recognize Employees	“That's what is damaging to us as nice people is that you're always hoping that somebody is looking out for your best interest, and a lot of times it's not that they're not.”
Employees Suffer from Insecurity Due to Lack of Recognition	“Well, my manager is good at recognizing in private, but I'm a little concerned because that's really where it stops.”
Employees React with Caution and Self-Preservation Tactics With Lack of Manager Recognition	“If you're not recognizing me doing, you know, working hard, doing everything that needs to be done, it makes it really hard sometimes to want to go on. It also puts me into “cover my butt” mode where I feel I have to save this e-mail just to cover my butt that if it comes back to me, that I didn't do it, I have this e-mail.
A Simple Thank You Goes a Long Way	“‘Thank you’ is the big one because thank you never gets used enough anymore.”
Employees Want to Know That They Are Being Recognized Even When Not Present in the Conversation	“So I think that's the problem, I don't trust what's being said when I'm not there, I want to know I'm being represented.”
Employees Will Advocate and Offer Greater Support as an Act of Reciprocity	“She really makes us look good, so I want to make her look good because she always makes us look good.”
More Manager Recognition Desired	“I don't think personally that I am recognized for what I do.”
Recognition Can Directly Make Employee Feel More Valued	“Being recognized makes me feel like I am contributing on a level that is valued and as a result, I feel more valued.”
Trust is Negatively Affected When Employees Sense Lack of Recognition from Manager	“Trust issues come up as a result of not knowing”

From the 19 focused codes identified in round one, I took the codes and began to further organize into similar categories. It became easier to see the similarities within the context of the responses. It was important to reorganize the responses over a period of time to allow my thought process to stretch beyond assumptions.

After four rounds of reorganizing the 19 focused codes, I assessed the memos, which is step three of the Charmaz method, that I jotted down throughout the line-by-line and focused coding process. Three key themes emerged from participants in the round one interviews. Themes are summary statements, casual explanations, or conclusions. The offer explains of why something happened, what something means, or how the interviewee feels about the matter. These normally show the relationship between two or more concepts (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Round one coding detail can be found in Table 7.

**Table 7. Round One Code Process**

Initial Codes	Focused Codes	Theme
Recognition Desired	Stronger Team	Increased Level of Manager
Happiness	Strengthens Connection	Recognition Desired
Authentic	Creates Broader Exposure	
Trust	Opportunity	
Dedication	Sign of Advocacy	
Stronger Team	Positive Reciprocity	
Support	Feels Valued	
Connection	Confidence	
Positive Environment		
Motivated		
Feel Valued		
Confidence		
Advocacy		

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Creates a Sense of Family  
 Opportunity  
 Work Harder  
 Belonging  
 Meaning  
 Care  
 Exposure  
 Trust in Talent  
 Respect Manager More

Initial Codes	Focused Codes	Theme
No Focus	Simple Acknowledgements	Managers Not Meeting Employee's Expectations of Recognition Desired
Selfishness	Expectations Not Met	
Little "Thank You"s Important	Recognition as Sign of Support	
Not Recognized	Verbal Over Tangible	
Disengagement	Negatively Affects Performance	
Public Recognition Important	Demotivation	
Lack of Support		
Expectations Not Met		
Recognition a Sign of Manager Support		
Manager Puts Onus Back on Follower		
Tangible Recognition Unimportant		
Verbal Appreciated		
Unclear Goals		
Lack of Awareness		
Unmotivated		
Not Represented		
Initial Codes	Focused Codes	Theme
Distrust	Private Only	Skepticism of Manager Recognition Affecting Work Performance/Job Outlook
Poor Recognition	Uncertainty	
Uncertainty	Insecurity	
Insecurity	Distrust in Manager	
Ambiguity	Acts with Caution	
Lack of Advocacy		
Lack of Support		
Devalued		
Took Credit		
Private Only		

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The first theme that emerged demonstrated that employees have a universal desire to be recognized for their work. Even employees who initially responded that recognition was not a motivating factor eventually shared stories from their careers in which they were recognized and how that recognition had a positive impact on their attitudes and behaviors afterwards. Participants shared stories of positive associations with recognition and often attributed its effects as motivating, inspiring, and empowering. For many people, work has taken on excessive importance in their quest for identity and their need for personal fulfillment (Brun & Dugas, 2008).

The second theme that emerged captured sentiments about managers failing to meet employee's expectations of recognition. This lack of recognition is seen as a lack of awareness and a lack of engagement on the part of the manager. The lack of recognition has had a negative impact on performance and engagement on the part of the employee. Employee issues of distrust toward their manager began to surface, and the lack of manager support was also associated with the lack of recognition.

In the study "Real Managers," by Luthans, Hodgetts, and Rosenkrantz, (1988), two types of leaders were identified. First, the successful leader was defined in terms of the speed of promotion within an organization. The second was referred to as an effective leader. An effective leader was defined as (1) getting the job done through high quality standards, and (2) getting the job done through people, requiring their satisfaction and commitment. The successful leader spent a majority of their time

networking with others, more than their less successful counterparts did. However, the effective leaders—the ones who delivered quality results through satisfied and committed employees—were found to spend a majority of their time actively managing human resources through motivating and reinforcing their value-enhancing behaviors and communicating with them on a regular basis (Luthans, 2000). In the case of round one results, participants identified a preference for what would be referred to as an effective leader as defined in the “Real Managers” study.

The third theme that emerged from the interviews from round one participants surrounded skepticism of overall recognition from their manager. The outcome of these experiences all resulted in negative reactions from employees. The lack of trust or belief that the manager would advocate on the employee’s behalf was a central theme in the experiences shared. As stated earlier, Brown and Moshavi (2005) suggested that high levels of trust result when leaders apply a service-oriented leadership model that demonstrates high emotional intelligence and a commitment to the success of others (Caldwell et al., 2010). The key with this statement lies within the “commitment to the success of others.”

Utilizing Creswell’s 6-step qualitative analysis model as a guiding principle, I created charts for each participant in round one that show the detail associated with each of the three themes. These are illustrated in Tables 8 through 17. My researcher notes from each participant in round one are included within each chart.

**Table 8. Round One, Participant 1 Analysis**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Theme #1 Increased level of manager recognition desired</b>	<b>Theme #2 Managers not meeting employees expectations of desired recognition</b>	<b>Theme #3 Skepticism of manager recognition impacting work performance/ job outlook</b>	<b>Researcher notes</b>
<p>1. “Debbie”</p> <p><b>Round One:</b> Member of small, in-tact work group</p> <p><b>Sector:</b> Public Fortune 500 company</p> <p><b>Type:</b> Mid- Management- Development</p>	<p>“A nod to good work really creates a positive environment.”</p> <p>“I’m sure not the kind of person that needs attention brought on me, so at first, I was like that’s weird, but then as we continued to do it, I saw the value and just how the halo effects, kind of created a sense of family. And we just, you feel more connected to your team.”</p>	<p>“I’ve also been criticized in past reviews that I really need to take charge and boast more about myself. I don’t think that’s fair all of the time. Why should I keep recognizing myself?”</p> <p>“I don’t know how much cheerleading is going on, your manager really needs to lead the charge and cheerlead for you. They’re there to represent you, to recognize you and to fight for you, and so I don’t know how much that is going on.”</p>	<p>“I assume that they [managers] just take it on as their work if I’m not present at the meeting.”</p> <p>“I’ve never had anybody approach me from outside of my team that complimented me on my work. I just get the impression that they’re [managers] present the work without recognizing the team who’s actually doing the work.”</p>	<p>Recognition may have an impact team/department health.</p> <p>Managers may expect employees to initiate the act of recognition as more of a shared experience.</p> <p>If recognition is not seen or heard outside of a work group, skepticism exists on whether the manager recognizes the employee outside of the immediate team.</p>

**Table 9. Round One, Participant 2 Analysis**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Theme #1 Increased level of manager recognition desired</b>	<b>Theme #2 Managers not meeting employees expectations of desired recognition</b>	<b>Theme #3 Skepticism of recognition negatively impacting work performance/job outlook</b>	<b>Researcher notes</b>
<p>2. "Georgie"</p> <p><b>Round One:</b> Member of small, in-tact work group</p> <p><b>Sector:</b> Public Fortune 500 company</p> <p><b>Type:</b> Mid- Management- Development</p>	<p>"I don't think personally that I am recognized for what I do. I've compared similar output being done by individuals on a higher level, and they get recognized."</p> <p>"I do most of the work for them to do what they have done, but yet I'm not compensated or recognized for my, small efforts, as you want to call it."</p>	<p>"Managers need to provide some level of recognition that makes you feel at least my efforts were acknowledged, and it didn't go all in vain."</p>	<p>"So I don't think it's a very level playing field and sometimes that kind of makes you not fully invested in what you're doing or want to do."</p>	<p>Teams must be sensitive to recognition at every level of the team, regardless to role or title.</p> <p>The lack of recognition can directly impact the level of employee investment.</p>

Table 10. Round One, Participant 3 Analysis

Participant	Theme #1 Increased level of manager recognition desired	Theme #2 Managers not meeting employees expectations of desired recognition	Theme #3 Skepticism of manager recognition impacting work performance/job outlook	Researcher notes
<p>3. "Heather"</p> <p><b>Round One:</b> Member of small, in-tact work group</p> <p><b>Sector:</b> Public Fortune 500 company</p> <p><b>Type:</b> Mid-Management-Development</p>	<p>"I don't know if it's like recognition or just more ownership that I would like to see. For recognition, like, 'Hey, you did a good job. You can go do this now....'"</p>	<p>"We really don't have public recognition. My manager sends nice texts, you know, this and that, here and there, but it's always private."</p>	<p>"My manager is good at recognizing in private, but I'm a little concerned because that's really where it stops."</p>	<p>Recognition should be a combination of both public and private acts to mitigate concerns of its sincerity and honesty.</p>

Table 11. Round One, Participant 4 Analysis

Participant	Theme #1 Increased level of manager recognition desired	Theme #2 Managers not meeting employees expectations of desired recognition	Theme #3 Skepticism of manager recognition impacting work performance/job outlook	Researcher notes
<p>4. "Dave"</p> <p><b>Round One:</b> Member of small, in-tact work group</p> <p><b>Sector:</b> Public Fortune 500 company</p> <p><b>Type:</b> Mid-Management-Development</p>	<p>"To some extent, we're all trying to get noticed and to get our name known, but without recognition for the work that we're doing, it will be difficult to network on our own."</p>	<p>"They're not aware of what your best interests are all the time. I'm sure everybody knows I'm doing a great job...I'll get recognized (sarcastically stated)."</p>	<p>"My manager recognizes us, but I don't know how much it's heard above that."</p>	<p>Employees expect managers to recognize them outside of the immediate work team. It's a sign of employee advocacy and support.</p>

Table 12. Round One, Participant 5 Analysis

Participant	Theme #1 Increased level of manager recognition desired	Theme #2 Managers not meeting employees expectations of desired recognition	Theme #3 Skepticism of manager recognition impacting work performance/job outlook	Researcher notes
<p>5. "Suzie"</p> <p><b>Round One:</b> Member of small, in-tact work group</p> <p><b>Sector:</b> Public Fortune 500 company</p> <p><b>Type:</b> Mid- Management- Development</p>	<p>"There's some significant achievements, but I don't know if that's being communicated. I have no idea."</p>	<p>"My manger has all of these fantastic relationships around the world, and he knows all these different people, but it's like he still wants to own those relationships, and we don't really get that additional exposure or to go out to markets."</p>	<p>"That's what is damaging to us as nice people is that you're always hoping that somebody is looking out for your best interest, and a lot of times, they're not."</p>	<p>Recognition must be apparent to the employee.</p> <p>Exposure to opportunities to connect with broader or higher levels within the company is seen as a form of recognition by the employee.</p>

Table 13. Round One, Participant 6 Analysis

Participant	Theme #1 Increased level of manager recognition desired	Theme #2 Managers not meeting employees expectations of desired recognition	Theme #3 Skepticism of manager recognition impacting work performance/job outlook	Researcher notes
<p>6. "Vivvi"</p> <p><b>Round One:</b> Member of small, in-tact work group</p> <p><b>Sector:</b> Public Fortune 500 company</p> <p><b>Type:</b> Mid- Management- Development</p>	<p>"I don't think we do a very good job of promoting from within on our team."</p> <p>"Maybe we could all go out and have recognitions for what we're working on, but I also feel like it shouldn't be so forced, and maybe there should be more off-the-cuff type recognitions."</p>	<p>"What happens is not particularly team-building type recognition, it just feels a bit diluted overall."</p>	<p>"Recognition of work may or may not happen. I know my manager doesn't care about that."</p>	<p>Recognition should be genuine and not forced.</p>

Table 14. Round One, Participant 7 Analysis

Participant	Theme #1 Increased level of manager recognition desired	Theme #2 Managers not meeting employees expectations of desired recognition	Theme #3 Skepticism of manager recognition impacting work performance/job outlook	Researcher Notes
<p>7. "Cici"</p> <p><b>Round One:</b> Member of small, in-tact work group</p> <p><b>Sector:</b> Public Fortune 500 company</p> <p><b>Type:</b> Mid-Management-Development</p>	<p>"I don't need another award, just 'you did a great job.' That kind of stuff, that goes a long way...it's the small things."</p> <p>"Thank you is big because it never gets used anymore."</p>	<p>"Just show me that you have some level of connection to what it is that I'm doing."</p>	<p>"So I think that the problem is that you want to trust that you're being represented when you're not in the room."</p>	<p>Nontangible, verbal recognition is desired and appreciated.</p> <p>Recognition creates a sense of manager-employee connection.</p>

Table 15. Round One, Participant 8 Analysis

Participant	Theme #1 Increased level of manager recognition desired	Theme #2 Managers not meeting employees expectations of desired recognition	Theme #3 Skepticism of manager recognition impacting work performance/job outlook	Researcher notes
<p>8. "Julio"</p> <p><b>Round One:</b> Member of small, in-tact work group</p> <p><b>Sector:</b> Public Fortune 500 company</p> <p><b>Type:</b> Mid-Management-Development</p>	<p>"It's not so much about awards, but also coaching opportunities are needed from managers with some level of recognition."</p>	<p>"Recognition effects change in an easy way, people would feel more valued personally and in work."</p>	<p>"It's really easy to get lost in the shuffle in terms of accomplishments and the roles we play are dependent on boss and their priorities so there's less exposure for us because you rely heavily on person you report to speak on your behalf."</p>	<p>Recognition strengthens employees' sense of value.</p>

Table 16. Round One, Participant 9 Analysis

Participant	Theme #1 Increased level of manager recognition desired	Theme #2 Managers not meeting employees expectations of desired recognition	Theme #3 Skepticism of manager recognition impacting work performance/job outlook	Researcher notes
<p>9. "Missy"</p> <p><b>Round One:</b> Member of small, in-tact work group</p> <p><b>Sector:</b> Public Fortune 500 company</p> <p><b>Type:</b> Mid-Management-Development</p>	<p>"There is a need for recognition outside of the major awards that are given once a year."</p>	<p>"I feel disconnected from business because of our structure. I don't know the context from around the globe, so, it is difficult to get recognized because we have a deficit of knowledge on the team."</p>	<p>"Our current mode is about individuals performing in roles on a team, versus being set up for personal advancement. I don't think there is much individual recognition on the team, because our role is to make the team look good as a collective unit."</p>	<p>Recognition should be personalized even within a team context.</p>

Table 17. Round One, Participant 10 Analysis

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Theme #1 Increased level of manager recognition desired</b>	<b>Theme #2 Managers not meeting employees expectations of desired recognition</b>	<b>Theme #3 Skepticism of manager recognition impacting work performance/job outlook</b>	<b>Researcher notes</b>
<p>10. "Maria"</p> <p><b>Round One:</b> Member of small, in-tact work group</p> <p><b>Sector:</b> Public Fortune 500 company</p> <p><b>Type:</b> Mid- Management- Development</p>	<p>"I feel as if it's about compensation for me. I want to get recognized for my efforts financially. I came in at a lower salary and now I am at a disadvantage."</p>	<p>"More opportunities for exposure at meetings and focus groups desired for all levels. This is a form of recognition and respect. Managers are not always close to the project."</p>	<p>"My manager used the word 'I' a lot during meetings and presentation, so I'm not sure about that and it makes me uncomfortable. That is an opportunity area for him."</p>	<p>Recognition should be tailored to the individual's needs and desires; otherwise it loses its impact.</p>

**Round Two Analysis**

The analysis for round two also followed Creswell’s 6-step process as outlined in Chapter 3. However, during the interviews, I applied a different research technique from the one applied in round one. Round one consisted of a list of direct questions from which the participant responded based on their personal experiences. In round two, I utilized the Critical Incident Technique as a guide for questioning during the participant interviews. As reviewed in Chapter 3, this technique is used to collect data on observations previously made which are reported from memory.

Below, Table 18 demonstrates the effectiveness in utilizing this technique. As participants shared their narratives, the progressions of critical experiences were revealed.

**Table 17. Round Two Narrative Synopsis**

<b>Recognition Outlook</b>
<p>“To get to some confirmation or some reaction to output, I think, is one of our basic behavioral needs, I think is part of Maslow’s Law. All employees don’t want recognition in the same way, so it’s important to be authentic when you’re recognizing employees as best to your ability and recognize in a way that means something to them. I believe that a leader that doesn’t recognize, I don’t qualify them as a leader.” – Sasha, Participant 12</p>
<p>“As I mentioned, sincerity in recognition is what’s most important to me. You can recognize me publicly as much as you want, but if it is not from the heart and an overtone of sincerity, I’m not interested.” – Cara, Participant 16</p>

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“It’s important for me to be recognized, so that I know that I’m on the right path and that I’m going the right direction. I do also realize that sometimes we take for granted the day-to-day things that people do. So I’m really, really big on acknowledging and recognizing employees, from the smallest things to the largest things.” – Felicia, Participant 2

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“Recognition that is heartfelt is obvious. A manager who says, ‘Look, I know this wasn’t easy. You went above and beyond, did a great job,’ and they just kind of pull you off to the side...it feels very genuine and heartfelt.” – Missy, Participant 6

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### **Feelings Related to Positive Recognition Experience**

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“There was a sense of additional motivation. There was a sense of energy. You felt it reinforced the confidence that you had that the work that you were doing was appropriately focused and doing the right things.” – Howard, Participant 23

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“It made me very proud of what I do and what I do to support this company.”  
–Brooke, Participant 1

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“I felt very valued, absolutely. I felt that the work I had done was not only worth it, but that it was appreciated.” – Bob, Participant 5

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“But it made me feel extremely excited, very purposeful. It definitely empowers the employee. It lets them know that they are definitely valued.” – Felicia, Participant 2

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“You have a better sense of accomplishment in knowing that you were aligned with the company’s strategies and what you were working on was important.” – Missy, Participant 6

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### **Impact on Work Resulting from Positive Recognition Experience**

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“It made me want to do more and it gave me more energy. It kept me going because I got this award and now I have to keep up these standards and expectations.” – Pam, Participant 24

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“It makes it a little bit easier to go the extra mile when you’re actually appreciated for the extra effort that it takes to sometimes get things done. So I think it is a motivator in terms of me pushing out more work.” – Joy, Participant 15

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“It’s just a little something, but it inspires you to work harder. It makes you want to keep getting when you get recognized. It kind of gives you a little bit of a competitive edge. But it also makes you want to do it again.” – Heather, Participant 3

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“The project wasn’t necessarily in my skill-set, so to be recognized for my work validated that if I can push myself out of my boundaries, I’m able to tackle pretty much anything.” – Sierra, Participant 18

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“It gave me the heart to want to keep pushing through any barriers or find solutions and find ways around stuff.” – Missy, Participant 6

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### **Impact on Manager Resulting from Positive Recognition Experience**

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“I felt very appreciated and supported. I felt good. I felt dedicated. I felt supported, motivated, energized. I felt valued.” – Howard, Participant 23

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“I felt like she appreciated me and the work that I was doing and she noticed.”  
– Marsha, Participant 9

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“I have my boss’s back because she recognizes that what I do is important.”  
– Brooke, Participant 1

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“I really respected her on another level...she knew a little bit more about me than what I thought, and she had a lot more faith in me than what I thought.” – Felicia, Participant 2

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“So my respect for him grew to a different level...because he understood the sacrifice that I took to ensure that this project was successful.” – Felicia, Participant 2

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### **Feelings Related to Negative Recognition Experience**

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“The days were long. Even though I was doing the same amount of work I was doing before, everything was filtered through this lens of being unsatisfied and unappreciated.” – Bob, Participant 5

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“I started doubting myself, doubting my value in the department. I was so confused. And it really changed my opinion about where I wanted to go in that department. Not being recognized for my work makes me question whether I am focused on the right things and that perhaps, I need to get better aligned with my boss.” –Pam, Participant 24

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“There was really no clear direction, and you’re working through that and you’re not getting direction and you’re not getting recognition on what you are asked to do, it really did have a very negative effect on me.” – Gloria, Participant 21

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“I wouldn’t say it threw me into a mode of depression, but it just makes you feel unappreciated, like you’re just easily disposed of.” – Mia, Participant 11

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### **Impact on Work Resulting from Negative Recognition Experience**

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“I didn’t put that level of detail in there. Things kind of fell to crap. And I remember being really worried about my job on one level, but on another level, I felt like, you know, because I was so confident in myself and what I was able to do, I needed them to see the difference in my attitude.” – Sierra, Participant 18

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“I was not as enthusiastic to do such a good job as I did on the previous project because I just felt that all the hard work and energy and effort that I put into it and it was really disappointing that nobody did not at least recognize it.” – James, Participant 7

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“I was very frustrated. I say frustrated is number one. And then it made me feel like I need to just be prepared to get a job somewhere else. I don’t really need to work half as hard as I worked. No need for me getting home from work at 7:30, 8:00 at night, leaving the office at 7:00 when the people that are getting recognized are leaving the office at 4:00 or 4:30.” – Marsha, Participant 9

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**Impact on Manager Resulting from Negative Recognition Experience**

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“She stood up and took all the credit...I literally walked out of the room and went home.” – Brooke, Participant 1

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“She was more focused on what her job was and I felt that she was very selfish...she took ownership of what I did because she was looking for the next move as well.” – Felicia, Participant 3

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“Difficult to trust a leader that doesn’t recognize in some way, shape, or form, and I’m also very keen at looking at what is happening throughout the entire team. And clearly, if he’s not recognizing others or unfairly recognizing people that don’t deserve it, that is also a huge indicator of lack of leadership.” – Sasha, Participant 12

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“If I never hear you acknowledge me, I don’t know that I would trust you to be able to speak positively about me or have my best interest at heart. If you’re never complimentary about anything that I do in a positive way, or if you just seem oblivious to my contributions, I would be a little nervous about that.” – Tori, Participant 17

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Round two participant stories are in Appendix H. The tables were created to provide more detail into the narratives shared. In addition, the tables were developed to show the comparative alignment of themes throughout the 25 participant interviews. As in round one, Creswell’s suggestion of the inclusion of researcher’s lessons learned were incorporated into each profile.

My coding began by entering all transcripts into the online qualitative tool

Dedoose (<http://www.dedoose.com>) to help capture the initial 3 rounds of line-by-line coding. As in round one, I also coded by hand. I found that the hand coding process

was more efficient and less restrictive than using the online tool after the initial codes were identified. Three hundred and ninety five initial line-by-line exerted codes were identified in round two. The 395 exerted codes were then grouped with more focused coding as outlined by Charmaz. From the 395 initial line-by-line codes, 49 focused codes were developed. The Critical Incident Technique engages storytelling in a way that made coding more detectable. The participant stories were clear and sequential. The answers to the Critical Incident Technique questionnaire directed the participant to recall specific incidences with detail and engaged them to further expound on the incident and provide texture around feeling and the effects (Appendix D). Focus codes were then consolidated into main themes that began to emerge from participant narratives in Table 19.

**Table 18. Round Two Focused Codes**

Focused Codes	Theme
Work Importance Feel Proud Dedication Work Meaning Belonging Motivated Feels Valued Greater Confidence Empowerment	Validation
Focused Codes	Theme
Manager Support Greater Connection Opportunity Advocacy Stronger Relationship Work Harder Public Recognition Important	Advocacy

<b>Focused Codes</b>	<b>Theme</b>
Positive Reciprocity Increased Manager Respect Care Admiration Creates Sense of Family Authentic Increased Support Genuine/Sincere Gratitude Public Recognition Important	Respect
<b>Focused Codes</b>	<b>Theme</b>
Disingenuous Lack of Communication Not Represented Impersonal Skepticism Lack of Recognition	Distrust
<b>Focused Codes</b>	<b>Theme</b>
Dissatisfaction Lack of Support Expectations Not Met Uncertainty Lack of Direction Disengagement	Attrition
<b>Focused Codes</b>	<b>Theme</b>
Ambiguity Unmotivated Uncertainty Insecurity Risk Adverse Lack of Awareness Unclear Goals/Expectations	Enigmatic
<b>Focused Codes</b>	<b>Theme</b>
Evolving Needs Not as Important Desire Waned Generational	Maturation

Although context, timing of event and details surrounding the events were unique to each participant, the effects of the incidents shared great similarities. Upon careful review of the focused codes, seven major themes related to recognition were identified and characterized within the following constructs:

1. Recognition Validation (RV): Recognition as a validation of work
2. Recognition Advocacy (RA): Recognition as a sign of advocacy
3. Recognition Respect (RR): Recognition and its direct impact on respect
4. Distrust Recognition (DR): Decreased trust due to a lack of recognition
5. Attritious Recognition (AR): Employee-initiated change due to a of lack of recognition
6. Enigmatic Recognition (ER): Ambiguity due to a lack of recognition
7. Recognition Maturation (EM): Recognition needs evolve and change over time

**Recognition validation (RV): Recognition as a validation of work**

All 25 participants shared a narrative indicating that recognition from their manager served as a validation of their work.

Recognition provides validation in employee work, value, and meaning. All participants reported some degree of feelings of recognition validation (RV) related to manager recognition. Participants equated RV to being aligned with their respective managers and company goals and expectations. RV helps support value of work and

that employee is focused on executing against the right plans and goals. RV provided a reassurance in work meaning. RV provided security in the belief of work importance and priority. RV results increased pride in work. It is also considered motivating and empowering to the employee.

- “It made me very proud of what I do and what I do to support this company.” — Brooke, Participant 1
- “It’s important for me to be recognized, so that I know that I’m on the right path and that I’m going the right direction.” — Felicia, Participant 2
- “You have a better sense of accomplishment and knowing that you were aligned with the company’s strategies and what you were working on was important.” — Missy, Participant 6

### **Recognition advocacy (RA): Recognition as a sign of advocacy**

Twenty two of the 25 participants shared a narrative in which recognition from their managers was viewed as a positive act of advocacy.

Recognition is a form of Advocacy. In reporting these results, I will refer to this analysis finding as Recognition Advocacy (RA). Employees consider managers who openly express RA can be considered as genuine advocates. This is a positive association with their manager. Given structural and organizational dynamics within the company, 17 participants considered their managers as the conduits to upper level management and outside teams. Employees expressed a dependency on managers for RA, and by doing so, managers represent their best interests outside of the presence

of the employee. RA opens pathways for comfortable, two-way dialogues with employee and manager. It strengthens relationships and eases conversations when help or advice is needed from employees.

- “I will do whatever I need to do to make her look good because it’s a give-and-take situation. She’s very supportive of me. I am extremely supportive of her.” — Brooke, Participant 1
- “So I feel going forward, I have to promote my work more or talk to it and promote myself more, whereas, I feel like normally, your manager would do that for you.” —Heather, Participant 3
- “It made you feel very comfortable when you would hit some challenges or roadblocks, coming to them and saying, ‘Hey, I’m doing this thing and here’s what we’re encountering, I really need some coaching on this or how to get through it.’” —Missy, Participant 6

**Recognition respect (RR): Recognition and its direct impact on respect**

Twenty three of the 25 participants expressed an increase in respect for managers who recognized them for their work.

Respect levels are higher for managers who sincerely recognize employee’s work and contributions. Recognition Respect (RR) is an act of gratitude toward managers and strengthens the employee-manager relationship. RR strengthens a sense of connection for the employee, and it results in more loyalty toward the manager. RR creates an

environment of employee support. As the employee increasingly feels the manager's acts of genuine recognition, the RR toward their manager increases. Genuine, sincere recognition was detected by the employee or recipient of the gesture. The employee can detect whether the manager took the time to understand and tailor the recognition out of sincerity or whether it was delivered out of obligation.

- “So my respect for him grew to a different level...because he understood the sacrifice that I took to ensure that this project was successful.” —Felicia, Participant 2
- “I just felt, gained more respect for him in general. The fact that he recognized me and recognized me in front of other leaders and peers was a great thing.”  
—Debbie, Participant 10
- “I respect her, because of the respect that she had for me. She is an advocate for our team. So she was not going to let that go unnoticed.” —Tori, Participant 17
- “I respect that individual very much. If anything, I have more admiration for them because it just shows that, as a leader of kind of a major company, for them to know all the things that people do, people that are far removed from them, is amazing.” —Cam, Participant 19

**Distrust recognition (DR): Decreased trust due to a lack of recognition**

Twenty two of the 25 participants shared narratives in which trust in their manager decreased if they were not recognized for their work.

When a manager does not recognize employees for their contributions and work, those employees described a sense of ambiguity. Distrust Recognition (DR) is a result of this ambiguity, leading to feelings of skepticism toward managers. DR skepticism ultimately resulted in distrust. Genuine recognition is defined as whether it “come from the heart” of the manager. It must be personalized in some way to show that the manager affirms or agrees with the recognition. Employees who experienced levels of DR could ascertain the difference of genuine and insincere acts of manager recognition. DR is discredited by employee and managers who are seen as untrustworthy.

- “I would say the lack of communication makes you not really trust your boss or believe that they believe in their people.” —Heather, Participant 3
- “As I mentioned, sincerity in recognition is what’s most important to me. You can recognize me publicly as much as you want, but if it is not from the heart and an overtone of sincerity, I’m not interested.” —Cara, Participant 16
- “There was definitely a lack of trust that made you feel a bit insecure. It changed the way that you look at that person you’re reporting to because you lose a lot of respect.” —Missy, Participant 6

**Attritious recognition (AR): Employee-initiated change due to a of lack of recognition**

Twelve of the 25 participants shared narratives in which they either left or considered leaving a role due to the lack of recognition by their manager.

Future work efforts are negatively affected because of past experiences of not being recognized. Employees who experience Attributive Recognition (AR) have less enthusiasm for their managers and their work, and their overall commitment to work wanes. AR does not result in getting the best out of people, and they do not reach their full potential if they believe that they will not be recognized for their work.

Twenty two out of 25 participants suffered from some degree of AR. They considered leaving or left a role because of a lack of recognition. Experts report that before employees resort to sabotage, they begin to withhold their energy. They do what is required, but no more. They do not develop or adopt new ideas easily. J. Barry Mason (as cited in Dutton, 1998), a professor of business administration at the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa, refers to such employees as “shelf-sitters” (p. 52)—those who have never made much of a contribution to the company but who never hurt it either. As a leader, you need to recognize the shelf-sitters and re-enchant them. Other effects of AR include disengagement and a sense of disconnection from work duties and performance. Managers should be concerned about the devastating costs of low employee engagement. A recent Gallup survey (as cited in Kimball & Nink, 2006) estimates that actively disengaged employees—the least productive—cost the American economy up to \$350 billion per year in lost productivity, including absence, illness and other problems that result when employees are not engaged. The same Gallup survey (as cited in Kimball & Nink, 2006) found that actively

disengaged workers are absent from work 3.5 more days per year than other workers—or 86.5 million days in all

- “I think I detached myself after that project. Not too long after, I started looking for something else.” —Felicia, Participant 2
- “I didn’t really work half as hard. No need for me getting home from work at 7:30, 8:00 at night, leaving the office at 7:00.” —Marsha, Participant 9
- “I didn’t put that level of detail in there. Things kind of fell to crap. And I remember being really worried about my job on one level, but on another level, I felt like, you know, because I was so confident in myself and what I was able to do, I needed them to see the difference in my attitude.” —Sierra, Participant 18
- “I actually left not too long after that.” —Sierra, Participant 18
- “Another area where you have this stellar, rock-star employee, and as opposed to recognizing him for all of his efforts—often going above and beyond for so long, they didn’t and he’s since left.” —Roma, Participant 22

### **Enigmatic recognition (ER): Ambiguity due to a lack of recognition**

Twenty-one of the 25 participants had negative experiences due to the lack of recognition because they did not know where they stood with their manager.

Employee ambiguity was the result of the lack of recognition.

Ambiguity is not well received by employees. Recognition helps them know where the stand with managers and the managers expectations. Enigmatic Recognition (ER)

results in employees being insecure about whether their manager will speak positively on their behalf because the manager fails to provide recognition as an ongoing practice. Employees don't know if they are aligned with their managers, and this causes increased levels of anxiety and stress.

- “If you were the type of manager that you really never recognized or acknowledged anything that I did, and I was someone who reported to you, I think I would be concerned if you had to go before someone to talk about me or my work because I wouldn't trust that you really understood what I did or that you were an advocate for me because I didn't ever hear it from you.” —Tori, Participant 17
- “I don't know if my boss had my back or not.” —Cory, Participant 14
- “You wonder, was it just laziness on my boss's part? Was it truly an oversight? Or was it just lack of awareness in how important recognition can be for individuals?” —Taylor, Participant 20
- “So I think without the recognition for the work, it's easy to start questioning why am I doing this? Why is this important?” —Howard, Participant 23
- “Is it really worth it for me to spend an extra 20 minutes at the office or to take this call at 8:00 at night?” —Howard, Participant 23
- “I don't know that you can trust somebody that doesn't necessarily recognize you because if somebody doesn't recognize you and let you know how they're feeling about you, then there's a concern that you can't trust them as having your best interest in meetings where your future is discussed.” —James, Participant 7

### **Recognition maturation (EM): Recognition needs to evolve and change over time**

Five of the 25 participants expressed how their desire for recognition changes over time.

Recognition must mean something for the employee, so managers must understand which form would be most appreciated by the employee. Through Recognition Maturation (RM), employees stated that their needs, expectations, and desires for recognition changed over time. Age and generational differences must be considered. Some demographics may have higher expectations to be recognized than others. This was evident one participant interview that explicitly recognized that her generation—the millennial generation—prefers and expects overt acts of recognition from managers as a regular, ongoing practice, whereas other participants who had been in the workforce longer expressed a waned degree of public recognition as motivating.

- “I’m not particularly a person that has to be recognized or people have to bow at my feet. But after years and years, it does become an irritant when you are comfortable being an idea person, but often have to share the recognition because of the structure.” —Daisy, Participant 8
- “All employees don’t want recognition in the same way, so it’s important to be authentic when you’re recognizing employees as best to your ability and recognize in a way that means something to them.” —Sasha, Participant 12

- “I think it used to be way more important to me. Being recognized has changed as I’ve grown in my career. Early, it was so important to me to be recognized formally, in front of a group, in front of their peers, I wanted to be valued amongst my peers. Now, being promoted, being recognized as a leader and adding value are important. It’s not money-motivated. I think just that part keeps growing as you get further and further along. I don’t need to be given an award. I don’t need a bonus. I don’t even necessarily need to be recognized in front of my peers anymore.” —Tami, Participant 13
- “I’m a Millennial, and we love encouragement. We love positive feedback, pats on your back. So that just makes me feel like it’s good, like I want to keep going on at this company, you know. Millennials were raised with, you know, hearing they did a great job all the time. I mean, I’m early, at the start of the Millennial generation, so I’m not nearly as bad as people that are ten years younger than me, that had to have a trophy for every single sport they played.” —JoJo, Participant 25

### ***Summary of Findings***

My research was designed to answer three questions related to the impact of employee recognition:

1. What impact does recognition have on employees?
2. What impact does recognition have on employees’ work?
3. How does recognition affect an employee’s feelings toward their manager?

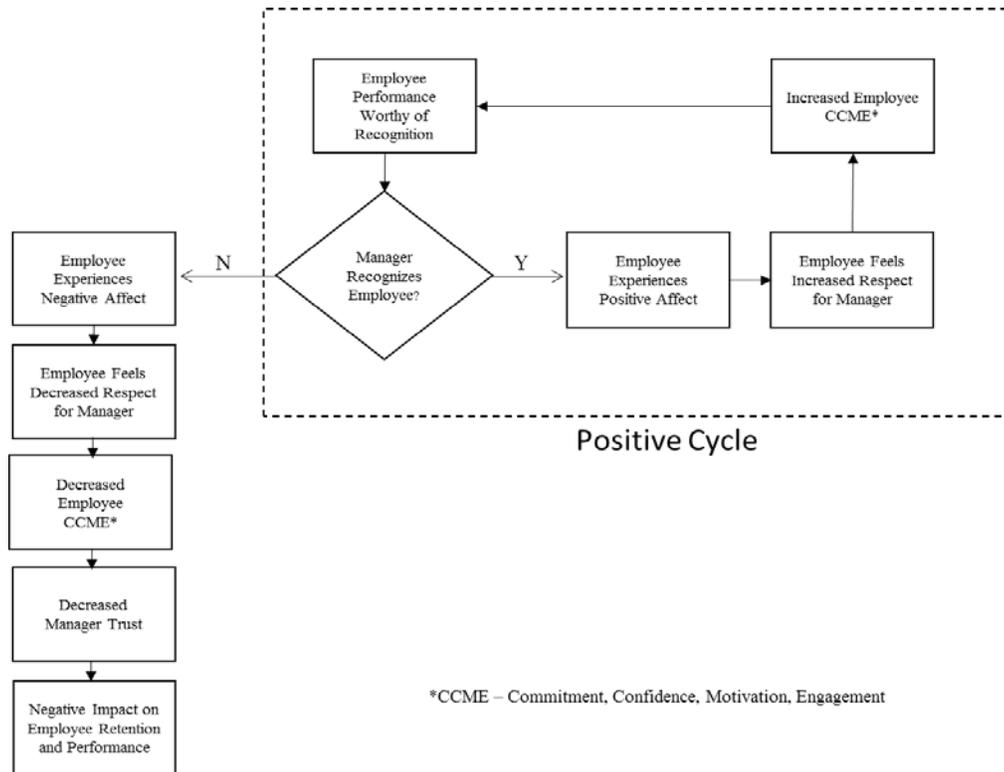
If the outcome of the recognition was positive, the participant's commitment, confidence, motivation, and engagement improved. In round two specifically, all 25 participants shared narratives that supported this. While seven of the participants stated that they did not personally expect recognition as an ongoing practice and, to some degree, were not motivated by it, ultimately, all participants expressed appreciation for a genuine act of recognition and expressed gratitude toward their manager. Positive experiences had a direct impact on increased levels of respect the participants had toward their managers. Twenty three participants used the word "respect" as related to positive experiences with recognition. It could be argued that a degree of reciprocity theory is taking place with the positive recognition resulting in high levels of manager respect. According to this theory, reciprocity is a behavioral response to perceived kindness and unkindness, where kindness comprises both distributional fairness as well as fairness intentions. There is a large body of evidence that indicates that reciprocity is a powerful determinant of human behavior (Falk & Fischbacher, 2006). While I am not suggesting that reciprocity by definition is being expressed through the participant stories directly, I am, however, acknowledging that in some cases, it may explain this result.

One of the unanticipated outcomes of this study relates to the participants' feelings of trust toward their manager. My ingoing assumption was that as recognition increased, so too would an employee's level of trust increase toward their manager. Participant narratives revealed otherwise. While recognition increases levels of respect as

previously discussed, levels of trust remain relatively neutral for positive experiences. However, employee levels of trust toward their manager decrease with negative experiences. Twenty two participants cited decreased levels of trust with poor experiences of manager recognition. Employees' respect for their manager also decreased.

After analysis of the participant data, trust should not be considered a motivator as it relates to positive acts of recognition. Respect was seen to motivate and was a solicitor of increased performance and commitment. Trust did not motivate increased performance levels or commitment. Positive recognition by managers increased levels of respect and had a positive impact on performance. Trust remained neutral or slightly higher with recognition by managers, but participant data did not show that it had a positive impact on performance.

The following model demonstrates findings from Round One and Round Two of my research in Figure 3:



**Figure 3. Employee Recognition Effects Model**

The Employee Recognition Effects Model shows the positive and negative effects of recognition on employees. The process begins with an act the employee believes is worthy of being recognized by their manager. The act was not quantified by size or degree. Participants noted through their narratives that the starting point of their anticipated recognition from their manager began with an initial action they believed to be worthy of acknowledgement.

- “We were given a timeline of two years to get it done, which we were able to get the site up and running within a year...Nobody out there could have done it any quicker.” —Cory, Participant 14

- “I had a lead role on a research initiative for the department and it was well outside of my job scope and description. I did that and my day-to-day job and was successful in both.” —Joy, Participant 15

After the initial act that the employee believes is worthy of recognition, the next action is the manager’s response. The manager can either recognize the employee or not. This action is solely at the discretion of the manager.

- “I felt like she appreciated me and the work that I was doing and she noticed.” —Marsha, Participant 9
- “You have a better sense of accomplishment knowing that you were aligned with the company’s strategies and what you were working on was important.” —Missy, Participant 6

If the manager recognizes the employee for their work, positive effects begin to emerge both for the employee and within the employee-manager dyad.

- “It made me very proud of what I do and what I do to support this company.” —Brooke, Participant 1
- “I felt very valued, absolutely. I felt that the work I had done was not only worth it, but that it was appreciated.” —Bob, Participant 5
- “It made me feel extremely excited, very purposeful. It definitely empowers the employee. It lets them know that they are definitely valued.” —Felicia, Participant 2

- “I felt very appreciated and supported. I felt good. I felt dedicated. I felt supported, motivated, energized. I felt valued.” —Howard, Participant 23

Employees then begin to have increased levels of respect for their manager. The increased level of respect was a direct result of the genuine recognition from the manager.

- “So my respect for him grew to a different level...because he understood the sacrifice that I took to ensure that this project was successful.” —Felicia, Participant 2
- “I just felt, gained more respect for him in general. The fact that he recognized me and recognized me in front of other leaders and peers was a great thing.”  
—Debbie, Participant 10
- “I respect her, because of the respect that she had for me. She is an advocate for our team. So she was not going to let that go unnoticed.” —Tori, Participant 17
- “I respect that individual very much. If anything, I have more admiration for them because it just shows that, as a leader of a major company, for them to know all the things that people do, people that are far removed from them, is amazing”  
—Cam, Participant 19
- “I really respected her on another level...she knew a little bit more about me than what I thought, and she had a lot more faith in me than what I thought.” —Felicia, Participant 2

As employees' feelings of respect for their manager increased, positive effects were also noted for the employee on a personal level. Increased levels of commitment, confidence, motivation, and engagement were expressed through the participant narratives.

- “It motivates you to do better and better because I knew that the work that I had done in the past was appreciated.” —James, Participant 7
- “I felt like I wanted to do more for the company.” – Debbie, Participant 10
- “It makes me more confident in my work.” – Sarah, Participant 4
- “I felt even more gifted and even more stretched to do something totally different than what I was accustomed to doing.” – Felicia, Participant 2
- “It’s very motivating and the level of work continued for a long time, and I felt it was more motivation on my side to continue working hard because hard work was recognized.” – Tami, Participant 13
- “It makes it a little bit easier to go the extra mile.” – Joy, Participant 15
- “The project wasn’t necessarily in my skill-set, so to be recognized for my work validated that if I can push myself out of my boundaries, I’m able to tackle pretty much anything.” —Sierra, Participant 18
- “There was a sense of additional motivation. You felt it reinforced the confidence that you had.” —Howard, Participant 23

As commitment, confidence, motivation, and engagement increased, the result was an ongoing positive cycle of positive performance and reciprocated recognition from the manager.

- “I will do whatever I need to do to make her look good because it’s a give-and-take situation. She’s very supportive of me. I am extremely supportive of her.”  
—Brooke, Participant 1
- “I have my boss’s back because she recognizes that what I do is important.”  
—Brooke, Participant 1
- “It gave me the heart to want to keep pushing through any barriers or find solutions and find ways around stuff.” —Missy, Participant 6

While positive experiences resulted in a positive cycle of recognition, negative experiences did not have the same result. As with positive experiences, the first action to begin the process starts with an employee’s act that they believed is worthy of recognition from their manager.

- “I just felt that all the hard work and energy and effort that I put into it, it was really disappointing that no one recognized it. It’s a little frustrating to work so hard at something that was such a huge initiative and not get recognized is disappointing.” —James, Participant 7
- “You do so much and you keep going and you work hard, and then there’s nothing. It just kind of gets all swept under the rug. So it just makes you question

leadership, you know, and their strategic direction and ability to communicate it.”

—Roma, Participant 22

After the employee performs an act they believe is worthy of recognition, the manager is then responsible for the next action. To explain this section of the model, the manager has chosen to not recognize the employee for their work.

- “You wonder, was it just laziness on my boss’s part? Was it truly an oversight? Or was it just lack of awareness in how important recognition can be for individuals?” —Taylor, Participant 20
- “I just would cringe. I’m doing all this and I’m not getting an ‘atta-boy’ recognition for it? So it definitely affected me.” —Roma, Participant 22

As a result of the manager not recognizing the employee’s work, the employee then begins to feel a negative reaction due to the experience.

- “I don’t know if my boss had my back or not.” —Cory, Participant 14
- “So I think without the recognition for the work, it’s easy to start questioning why am I doing this? Why is this important? —Howard, Participant 23

The negative effects lead to the employee having a decreased level of respect for their manager.

- “There was definitely a lack of trust that made you feel a bit insecure. It changed the way that you look at that person you’re reporting to because you lose a lot of respect.” —Missy, Participant 6
- “I didn’t respect that person because I didn’t think much of them. I just felt that some leaders, like employees who are aggressive, that communicate openly, who are maybe more extroverts. There are people behind the scenes, who are quietly doing work, and don’t get that recognition.” —Cam, Participant 19
- “I lost a whole lot of respect. I wasn’t ever rude, but I didn’t take too much stock or invest too much in what they were saying anymore.” —Sierra, Participant 18
- “I had no respect for her at all as a leader. I think she was more fearful of me doing well and over shadowing her than she was interested in developing me as an employee.” - Bob, Participant 5

The decrease in respect led to a decrease in employee commitment, confidence, motivation, and engagement.

- “It’s demotivating, especially when you want to be doing the very best that you can, you would hope that somebody notices that you’re doing that.” —Taylor, Participant 20
- “Is it really worth it for me to spend an extra 20 minutes at the office or to take this call at 8:00 at night?” —Howard, Participant 23

- “I didn’t really work half as hard. No need for me getting home from work at 7:30, 8:00 at night, leaving the office at 7:00.” —Marsha, Participant 9
- “I think I detached myself after that project. Not too long after, I started looking for something else.” —Felicia, Participant 2

After the employee’s commitment, confidence, motivation, and engagement decreased, trust in the manager decreased.

- “Difficult to trust a leader that doesn’t recognize in some way, shape, or form, and I’m also very keen at looking at what is happening throughout the entire team. And clearly, if he’s not recognizing others or unfairly recognizing people that don’t deserve it, that is also a huge indicator of lack of leadership.” —Sasha, Participant 12
- “I would say the lack of communication makes you not really trust your boss or believe that they believe in their people.” —Heather, Participant 3
- “I don’t know that you can trust somebody that doesn’t necessarily recognize you, because if somebody doesn’t recognize you and let you know how they’re feeling about you, then there’s a concern that you can’t trust them.” —James, Participant 7
- “If I never hear you acknowledge me, I don’t know that I would trust you to be able to speak positively about me or have my best interest at heart. If you’re never complimentary about anything that I do in a positive way, or if you just seem

oblivious to my contributions, I would be a little nervous about that.” —Tori,  
Participant 17

Once an employee’s trust in their manager decreased, there was a negative impact on their performance and retention.

- “I didn’t put that level of detail in there. Things kind of fell to crap. And I remember being really worried about my job on one level, but on another level, I felt like, you know, because I was so confident in myself and what I was able to do, I needed them to see the difference in my attitude” —Sierra, Participant 18
- “Another area where you have this stellar, rock-star employee, and as opposed to recognizing him for all of his efforts - often going above and beyond for so long, they didn’t and he’s since left” —Roma, Participant 22

Definitions associated with the research results are captured in Table 21.

**Table 19. Summary of Results Definitions**

Commitment	An attitude reflecting an employee's loyalty to the organization, and an ongoing process through which organization members express their concern for the organization and its continued success and well-being. (Northcraft & Neale, 1996)
Confidence	A person’s belief in one’s capabilities to learn or perform behaviors. (Shoemaker, 2010)
Motivation	Reasons that underlie behavior that is characterized by willingness and volition. (Lai, 2011)
Engagement	A “passion, commitment, extra effort...the illusive force that motivates employees to higher (or lower) levels of performance.” (Wellins & Concelman, 2005, p. 1)

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Trust	Willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other party. (Mayer et al., 1995)
Respect	A form of regard: a mode of attention to and perception and acknowledgement of an object as having a certain importance, worth, authority, status, or power. (Dillon, 2007, p. 202)

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The key insights from my research results are as follows:

- The level of respect an employee has for their manager is directly influenced by the degree to which the manager recognizes the employee.
- Regardless to the increased levels of recognition, there is no positive impact on manager trust.
- The absence of recognition decreased the level of trust an employee has for their manager.
- Additional positive recognition creates a positive employee-manager relationship cycle that results in increased employee performance worthy of recognition and increased CCME. Interestingly, although the absence of recognition results in decreased CCME, it does not lead to a decrease in employee performance worthy of recognition. The reason for this is not evident from the data, but may be due to employees taking pride in their work. In cases where recognition was continually absent, employees disassociated from their managers by moving to a different department or position. If they stayed in the same department, it was due to a change in management.

In Chapter 5, I will explore the topic of respect.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

### *Introduction*

I began my dissertation seeking to understand the impact of recognition on an employee, their work, and their feelings toward their manager. I had an interest in how manager trust would be impacted specifically. My ingoing assumption was that as a manager increased levels of employee recognition, employees, in turn, would have increased feelings of trust in that manager. I assumed that there was reciprocity involved in this dynamic. Surprisingly, my research revealed that increased levels of recognition do not positively impact trust. However, the lack of recognition decreases the level of trust an employee has for their manager.

This finding led me to refer to Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory (1987, p. 9), which is also called the two-factor theory of job attitudes. Motivation-Hygiene Theory suggests that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction are produced by different work factors. What makes people satisfied at work are factors that relate to the content of their jobs—specifically, achievement, recognition for achievement, interesting work, increased responsibility, growth, and advancement. However, what makes people unhappy at work is not what they do but how they are treated. These treatment factors (dissatisfiers) are related not to the content of work, but to the context of the job. I will revisit Herzberg in the summary of this chapter.

**Respect as a motivator**

My research results showed that an employee's respect for their manager was directly affected by the degree to which their manager recognized the employee. As a manager expressed recognition, the participants consistently reported increased levels of respect for that manager. The opposite was true with decreased or nonexistent levels of recognition. The lack of recognition decreased the level of respect an employee had for their manager. I then began to dive deeper into the literature related to respect to better understand the relational and emotional aspects of respect in general.

**Defining respect**

Respect involves certain beliefs, perceptions, judgments, emotions, feelings, and ways of experiencing things. Respect is a form of regard. It is an acknowledgement of an object as having a certain importance, worth, authority, status, or power (Dillon, 2007, p. 202). Respect is fundamentally tied to our existence as social beings who live and survive in groups (Laschinger & Finegan, 2005). Conversely, people experience disrespect when they are ignored, neglected, disregarded, or dismissed lightly or thoughtlessly.

Respect is a complex and often elusive concept, although those involved in practicing, teaching, and studying leadership interact continuously with the consequences of respect and disrespect. The complex and fluid nature of respect can be confounding. One reason for this is that respect is both an objective phenomenon

and a subjective one. The challenge for those who practice leadership is not to control respect, of course, but to understand it, and thereby engage it (DeLellis, 2000, p. 36).

DeLellis further demonstrates respect as having aspects that are both subjective and objective in Table 22.

**Table 20. DeLellis Respect Definitions**

<b>The 7 Elements of Respect: Subjective Aspects</b>	
Respect as Appreciation	Appreciation is an assessment, measurement, fathoming of something or someone. It may result in feelings, positive or negative, about that which was assessed. When positive, it may result in feelings of respect for nature, humanity, civilization, an individual, or deity.
Respect as Admiration	Admiration is what we feel for people when they exhibit high levels of skill or exceptional virtue or beauty. We admire the work of people when we find it particularly pleasing, well done, finely performed, uniquely expressive, or useful. Accompanying our feelings of admiration, we often say that we feel respect for the person or for the work of the person.
Respect as Esteem	Esteem is a measurement, a valuation, or an approximation. When we hold individuals in high esteem, it means that we value them highly; if in low esteem, we value them little. People who are esteemed are said to be valued, admired, and respected.
Respect as Honor	Honor is used with perhaps as much variation in the English language as is respect. Honor is held, given, bestowed, or earned by people. Being honorable suggests that one lives by a code of honor which governs behavior and is considered good. People who are honorable are respected by those who value honor.
Respect as Reverence	Reverence describes exceptionally profound feelings of esteem, deference, and respect. It describes positive feelings about religious beliefs, teachings, figures, concepts, objects, and places. It also characterizes feelings for people who are especially highly regarded and who have earned the right to be held up as models and respected for their accomplishments, kindness, courage, or other virtues.

Respect as Deference	Deference is what we give when we wish to exhibit feelings of respect for someone's accomplishment, age, wisdom, courage, or other virtue. Often, we give deference to powerful people, sometimes because we admire them, but sometimes because we fear them.
<b>The 12 Elements of Respect: Objective Aspects</b>	
Respect as Fear	Fear is what we feel when we perceive danger or threat from another person, from a group of people, from nature, or from God.
Respect for Situation	Respect for situation is directed toward a number of circumstances existing in the natural world.
Respect for Life Cycle Human Events	Childbirth, illness, healing, sorrow, anguish, elation, depression, trauma, and death are examples of life cycle human events.
Respect for Self	Respect for self is recognition of fundamental value of oneself as a human being and a carrier of moral law. It is a person who aspires to live a moral and worthwhile life. The extent to which one believes one lives such a life is the extent to which one has respect for self.
Respect for Others	Respect is warranted for every human regardless of their virtue or lack of it. It may appear difficult or impossible to respect both the virtuous person and the scoundrel, the person who seems to earn respect and the one who seems to not earn it. Nevertheless, people are born with this basic right to respect as a human being, and they retain it throughout life.
Respect for People Who Display One's Own Values	When we encounter people who behave in ways that we value or consider virtuous, we respect them for doing so.
Respect for Symbols and Objects	We often behave respectfully, not only toward people, but toward visual and audible symbols, such as certain flags, banners, badges, coat-of-arms, buildings, monuments, geometric patterns, color patterns/combinations, uniforms, hymns, and anthems.
Respect for Social Institution	Social institutions such as marriage, rites of passage, education, economy, and socialization engender respect in many people.

Respect for Status, Station, and Role	Certain individuals, simply because they hold certain positions in society or in organizations, appear to receive respect. It is likely, however, that the respect is for their position or station, not necessarily for their accomplishments, virtues, or values.
Respect for Mores, Laws, and Regulations	To respect mores, laws, and regulations means, at a minimum, that one obeys them. For some people, it may also mean that they believe that these parameters on behavior are appropriate. At a minimum, however, respect here requires obedience.
<b>The 12 Elements of Respect: Objective Aspects</b>	
Respect for Folkways, Customs, and Expectations	Folkways and customs, like mores, laws, and regulations, can be obeyed without agreeing with or valuing them. But we often value a custom for its historical or sentimental significance without adhering to it or obeying it.
Respect for Religion	Respect for religion exists when one appreciates the tendency of humans to aspire to understand themselves as spiritual beings who exist in a larger spiritual context. Belief in specific myths or dogma is not essential to respect religious thought in the abstract.
Respect for Deity	Respect for deity may be a function of concurring values. That is, a person may respect a deity because the deity represents values held in common with the individual.

*Source:* Adapted from DeLillis (2000)

The DeLillis Respect Definitions were included to provide further insight and clarity on respect, its contexts, and its various meanings.

### **Demonstrating respect**

Demonstrations of respect include listening to others, giving service, using appropriate language and forms of address, and seeking advice from others. An element in understanding the nature of respect is to define it as a series of behaviors or virtues worthy of respect such as honesty, loyalty, or trustworthiness.

Understanding respect is important in employee relations because, although understanding what people respect and how people feel when they are respected is important, it is absolutely critical that respect be demonstrated (DeLellis & Sauer, 2004).

The respect people want is something more than material benefits, more even than such benefits offered in a charitable spirit or from recognition that they are owed.

What they want, is something to which we should presume every human being has a claim—full recognition as a person with the same basic moral worth as any other, and co-membership in the community whose members share the authority to determine how things ought to be and the power to influence how they will be (Hill, 1997).

Participant narratives clearly supported DeLellis & Sauer's (2004) position to understand the employee as an individual through the demonstration of respect.

- “I do believe respect is recognition, yes, because if you respect me, you recognize that I'm a person and that I'm doing my best that I can do for you.” —Brooke, Participant 1
- “I respect her, because of the respect that she had for me.” —Tori, Participant 17

Feinberg (1980) further contextualizes the participant narratives concerning respect:

Respect for persons may simply be respect for their rights, so that there cannot be one without the other; and what is called “human dignity” may simply be the recognizable capacity to assert claims. To respect a person, then, or to think of him as possessed of human

dignity simply is to think of him as a potential maker of claims.” (p. 151)

To respect someone’s dignity by treating them with dignity requires that one shows them respect, either positively, by acting toward them in a way that gives expression to one’s respect, or, at least, negatively, by refraining from behavior that would show disrespect (Rosen, 2012). Participants shared narratives that supported Feinberg and Rosen of how negative experiences with the lack of recognition affected their dignity, their self-esteem, and their feelings of being disrespected.

- “Betrayed, disrespected, undervalued. There was a sense that the trust was broken. You almost felt as if someone had betrayed you or stabbed you in the back. You just felt bad. You felt bad about it.” —Howard, Participant 23
- “I started doubting myself, doubting my value...I was so confused.” —Pam, Participant 24
- “I wouldn’t say it threw me into a mode of depression, but it just makes you feel unappreciated, like you can be easily disposed of.” —Mia, Participant 11

Respect is not the same as praise, as Ellingsen and Johannesson (2007) explain: “An employer can praise their employee without the employee feeling respected. Only if praise credibly reveals the employer’s belief about the employee’s talent does it convey respect” (p. 143-144). This statement was supported by my research.

Participants discussed experiences of disingenuous acts of recognition and that a manager’s level of sincerity can be detected.

- “As I mentioned, sincerity in recognition is what’s most important to me. You can recognize me publicly as much as you want, but if it is not from the heart and an overtone of sincerity, I’m not interested.” —Cara, Participant 16
- “Recognition that is heartfelt is obvious.” —Missy, Participant 6
- “Well, I will say that people that genuinely recognize you, you can tell.” —JoJo, Participant 25

W. Timothy Gallwey (2011) offers advice in his book, *The Inner Game of Work*. He suggests a process we all can use to refocus our minds on how we should treat others.

The STOP tool invites us to disengage and move forward respectfully in the right direction. The STOP tool acronym is explained below:

- **S**tep back from what you are doing and start to think more clearly about the situation at hand and the people involved.
- **T**hink of others' feelings and how your words and actions may affect someone.
- **O**rganize your thoughts logically and respectfully for how to move forward.
- **P**roceed when the respectful and right next steps are clear to you.

### **Interpretations of respect**

Janoff-Bulman & Werther (2008) discussed two types of respect: categorical and contingent. Categorical respect is defined as intergroup in nature. It is granted to another based on membership in a common community. Categorical respect is based on group membership (De Cremer & Tyler, 2005) and is equally accorded to all members of one’s group. In the case of categorical respect, the focus is on rights of

membership—shared entitlements of all members. Contingent respect is associated with standing in a group—in-group status rather than inclusion. Contingent respect is primarily intragroup, not intergroup in nature, for it is based on comparisons across group members, rather than on membership. Contingent respect seeks to find the best people within the group to provide guidance, information, and direction. These are the people who are most respected. Janoff-Bulman and Werther (2008), explain that the distinction between these two different types of respect can also be found between different types of status:

The differences between contingent and categorical respect to some extent parallel the distinction drawn by sociologists between achieved and ascribed status. Achieved status is based largely on how well one performs (e.g., in a family or organization), whereas ascribed status is based on inherent characteristics rather than personal characteristics or achievements. Categorical respect, like ascribed status, is not earned; it is not based on a person's efforts, personal strengths, successes, or contributions. It is based on one's membership in a group. In contrast, like achieved status, contingent respect is earned. (p. 6)

This parallel between respect and status demonstrates possible causes for respect that is hard earned and respect that is merely given.

Darwell (1977) identified two ways a person can be respected. The first is recognition respect, and the second is appraisal respect. People can be the object of recognition respect, as it is owed to all persons. It does not require a general agreement per se, because it consists of our moral obligations and duties to each other. Appraisal respect consists of a positive appraisal of a person or their qualities. One may have

appraisal respect for someone without having any particular conception of just what behavior from oneself would be required or made appropriate by that person having the features meriting such respect. Typically, when we speak of someone as meriting or deserving our respect, it is appraisal respect that we have in mind.

Hudson (1980) defines respect in four segments:

- Evaluative respect is defined as similar favorable attitudes, such as esteem and admiration; it is possibly earned or deserved, depending on if—and to what degree—the object is judged to meet certain standards.
- Obstacle respect is defined as a matter of regarding the object as something that—if not taken into proper account in how one acts—could prevent one from achieving one's ends.
- Directive respect is defined as directives—things such as requests, rules, advice, laws, or rights claims that may be taken as guides to action. One respects a directive when one's behaviors intentionally comply with it.
- Institutional respect is defined as social institutions or practices, the positions or roles defined within an institution or practice, and persons or things that occupy the positions or represent the institution. Institutional respect is shown by behavior that conforms to rules that prescribe certain conduct as respectful.

### **Managers in conflict with respect**

In his 2015 article, Jayson DeMers, founder and CEO of AudienceBloom, a Seattle-based content marketing and social media agency, outlined 10 reasons that managers

lose employees' respect and the mechanisms to evoke change. These reasons are shown in Table 23.

**Table 21. Winning Back Manager Respect**

<b>Manager Loss of Employee Respect</b>	<b>Mechanisms for Respect Recovery</b>
Manager will not let employees play to their strengths	“Hire people smarter than yourself.” This means being more selective and paying employees <i>what they're worth</i> . The tradeoff is extremely high-quality individuals working on behalf of the manager with the freedom to play to their strengths.
Manager will avoid conflict at all costs	Great leaders aren't afraid to bring up difficult issues or to be confrontational (when necessary). Thinking that “playing the nice guy” is a surefire strategy for gaining employees' respect, the opposite may actually be true.  Consistent avoidance of conflict sends the message of not being confident in decision making.
Manager does not appreciate employees (or at least fails to show it)	A person who feels appreciated will naturally feel more of an affinity and respect for the one doing the appreciating.  Employees are helping to grow the business. Show them the appreciation they deserve by being generous with praise and encouragement, and by letting them know how integral they are to business success.
Manager is not reliable	Managers must hold themselves to the same level of accountability as their employees.
Manager does not respect employees	Failing to recognize employees' achievements and failing to listen to their feedback are signs the manager does not respect them.
Manager offloads blame onto others	Arnold Glasow said, “A good leader takes a little more than his share of the blame, a little less than his share of the credit” (as cited in DeMers, 2015). Managers offloading blame onto employees not only ensures they won't respect the manager, but it also sets the standard for acceptable office behavior.

	A great leader graciously accepts their fair share of the responsibility when things go wrong. This doesn't mean allowing oneself to become a scapegoat; however, it does mean claiming one's mistakes as one's own.
Manager does not care about employees' personal lives	There's a difference between knowing everything and <i>caring about the things one does not know</i> . Managers should pay attention to employees and express concern.
Manager is not self-aware	Great leaders are able to accurately gauge their own skills and abilities instead of assuming that they know everything about everything. They are realistic about their strengths and weaknesses.
Manager is not a good communicator	Effective communication is a skill, and one that must be practiced over time. Managers must model timely and effective communication—timely responses and effective listening.
Manager is impossible to please	Expecting employees to be conscientious and to do their best is reasonable; demanding perfection is not.

*Source:* Adapted from DeMers (2015)

In the same article, DeMers (2015) stressed the importance of earning respect.

“Getting your employees to respect you is all about *earning* that respect. Being a leader who's worthy of respect means taking responsibility for your mistakes, giving your employees the freedom to shine and providing strong but collaborative leadership.”

Results from my research support DeMers' assessment as the participants all shared narratives that support 9 out of 10 scenarios. Participants did not share narratives related to avoidance of conflict.

In 2012, Forbes published an article listing five steps toward respect recovery for managers. According to Bruce J. Avolio, Ph.D., executive director at the Center for Leadership and Strategic Thinking at the University of Washington's Foster School of Business, those five steps for employers/managers to earn the respect of employees include the following (as cited in Quast, 2012):

1. Be authentic: Be an authentic reflection of your organization's espoused values and principles while promoting transparency and justice.
2. Promote "ownership": Make all employees feel like "owners" versus "renters," that their voices matter, and that people in positions of power listen to learn and engage with their employees.
3. Develop potential: Help each individual feel like they are reaching their full potential and achieving their performance goals by investing in development.
4. Create an energized culture: Create a positive climate where your followers' energy is directed towards winning against competitors versus defending against internal detractors from what you're trying to accomplish.
5. Sacrifice when necessary: Be willing to sacrifice for the greater good of the organization when such sacrifices contribute to everyone's success.

Given the narratives provided in my research, I agree that the five steps as outlined by Avolio would be beneficial for managers who struggle with issues related to employee respect. Participants shared narratives that support the need for authenticity, promoting ownership, developing potential, and creating an energized culture:

- “So the manager just can’t quote, regurgitate or give examples of recognition that they may or may not have a personal experience with what the employee contributed.” —Cara, Participant 16
- “I felt even more gifted and even more stretched to do something totally different than what I was accustomed to doing.” —Felicia, Participant 2
- “It motivates you to do better and better because I knew that the work that I had done in the past was appreciated.” —James, Participant 7
- “It helped me to continue to have energy to keep working on the project.” —Tami, Participant 13
- “There was a sense of additional motivation. There was a sense of energy. It reinforced the confidence that you had.” —Howard, Participant 23
- “It made me want to do more and it gave me more energy...it helped me to keep going.” —Pam 24

However, narratives were also shared on the negative effects of when managers are perceived as not sacrificing for the greater good of the team’s success.

- “My manager used the word ‘I’ a lot during meetings and presentations, so I’m not sure about that and it makes me uncomfortable. That is an opportunity area for him.” —Maria, Participant 10 (Round 1)

- “I had no respect for her at all as a leader. I think she was more fearful of me doing well and over-shadowing her, than she was interested in developing me as an employee.” —Bob, Participant 5
- “My manager was very self-centered in that it was really about him and what he needed to do and whether or not he looked good, versus whether or not he was providing the kind of support that I needed.” —Joy, Participant 15

The U.S. Small Business Association, according to Beesley (2012), suggests that managers consider the following five steps when respect restoration is needed:

1. **Acknowledge the Problem:** Use one-on-one or group meetings to make it known that you see the problems and are willing to make adjustments. Be open and prepared for hard discussions and invite feedback. It may be hard to hear, but it shows you are listening.
2. **Gauge the Extent of the Problem:** Your first step is acknowledging there’s an issue. If you have trusted employees or a mentor, engage their confidence to assess how bad the situation is and what they think you can do to turn things around.
3. **Have a Plan:** Present your employee(s) with a plan for how things are going to change. This means laying ground rules, both for you and for them. Consider what you can do to earn more respect. Most important of all—show respect to earn respect! Give your employees more frequent face time, and empower them through delegation of key tasks.

4. Make your Expectations Clear: Explain clearly what you expect in return and that continued disrespect and poor performance will have disciplinary consequences.
5. Plan on the Follow-Through: Give it time; there are no quick fixes. Have regular reviews with employees and your managers to gauge progress (on both sides).

Given my research findings, I would recommend an adjustment to step 4 of the restoration process. Upon reading the Small Business Association's recommendation on respect repair, I would not suggest that a manager outline consequences or threats as indicated. As a result of my findings, I believe that in order to earn respect from employees, there must be an outward facing change on the part of the manager first, before expectations from the employee are explicitly stated. If respect is desired from a place of genuine sincerity on the part of the manager, stating expectations of reciprocity from an employee puts the onus on the employee as a shared responsibility. This is contrary to the manager outright owning the process of changing themselves in order to regain the respect of the people that they manage.

Further review of trust

My research results showed that when an employee did not feel recognized by their manager, their feelings of trust toward that manager decreased. Trust arises out of our dependency on other people. Because we have needs that require the services of other people, we must deal with issues of trust. Currall (1990) described this relationship

more fully when he defined trust as an individual's reliance on another person under conditions of dependence and risk. Currall (1990) goes on to define reliance as behavior that allows one's fate to be determined by another. Dependence means that one's outcomes are contingent on the trustworthy or untrustworthy behavior of another, and risk means that one would experience negative outcomes from the other person's untrustworthy behavior (Kramer & Tyler, 1995, p. 41). When we trust, we also have to give the trustee power over us. Furthermore, the more important the outcomes mediated by the trustee, the greater our dependency on him or her, and, by definition, the more power the trustee will have over us (Emerson, 1962).

Deutsch (1958) suggested that a decision to trust is made in situations in which the following situational parameters exist: (a) There is an ambiguous course of action in the future, (b) outcome occurrence depends on the behavior of others, and (c) the strength of the harmful event is greater than the beneficial event. Therefore, in the context of trust and recognition, the participants in this study were reliant on their respective managers to provide the recognition that they believe they deserved. As noted in their narratives, the strength of the harmful event in this case, would be the negative psychological ramifications that resulted from negative recognition acts. In addition, attrition is a harmful event—12 of the 25 participants in round two shared experiences of leaving roles due to lack of recognition.

Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, and Camerer (1998) define trust as “a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviors of another” (p. 395). This definition support participant narratives, which indicated a level of vulnerability with an expectation of recognition for their work. When their work was not recognized, manager trust decreased. An interesting observation within the narratives was that trust was an inherent, intangible contract placed on the manager by the employee. All participants, to some degree, initially expected to be recognized for their work. The intangible contract was not explicitly stated or expressed by the employee until it was not fulfilled from their perspective. Stated differently, trust was a pre-existing, non-verbalized employee expectation, and only when the expectation was not met, did it materialize most notably in decreased CCME. My research results indicate that trust, coupled with recognition, are critical in supporting an employee’s personal growth and performance, as well as being vital to the long-term success of the team as a whole.

### ***Revisiting my Initial Research Questions***

I began my study with research questions to qualitatively understand the impact of recognition. I learned that an employee’s respect for their manager was positively impacted with increased levels of recognition. Referred to as “the single most powerful ingredient in nourishing relationships and creating a just society” (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2000, p. 13), respect within the manager-employee dyad is of the utmost importance.

Earlier in Chapter 5, I explored various concepts related to respect to better define and explain its purpose and significance within the manager-employee relationship. Respect is complex and has multiple definitions, philosophical differences, and interpretations, as previously discussed in this chapter. I have cited examples of respect recovery suggestions in this chapter, although after my research findings, I added suggestions on how those recommendations could be strengthened.

I most associate my results with those of Herzberg's position on work motivators. After completing an extensive literature review of more than 2,000 job satisfaction studies, Herzberg, Mausner, Peterson, and Capwell (1957) noted that the variables that contributed to satisfaction seemed to be different from the variables that contributed to dissatisfaction. To test this possibility, Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) asked a sample of accountants and engineers to describe incidents when they felt "really good" on the job and specific times when they felt "really bad" on the job. Herzberg, Mausner, and Peterson then examined the themes of the stories (as cited in Sachau, 2007, p. 379). What was noteworthy was that the themes of the stories about satisfaction were not the same as the themes of the stories about dissatisfaction. For instance, the stories about dissatisfaction involved bad company policies, but the stories about satisfaction did not involve good company policies. The stories about satisfaction involved achievement, but the stories about dissatisfaction did not involve failure. Herzberg, Mausner, and Peterson (1959) called the themes of the satisfying incidents "motivator factors." They used the term *motivators* because

most of the stories about satisfying events also involved high levels of self-direction and productivity (Herzberg et al., 1959, p. 114). In other words, from a supervisor's perspective, the employees in the positive incidents would have looked motivated. Herzberg called the themes of the dissatisfying events "hygiene factors." The term hygiene is rooted in its epidemiology. Herzberg noted that good medical hygiene does not make people healthy, but it can prevent illness (Herzberg et al., 1959, p. 113; Sachau, 2007, p. 379).

"Hygiene factors, when satisfied, tend to eliminate dissatisfaction and work restriction, but they do little to motivate an individual to superior performance or increased capacity" (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982, p. 59). Herzberg satisfiers were called motivating factors because they are more effective in motivating people to greater performance and productivity. Classic motivators are identified as the following:

- Achievement
- Recognition for achievement
- Work Itself
- Responsibility
- Advancement
- Growth

Classic Hygiene factors (dis-satisfiers of work) are identified as the following:

- Company policy and administration
- Supervision
- Interpersonal relations

- Working Conditions
- Salary
- Status
- Security

The implication of the theory is that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not opposites per se, and that job satisfaction may merely be an absence of job dissatisfaction (Sharp, 2008, p. 375). The opposite of satisfaction is not dissatisfaction, but no satisfaction and the opposite of dissatisfaction is not satisfaction, but no dissatisfaction.

There are three primary psychological states that significantly affect worker satisfaction:

1. Experienced meaningfulness of the work itself
2. Experienced responsibility for the work and its outcomes
3. Knowledge of results, or performance feedback

The more that work is designed to enhance these states, the more satisfying the work will be (Wallace, Goldstein, Nathan, 1987, p. 275; Burke, 1987, p. 35; Pardee, 2009, p.10). According to Behling, Labovitz, & Kosmo, (1968), “The conventional explanation of job satisfaction considers ‘satisfaction’ and ‘dissatisfaction’ to be the extremes of a continuum having a neutral condition in which the individual is ‘neither satisfied nor dissatisfied’ as its midpoint” (p. 99). The assumption is that individuals migrate on this continuum as they are affected by both intrinsic and environmental work factors. “The nature of the work itself, the challenge it offers, the behavior of

supervisors, pay, working conditions, relations with co-workers, and dozens of other things are all assumed to affect job satisfaction to some degree” (Behling et al., 1968, p. 99) Dissatisfaction is therefore a result of the absence of satisfaction factors like lack of effective supervision or salary can cause dissatisfaction or, if the absence thereof is offset by positive factors, neutrality will occur.

The results of my research would support Respect as a motivator when applied to this model. The presence of respect (regardless of whether it was the employee toward the manager or manager toward the employee) was consistently seen as motivating and contributing to job satisfaction. Employees expressed feelings of motivation, increased productivity, stronger engagement, less ambiguity, and less attrition as a result of increased respect for their manager, which was directly derived from the recognition they had received. In addition, relationships between the manager and employee were also strengthened. Additional support of this theoretical model can be found within the participant narratives included below:

- “I will do whatever I need to do to make her look good because it’s a give-and-take situation. She’s very supportive of me. I am extremely supportive of her.” — Brooke, Participant 1
- “So my respect for him grew to a different level. He understood the sacrifice that I took to ensure that this project was successful. I felt even more gifted and even more stretched to do something totally different than what I was accustomed to doing.” — Felicia, Participant 2

- “It just made me respect him much more. It makes you want to keep getting recognized. It kind of gives you a little bit of a competitive edge. But it kind of makes you want to do it again. It inspires you to work harder.” —Heather, Participant 3
- “I gained more respect for him in general. The fact that he recognized me and recognized me in front of other leaders and peers was a great thing. So it made me feel great. It made me feel valued. I felt empowered, and I felt like I wanted to do more for the company.” —Debbie, Participant 10
- “I respect that individual very much. If anything, I have more admiration for them because it just shows that, as a leader of kind of a major company, for them to know all the things that people do, people that are far removed from them, is amazing. I felt inspired to do more work like that. So it made me feel very confident about my skills and abilities. It made me feel appreciated and valued by the company.” —Cam, Participant 19
- “It made me appreciate her even that much more. I had a high level of respect and appreciation for her, just simply because of her style and how supportive she is. But to know that she took the time to recognize me when she did not have to meant a lot. It’s important to incentivize and encourage me and motivate me to want to keep going and doing my job even better.” —Taylor, Participant 20
- “I respect her because of the respect that she had for me. She is an advocate for our team. That it is what inspires and it is what motivates the team.” —Tori, Participant 17

## **Chapter 6: Implications for Future Research**

### ***Implications for Current Theory and Practice***

Respect is a widely understood human need on a personal level, yet it is often overlooked or not immediately considered within professional environments. There is an abundance of training materials that focus on leadership acumen; however, successful application remains elusive for many leaders. In my research, employees expressed levels of discontentment over basic human needs. There is a cog in the wheel of leadership learning that must be removed in order to progress in the field of employee recognition.

### ***Considerations for Future Research***

There are five areas of interest that can contribute to this study. The first recommended area of consideration surrounds generational differences related to recognition and how those needs vary. Participant 25, JoJo, made references to her generational differences and expectations of recognition:

- “Millennials were raised with, you know, hearing they did a great job all the time. I mean, I’m early, at the start of the Millennial generation, so I’m not nearly as bad as people that are ten years younger than me, that had to have a trophy for every single sport they played.”
- “I’m a Millennial, and we love encouragement. We love positive feedback, pats on your back.”

A void in understanding future generational needs regarding manager recognition exists and would strengthen understanding in this area.

The second recommended area of consideration is a greater understanding of the “life cycle” of recognition, a research topic necessary for further exploration. By “life cycle,” I am referring to the evolution of recognition needs. Through their narratives, participants 5 and 13 expressed an evolution of recognition needs and how the expectations and desires for recognition changed with life events or overtime. Increasing understanding in this area of recognition will be helpful to managers of employees that are multigenerational. The following participant narratives demonstrate that evolution of recognition needs:

- “So I can’t say that it [recognition] really motivated me anymore.” —Bob, Participant 5
- “I think it used to be way more important to me. Being recognized has changed as I’ve grown in my career. Early, it was so important to me to be recognized formally, in front of a group, in front of their peers, I wanted to be valued amongst my peers. Now, being promoted, being recognized as a leader and adding value are important. It’s not money motivated. I think just that part keeps growing as you get further and further along. I don’t need to be given an award. I don’t need a bonus. I don’t even necessarily need to be recognized in front of my peers anymore.” —Tami, Participant 13

The third area that could contribute to the findings of this study includes narratives from both the manager and the employee. Understanding the mindset, motivations, and intentions of managers with regards to how and when they recognize employees could strengthen understanding in the manager employee dyad.

- “Recognition is not a strong point of mine in terms of giving. It’s a byproduct of my work ethic and my lack of need to receive recognition. I tend to project that out on others, and I’m not as quick to give recognition when they should have.”  
—Bob, Participant 5

A fourth area of consideration would further explore gender dynamics related to recognition. This study was female dominant as a result of the willing and available population of employees within the Fortune 500 company. However, understanding expectations of recognition that may be attributed to gender based needs, biases, or nuances would add to this body of learning.

A fifth area of future consideration would focus on the link between recognition and attrition. As noted in Chapter 4, in cases where recognition was continually absent, employees disassociated from their managers by moving to a different department or position. If they stayed in the same department, it was due to a change in

management. A deeper exploration could yield beneficial findings that could aid employee retention efforts within organizations.

Finally, the results from this research added to the understanding of workplace motivators, but there is more to learn. The participants in this study openly shared narratives of happiness, fear, confidence and insecurity. One area implicitly inferred, related to the concepts of hope and perseverance. Whether the participant chose to stay in their role because of positive experiences or if they decided to leave due to the lack of recognition, the motivation was often rooted in aspirations of hope.

Hope that the positive situation continued. Hope that the negative situation would end. Or hope that, by leaving, a new destination would bring greater fulfillment. The result of this sense of hope was a persistent effort to keep moving forward. Despite the situation, either positive or negative, the participants all chose to continue to forge ahead in hopes of more or less of what they had experienced in the past. The moments of reflection at times brought back difficult memories and distress, and these emotions at times became apparent in the transcripts. Ending with participants sharing a story of positive recognition experiences served to remind them of their strength, as well as served to replenish their spirits. Understanding the role of hope and perseverance related to recognition are areas that could strengthen existing literature.

***Personal Reflection***

I did not expect the temptation to form an emotional connection to the narratives of my participants. Reading their stories of happiness, frustrations, and pain evoked emotions in me that—as a researcher—I did not anticipate. Reading about how recognition demotivates, can cause feelings of insecurity and sadness in employees was difficult. However, as a researcher, I had to remain unbiased and unprovoked to entertain the emotions that I could feel building at times. However, there were more stories of vindication, care, compassion, and support that mitigated and overcame the negative. I was in awe of the raw honesty of the participants and their willingness to share their stories for the sake of educating others. I am humbled by their courage.

My personal hope is that there are findings in my research that will inspire managers of people and future research in the topic of recognition and respect. Personally, I have changed as a result of my findings. I have spent many hours in reflection of my past behavior related to recognition and the respect of those I have managed. While I believe that I am “one of the good ones,” I admit that I have shortcomings and can be stronger in recognizing others. I have a deeper level of compassion and understanding and now know, through my own research efforts, that telling someone that you recognize and appreciate their efforts could be the difference in an employee staying, or choosing to leave, respecting me more or trusting me less—but more importantly, the lasting impact on how they view themselves as a result of me recognizing them. I always believed that managers had a choice to either recognize employees or not.

However, after analyzing the results of my research, I no longer believe that recognizing employees is a choice. I now believe that it is a manager's obligation.

## Appendix A: Recruitment Email

Subject: Invitation to participate in research related to understanding the impact of recognition on employees, their work, and their feelings toward managers

Dear [*First and Last Name*],

My name is Kasey Short, and I am a doctoral candidate in Benedictine University's Values-Driven Leadership Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program. I am researching how recognition impacts leadership trust. More specifically, I am interested in learning more about recognition and trust from the follower's perspective. Key to my research is understanding the impact of recognition on employees, their work, and their feelings toward managers.

This research will potentially lead to a greater understanding of how manager's overt recognition of individual team members can impact the degree of trust the members place in the leader. As a researcher, I am inviting you to participate in this research. **Your participation is strictly voluntary.**

Three steps are being taken to ensure the anonymity of all participants: 1) data collected will be stripped of any identifying information, 2) data will be analyzed only at an aggregate level, and 3) all data will be coded as to further secure the anonymity of all participants.

**What is involved and how much time is required of you? To participate in this study, you would need to:**

1. Conduct a one hour interview
2. Sign a consent form at the time of the interview

I would greatly appreciate your participation in this study. If you choose to participate, please acknowledge and accept via this electronic communication. If you have any questions, please email me at [kasey.short@us.mcd.com](mailto:kasey.short@us.mcd.com). Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

Thank You,  
Kasey L. Short  
Ph.D. Candidate  
Benedictine University

## Appendix B: Consent to Participate in Research

My name is Kasey Short, and I am a doctoral candidate in Benedictine University's Values-Driven Leadership Ph.D. program. I am researching how recognition impacts leadership trust. More specifically, I am interested in learning more about recognition and trust from the follower's perspective. Key to my research is understanding the impact of recognition on employees, their work, and their feelings toward managers.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the study. **Your participation is strictly voluntary.** Three steps are being taken to ensure the anonymity of all participants; 1) data collected will be stripped of any identifying information, 2) data will be analyzed only at an aggregate level, and 3) all data will be coded as to further secure the anonymity of all participants.

Your time is truly appreciated.

### **What is involved and how much time is required of you? To participate in this study, you would need to:**

1. Conduct a one hour interview
2. Sign a consent form at the time of the interview

All one hour interviews will be audio recorded. Participant identity and confidentiality will be concealed using coding procedures. For legal purposes, data will be transcribed and transmitted to a Benedictine University faculty member (Dr. Marie DiVirgilio, Ph.D.) for secure and ultimate disposal after a period of seven years.

Excerpts and results of this study may be published or presented at scientific meetings, but your identity will not be disclosed, and your data will be presented in the aggregate form only. All information will be stored in a secure place without your name or anything else that will identify you.

**Regardless of your participation in the study, your participation is voluntary and your employment status will not be at risk.** You have the right to withdraw from this study at any time.

**Consent**

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**Signature and Date (collected at the time of the interview)**

This study is being conducted in part to provide data for a published dissertation study and to fulfill requirements for my Values Driven Leadership Ph.D. in the business school of Benedictine University in Lisle, Illinois. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Benedictine University must approve this study. The Chair of Benedictine University's IRB is Dr. Alandra Weller-Clarke. She can be reached at (630) 829-6295 and her email address is [aclarke@ben.edu](mailto:aclarke@ben.edu). The chairperson of this dissertation is Dr. Marie DiVirgilio, Ph.D. She can be reached at (630) 829-2178 for further questions or concerns about the project/research.

## Appendix C: Round One Interview Guide

Interviewer	Interviewee	Date	Time	Duration

Dissertation Interview Guide  
 Researcher: Kasey Short  
 Interviewers: Kasey Short and Yolanda Collins

### Research Background & Objectives

**Title: Understanding the impact of recognition on employees, their work, and feelings toward managers**

The purpose of this dissertation is to understand whether there is a relationship between employee recognition and trust. This study aims to provide insight into how manager recognition may impact follower’s trust. The goal is to add to the existing body of knowledge on trust and employee recognition from a follower’s perspective.

First, much of the existing literature focuses on the leader position within a work group, and there are gaps related to studies designed to enrich knowledge solely from the follower’s experiences related to recognition and trust.

Second, there is also a gap in the existing literature that focuses on the aspects of employee recognition and how it may have an impact on leadership trust.

Finally, findings from this study can benefit companies and organizations. Findings can be used to design more insightful leadership development programs. In addition, Human Resource departments can leverage the findings when developing and /or strengthening existing employee training tools.

From a qualitative perspective, this study will address the following research question: How does manager recognition impact follower trust?

### Schedule

- One hour interview sessions with participants
- Schedule specifics—tbd

**A. Introductions : Explain roles, participant expectations, and purpose (5 minutes)**

- Welcome and Thank You for participating
- Researcher role as independent researcher: This is about your experience. I am going to ask a lot of questions; there are no right or wrong answers, I am not trying to influence or change your mind about anything.
- Participants will be informed that their participation is voluntary. Participants may withdraw from the study at any time, and the data will be confidential.
- Procedures will be implemented to ensure that information obtained by participants in this study will be kept strictly confidential. I will take three steps to ensure participant anonymity; 1) no personal identifying indicators will be kept on participants, 2) transcripts of interviews will be sent to an independent consultant who will strip identifying indicators and will send the transcripts to me for coding, and 3) analyzed data will be collected at the aggregate level only. The independent consultant will aggregate the data and present it to me for analysis. Under the confidentiality section of the informed consent, participants will be informed that although information obtained will be kept confidential, the data may be published or presented at professional conferences and their individual identity will not be disclosed.
- Maintaining the anonymity of participants is important as qualitative studies have small sample sizes. Interviews will be digitally recorded and the recordings will be transcribed. The files and data will then be stored on Benedictine University's campus, locked under Marie DiVirgilio's (Dissertation Chairperson) supervision. The data will be stored for seven years, and then destroyed.
- The purpose of this research is to explore how manager recognition may impact follower's trust. The goal is to add to the existing body of knowledge on trust and employee recognition from a follower's perspective.

**B. Conversation (45 minutes)**

*Initial questions will utilize an Appreciative Inquiry strategy:*

1. Tell me, in general terms, what's worked well this past year?


- 2. What have you enjoyed most about your role specifically on the team this past year and why?


- 3. Overall, how would characterize this past year?


- 4. Were there any significant changes in work culture and team dynamics

- a. Positive observations and/or experiences?
- b. Negative observations and/or experiences?


*Deep dive on recognition:*

- 5. What are your views on recognition, and how do you define it?


- 6. Is recognition or being recognized important to you? Why/why not?


7. Can you provide general, positive experiences or examples of being recognized?


8. Can you provide general, negative experiences or examples of not being recognized?


9. How did your experiences, both positive and/or negative, affect you and your work?


*Impact on Trust:*

10. Does being recognized have any impact on your feelings of trust in leadership? Why or why/not?


11. How do you define Trust in leadership?


12. Open dialogue...


**C. Closing**

Thank you for your participation. Participant employment status will not be at risk. Reminder—as outlined in the introduction, steps will be taken to ensure the anonymity of all participants, including de-identifying data, coding, and using aliases in place of participants' names. Also, copies of personal recordings will be provided to the participant if desired.

## Appendix D: Round Two Interview Guide

Interviewer	Interviewee	Date	Time	Duration

Dissertation Interview Guide

Researcher: Kasey Short

Interviewers: Kasey Short and Yolanda Collins

### **Research Background & Objectives**

**Title: Understanding the impact of recognition on employees, their work, and feelings toward managers**

The purpose of this dissertation is to understand whether there is a relationship between employee recognition and trust. This study aims to provide insight into how manager recognition may have an impact on follower’s trust. The goal is to add to the existing body of knowledge on trust and employee recognition from a follower’s perspective.

First, much of the existing literature focuses on the leader position within a work group, and there are gaps related to studies designed to enrich knowledge solely from the follower’s experiences related to recognition and trust.

Second, there is also a gap in the existing literature that focuses on the aspects of employee recognition and how it may have an impact on leadership trust.

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From a qualitative perspective, this study will address the following research question: How does manager recognition impact follower trust?

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## Schedule

- One hour interview sessions with participants
- Schedule specifics—TBD

### **A. Introductions : Explain roles, participant expectations, and purpose (5 minutes)**

- Welcome and Thank You for participating
- Researcher role as independent researcher: This is about your experience. I am going to ask a lot of questions; there are no right or wrong answers, I am not trying to influence or change your mind about anything.
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- Procedures will be implemented to ensure that information obtained by participants in this study will be kept strictly confidential. I will take three steps to ensure participant anonymity; 1) no personal identifying indicators will be kept on participants, 2) transcripts of interviews will be sent to an independent consultant who will strip identifying indicators and will send the transcripts to me for coding, and 3) analyzed data will be collected at the aggregate level only. The independent consultant will aggregate the data and present it to me for analysis. Under the confidentiality section of the informed consent, participants will be informed that although information obtained will be kept confidential, the data may be published or presented at professional conferences and their individual identity will not be disclosed.
- Maintaining the anonymity of participants is important as qualitative studies have small sample sizes. Interviews will be digitally recorded and the recordings will be transcribed. The files and data will then be stored on Benedictine University's campus, locked under Marie DiVirgilio's (Dissertation Chairperson) supervision. The data will be stored for seven years, and then destroyed.
- The purpose of this research is to explore how manager recognition impacts followers.

**B. Conversation (45 minutes)**

1. Tell me, in general terms, what's worked well this past year?


**The Qualitative Research will utilize the Critical Incidence strategy.**

2. Positive Critical Incident #1

- “Tell me about a time when you were appropriately recognized for something you did that was significant and important.”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask...]
- “And then what happened? And what were you thinking and feeling?”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask again...]
- “And then what happened? And what were you thinking and feeling?”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask...]
- “How did this experience affect you and your work?”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask...]
- “How did this experience affect your feelings toward your (boss, leader)?”


3. Negative Critical Incident #1

- “Tell me about a time when you were not appropriately recognized for something you did that was significant and important.”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask...]
- “And then what happened? And what were you thinking and feeling?”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask again...]
- “And then what happened? And what were you thinking and feeling?”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask...]
- “How did this experience affect you and your work?”

- [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask...]
- “How did this experience affect your feelings toward your (boss, leader)?”

4. Positive Critical Incident #2

- “Tell me about a time when you were appropriately recognized for something you did that was significant and important.”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask...]
- “And then what happened? And what were you thinking and feeling?”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask again...]
- “And then what happened? And what were you thinking and feeling?”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask...]
- “How did this experience affect you and your work?”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask...]
- “How did this experience affect your feelings toward your (boss, leader)?”


5. Negative Critical Incident #2

- “Tell me about a time when you were not appropriately recognized for something you did that was significant and important.”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask...]
- “And then what happened? And what were you thinking and feeling?”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask again...]
- “And then what happened? And what were you thinking and feeling?”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask...]
- “How did this experience affect you and your work?”
  - [Encourage participant to tell the story in detail. Then ask...]
- “How did this experience affect your feelings toward your (boss, leader)?”


6. What are your views on recognition? How do you define recognition?


7. Is being recognized important to you? Why? Why not?


8. What do you see as the relationship between recognition and trust?


**C. Closing**

Thank you for your participation. Participant employment status will not be at risk. Reminder—as outlined in the introduction, steps will be taken to ensure the anonymity of all participants, including de-identifying data, coding, and using aliases in place of participants’ names. Also, copies of personal recordings will be provided to the participant if desired.

## Appendix E: Round One Guide for Intercoder Reliability

### Guide for Intercoder Reliability Checking: Understanding the Impact of Manager Recognition on Employee Trust

#### Overview

This document guides the process of coding data collected for a qualitative study to better understand the relationship between trust and recognition. Through follower narratives and shared experiences, the research plan is to discover a deeper understanding of how recognition can affect the degree to which a follower may trust their leader.

#### Research Context

To further explore the topic of leader trust from a follower's perspective, this study isolates one key area that may be related to leadership trust, which is recognition. All participants in the study are employees of the same Fortune 500 company located in the Midwest section of the United States.

#### Research Questions

This study is interested in understanding whether recognition from a leader has an impact on the degree of trust a follower may place in that leader. Things that you may look for—but should not be limited by—include:

1. Did the employee express satisfaction with their level of manager recognition?
2. Did the employee express disappointment with their level of personal recognition from their manager?
3. Is the employee affected by the degree to which they are recognized?
4. What are the employee's expectations regarding recognition?
5. What examples of desired acts of recognition were stated?
6. Has the employee's attitude toward their manager been affected by an occurrence related to recognition?

#### Directions

1. Familiarize yourself with the research questions.
2. Read each passage from the transcript.
3. As you read the passage, think about the research questions.
4. For each passage, please note your observations.
5. Save the document and add your initials to the document name. For example: *codevalidationKS*—in which the document name is *codevalidation* and *KS* represents the coder's initials.

Please contact Kasey Short if you have any questions regarding this process.

## Appendix F: Round Two Guide for Intercoder Reliability

### Guide for Intercoder Reliability Checking: Understanding the Impact of Manager Recognition on Employee Trust

#### Overview

This document guides the process of coding data collected for a qualitative study to better understand the relationship between trust and recognition. Through follower narratives and shared experiences, the research plan is to discover a deeper understanding of how recognition can affect the degree to which a follower may trust their leader.

#### Research Context

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#### Research Questions

This study is interested in understanding whether recognition from a leader has an impact on the degree of trust a follower may place in that leader. Things that you may look for—but should not be limited by—include:

1. Is the employee affected by the degree to which they are recognized?
2. What are the employee's expectations regarding recognition?
3. What examples of desired acts of recognition were stated?
4. Has the employee's attitude toward their manager been affected by an occurrence related to recognition?

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1. Familiarize yourself with the research questions.
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5. Save the document and add your initials to the document name. For example: *codevalidationKS*—in which, the document name is *codevalidation* and *KS* represents the coder's initials.

Please contact Kasey Short if you have any questions regarding this process.

## **Appendix G: Round Two Participant Analysis**

Tables 24 – 48 (below) detail round two participant analysis.

**Table 22. Round Two, Participant 1 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
1. "Brooke"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Mid- Management —Shared Services	Non-monetary & small tokens of appreciation matter  "I just want to thank you for doing such a great job...She'll leave little notes on my desk. Those are very private, you know, but they make me feel good."	Instilled confidence and pride in personal ability and company  "It made me very proud of what I do and what I do to support this company."	Encouraged to work harder —do more  "I have my bosses back, because she recognizes that what I do is important."	Strengthened respect  "I will do whatever I need to do to make her look good because it's a give-and-take situation. She's very supportive of me. I am extremely supportive of her."	Discouraged  "I don't need to be promoted, I'm not looking for that. I'm just looking for, 'Brooke worked really hard at doing this, and I just want to thank her for that.' That's all I wanted."	Disenchantment  "She stood up and took all the credit...I literally walked out of the room and went home."	Loss of trust  "There was no trust."
Participant's lesson learned	"I believe respect is recognition, because if you respect me, then you recognize that I'm a person who's doing the best that I can do for you."						
Researcher's lessons learned	Recognition strengthens commitment and support of the manager and company as a whole.						

**Table 235. Round Two, Participant 2 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
2. "Felicia"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Entry Level Management — Administrative	Non-monetary & small tokens of appreciation matter  "Just a good morning with coffee and doughnuts to say thank you. It's the small things matter. I want people to know that we don't take their skills for granted."	Gave purpose and meaning to work  Made employee feel valued  "It made me feel extremely excited, very purposeful."  "It definitely empowers the employee. It makes them to know that they are definitely valued."	Encouraged to work harder —do more  "I felt even more gifted and even more stretched to do something totally different than what I was accustomed to doing."	Strengthened respect  "My respect for him grew to a different level, because he understood my sacrifice to ensure that this project was successful."  "I really respected her on another level. She knew a little bit more about me and she had a lot more faith in me than what I thought."	Disengaged  Left job/Quit/  Considered leaving role  "So it was a little draining. And after the project was over, I started, doing my own inventory of where I really wanted to be. I realized that maybe it was time for me to take on a new assignment."	Disenchantment  Left job/Quit/  Considered leaving role  "I think I detached myself after that project. Not too long after, I started looking for something else."  "Two or three weeks after that incident of blatantly not being recognized, started looking for another role."	Loss of respect  "She was more focused on what her job was and She was very selfish. She took ownership of what I did because she was looking for her next move as well. It left me feeling as if I was really doing my job by myself without any support and that was not a great feeling."
Participant's lesson learned	"It's important for me to be recognized, so that I know that I'm on the right path and that I'm going in the right direction."  "I also realize that sometimes we take for granted the day-to-day things that people do. So I'm really, really big on acknowledging and recognizing employees, from the smallest things to the largest things."						
Researcher's lessons learned	Increased feelings of respect toward manager results from recognition.						

**Table 246. Round Two, Participant 3 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
3. "Heather"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Mid-Management — Development/ Innovations	Non-monetary & small tokens of appreciation matter  "It wasn't a huge monetary award, but it was something just to make you feel really special and like all of that hard work was worth it."  "Having others hear what you're working on and knowing that your work is meaningful, I think that's very valued."	Gave purpose and meaning to work  Made employee feel respected and valued  "There wasn't any monetary value, however people knew what you were working on was helping the business."	Encouraged to work harder —do more  "It makes you want to keep getting recognized. It gives you a competitive edge and makes you want to do it again."  "It's just a little something, but it inspires you to work harder."	Strengthened respect for Manager  "I would say that it just made me respect my manager that much more."	Work was devalued and appeared as unimportant  "Exceptional job done, but it wasn't that important to business, so we were never really recognized although it was a lot of work with many people involved. No one in the group was really praised for it."	Demotivated Left job/Quit/ Considered leaving role  "Makes you feel undervalued and just not that excited. I would have to kill myself to get recognition, so why work that hard?"  "So finally, I decided that it wasn't that healthy for me to be staying there, so I left."	Loss of respect Loss of trust  "I would say the lack of recognition makes you not really trust your boss or believe that they believe in their people."  "I disrespect them a bit now."
Participant's lesson learned	"So I feel going forward, I have to promote my work more or talk to it and promote myself more, whereas, I feel like normally, your manager would do that for you."						
Researcher's lessons learned	Recognition in its most simplistic form of 'just saying thank you' inspires employees to feel more valued and to want to do more and contribute more.						

**Table 257. Round Two, Participant 4 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
4. "Sarah"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Mid-Management—Research	Non-monetary & small tokens of appreciation matter  "Good recognition is just giving someone a compliment or positive feedback when they've something well."	Motivation tool  Gave purpose and meaning to work  "Helps with motivating you as an employee and you know exactly where you stand with your manager."	Boosts confidence  "It makes me more confident in my work."	Strengthened respect  Strengthened Admiration  "I feel like they were people developers. They were empathetic and encouragers. They were motivating and driven to help me get to the next level."	Devalued  "It made me feel like I was incompetent. It made me feel like I wasn't as valued"  "It just made me feel like I wasn't capable, and I didn't like going to work at all."	Left job/Quit/Considered leaving role  "I left the company eventually because of it. I just didn't feel like I was being recognized."	Loss of respect  "I didn't have a lot of respect for her. I thought she was very smart, but I just didn't really want to deal with her unless I absolutely had to."  "My work was delivered through my boss, so I didn't actually get to present the information. She was recognized and it didn't make me feel good."
Participant's lesson learned	"I think once someone recognizes you, you do begin to trust them more because you feel like that person is actually paying attention to you."						
Researcher's lessons learned	The lack of respect is a demoralizing experience that leaves employees unmotivated, devalued and likely to leave or quit their position.						

**Table 268. Round Two, Participant 5 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
5. "Bob"	Non-motivating factor	Gave purpose and meaning to work	Adding value	Respect and Admiration	Dis-satisfaction and un-appreciated	Left job/Quit/Considered leaving role	Loss of respect
Round Two: Member of broader company	"I can't say that it really motivates me anymore. It felt good at the time, but I moved on."	Made employee feel valued and appreciated	"It's good to know that what I'm doing is being received and valued."	"For him to step up and initiate this level of recognition for my work was really special."	"The days were long. Even though I was doing the same amount of work as before, everything was filtered through this lens of being unsatisfied and un-appreciated."	"I was really questioning whether or not I wanted to continue working there. I definitely wanted to pursue other opportunities within the company if I did stay."	"I had no respect for her at all as a leader. I think she was more fearful of me doing well and overshadowing her than she was interested in recognizing me."
Sector: Public Fortune 500 company							
Type: Mid-Management—IT	"If recognition is given, it's important that it goes to the right person. If it's not given at all, it's not going to bother me, but if it's given to the wrong person, that's when it becomes an issue."	"I felt very valued. I felt that the work I had done was not only worth it, but that it was appreciated."					"If you fail at providing recognition for those who report to you, it will probably diminish their trust in you."
Participant's lesson learned	"Giving recognition is not my strength. It's a byproduct of my work ethic and my lack of need to receive recognition. I tend to project that out on others, and I'm not as quick to give recognition when I should."						
Researcher's lessons learned	Manager trust and respect are negatively impacted when employee feels unrecognized for their work.						

**Table 279. Round Two, Participant 6 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
6. "Missy"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Mid-Management – Development	Recognition must be genuine  "When a manager pulls an employee to the side to recognize that work isn't easy, and that the employee has gone above and beyond doing a great job feels very genuine and heartfelt."	Motivation tool  Gave purpose and meaning to work  "It gave me the heart to want to keep pushing through any barriers or find solutions and find ways around stuff."  "I feel like they value me enough as an employee or as a team member to say when I'm doing it good so I can keep doing it."	Encouraged to work harder – do more  "You have a better sense of accomplishment knowing that you were aligned with the company's strategies and what you were working on was important."	Increased feeling of manager support  "It made you feel very comfortable when you would hit challenges or roadblocks, knowing that you could get coaching without backlash."	Devalued Insecure  Not willing to take risks  "If you're not getting any recognition, you start to wonder if what you're doing is important."  "If I don't have recognition, I'm not going to want to take risks. I'm not going to step out of my comfort zone."	Devalued Insecure  Not willing to take risks  "It made me question all my decisions, all my judgment. Have I been wrong this whole time?"  "It really made me more hesitant to take risks or to make decisions on my own."	Loss of respect  "My boss at the time was like, 'yeah, whatever' you know. You got no credit for the work you did. He was very selfish."  "There was definitely a lack of trust that made you feel a bit insecure. It changed the way that you look at that person you're reporting to because you lose a lot of respect for them."
Participant's lesson learned	"Recognition that is heartfelt is obvious. When you get that sincere recognition for something you worked on, not even if it's a big, it just feels really good and that is important to me."						
Researcher's lessons learned	Recognition opens pathway for comfortable, two-way dialogue with employee and manager. It strengthens relationship, opens a pathway, and eases conversations when an employee needs help or advice from a manager.						

**Table 28. Round Two, Participant 7 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
7. "James"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Mid-Management – Operations	Non-monetary & small tokens of appreciation matter  "Recognition to me is just somebody acknowledging, in some form, what I've accomplished. I don't always have to get money or a plaque, I just like to have somebody come up and say, 'Hey, you're just doing a really good job.'"	Made employee feel appreciated  "It made me feel appreciated and valued as an employee."	Motivation tool  Encouraged to work harder – do more  "It motivates you to do better and better because I knew that the work done in the past was appreciated."	Increased feeling of manager support  "They didn't take me for granted, and they appreciated the hard work that I did. So it helped me have a new appreciation for my boss."	Devalued  Unmotivated  "You just don't feel valued and unappreciated."  "They can count on me to do all the hard work, but I don't think that they necessarily value the work that I do."	Un-motivated  Devalued  "I was going into it not as motivated, knowing that I might do something that's going to turn out great results and it probably is not going to be recognized."  "I was not as enthusiastic to do such a good job as I did on the previous project, because I just felt that I would not be recognized for all of my hard work, energy, and effort."	Loss of trust  "I don't know that you can trust somebody that doesn't necessarily recognize you because if they don't recognize you and let you know how they're feeling about you, then there's a concern that you can't trust them as having your best interests when decisions are made on your behalf."
Participant's lesson learned	"Ongoing recognition is very important. For me, that really is something that keeps me going. Just acknowledging what I've done."						
Researcher's lessons learned	Future work efforts are negatively impacted due to past experiences of not being recognized. Employee's enthusiasm and commitment to work wanes. You do not get the best out of people and they do not reach their full potential if they believe that they will not be recognized for their work.						

**Table 291. Round Two, Participant 8 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
8. "Daisy"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Mid- Management – Marketing	Non-monetary & small tokens of appreciation matter  "Good recognition from a manager is when your input on the team is not only acknowledged, but when they take the time to understand the role that you have played in the project and its success."	Recognition must be genuine in order to be effective  "When a manager takes the time to learn who you are and what strengths you bring to the team."	Recognition should be personal and genuine  "I'm not particularly a person that has to be recognized or people have to bow at my feet, but after years and years, it does become an irritant when you are comfortable being an idea person, but often have to share the recognition because of the structure."	Loss of respect  "I don't think it was an altruistic-type of recognition. I think it was more a function of what was needed on that particular project to drive it forward."
Participant's lessons learned	"Recognition, legitimate and genuine, builds trust."			
Researcher's lessons learned	Genuine, sincere recognition is often detected by the employee or recipient of the gesture. Employees can detect whether the manager took the time to understand and tailor the recognition out of sincerity or whether it was delivered out of an expected, established protocol.			

**Table 302. Round Two, Participant 9 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
9. "Marsha"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Mid-Management – Research	Small tokens of appreciation matter  "It's really just as simple as a 'thank you' at the completion of a project."  "Just letting someone know that you appreciate the work that they're doing and the time that they're putting into their job."	Increased appreciation of Manager  "I felt like she appreciated me and the work that I was doing and she noticed. It felt good that she took the time to recognize me."	Demotivated  "I don't really need to work half as hard as I worked. No need for me getting home from work at 7:30, 8:00 at night, when the people that are getting recognized are leaving the office at 4:00 or 4:30."	Left job/Quit/Considered leaving role  "I was very frustrated. Then it made me feel like I need to just be prepared to get a job somewhere else."	Loss of respect  "I feel like she's not a fighter, and she's not invested in my career."
Participant's lessons learned	"I really think that recognition is closely tied to appreciation more than anything else."				
Researcher's lessons learned	Employee willingness to over-deliver wanes when recognition is given to peers who appear to be working and contributing less.				

**Table 313. Round Two, Participant 10 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience
10. "Debbie"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Mid- Management – Innovations	Non-monetary & small tokens of appreciation matter  "He brought us together with the Officers and individually acknowledged each person and what they had accomplished ...getting that support from our senior leadership was huge."	Generated Connections  "It lowers the barriers between departments and opens doors. Now, I feel very comfortable approaching other teams and getting feedback from them."	Encouraged to work harder – do more  Increases feeling of being Valued  Motivation tool  "It made me feel great. It made me feel valued. I felt empowered, and I felt like I wanted to do more for the company."	Increased level of manager respect  "I just felt and gained more respect for him in general. The fact that he recognized me and recognized me in front of other leaders and peers was a great thing."	Demotivated  "I didn't feel the urge to stick out my neck again...no one is going to know what I'm doing and there won't be any recognition anyway."
Participant's lesson learned	"I felt very confident in my capabilities and ability after being recognized. Having my bosses support showed me that he trusted me and that was a positive form of recognition for me."				
Researcher's lessons learned	Recognition strengthens connections vertically and across the organization.				

**Table 324. Round Two, Participant 11 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
<p>11. "Mia"</p> <p>Round Two: Member of broader company</p> <p>Sector: Public Fortune 500 company</p> <p>Type: Lower Management – Administrative</p>	<p>Non-monetary &amp; small tokens of appreciation matter</p> <p>"Recognition doesn't have to be tangible. It could just be verbal a acknowledgement, face-to-face, one on one, a text message, a voice mail message, or a Post-It left on your desk."</p>	<p>Made employee feel wanted and appreciated</p> <p>"It made me feel wanted and appreciated. And that made me feel good about being an employee of the company."</p>	<p>Increased Appreciation for Manager because they care</p> <p>"They care enough to acknowledge your hard work or to acknowledge your presence."</p> <p>"You feel like this person cares about you."</p>	<p>Demotivating</p> <p>"I wouldn't say it threw me into a mode of depression, but it just makes you feel unappreciated, like you're just easily, you can be easily disposed of."</p>	<p>Left job/Quit/ Considered leaving role Disengaged</p> <p>"It's just not an overall good feeling. It doesn't make you feel good about coming into work every day, and especially with me driving 30 miles each way."</p>	<p>Feelings of Ambiguity</p> <p>"There was a point in time where the management that I reported to did not appreciate any of her employees Well, it made me feel un-appreciated. It wasn't a good feeling at all."</p> <p>"You didn't know if she was going to fire you, if she was happy with you... how can you gauge it?"</p> <p>"And it was almost along the lines of them being jealous of their workers."</p>
Participant's lesson learned	"Thinking back to the management teams or the bosses that I've had that were huge on recognition, I would say that I think I trusted them more, you know. I think it is something that kind of goes hand in hand because you become almost like a family and it's a bond that you establish. You feel like this person cares about you."					
Researcher's lessons learned	Recognition is seen as the manager caring about the employee which builds and strengthens the relationship and trust.					

**Table 335. Round Two, Participant 12 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
12. "Sasha"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Lower Management – Administrative	Non-monetary & small tokens of appreciation matter  "So instead of giving me money, I just need you to write a memo to the department as an example, and actually take the time to not only do it, not only recognize me, but you also take the time to figure out how that looks and what that would mean for me individually."	Feeling Appreciated  "Just that feeling of putting in the work and doing something that's never been done before, successfully completing it and getting that immediate feedback celebration, real time, was an awesome experience."	Adding Value Work meaning  "I felt that I was actually adding value. I felt that I being a pioneer, because this particular task hadn't been done, so it made me feel that I was entering into territory that I had not been in before."	Genuine  "The best leaders will engage with employees to find out what form of recognition they appreciate. When managers do that, it builds the trust because not only are you giving authentic recognition, you are also doing it in the way that means something to me personally."	Unappreciated  "It didn't go over well in terms of the significant amount of time and effort that went into that project."	Distrust  Lack of leadership  "Difficult to trust a leader that doesn't recognize in some way, shape, or form, and I'm also very keen at looking at what is happening throughout the entire team. And clearly, if he's not recognizing others or unfairly recognizing people that don't deserve it, that is also a huge indicator of lack of leadership."
Participant's lessons learned	"All employees don't want recognition in the same way, so it's important to be authentic when you're recognizing employees as best to your ability and recognize in a way that means something to them. I believe that a leader that doesn't recognize, should be qualified as a leader."					
Researcher's lessons learned	Recognition must mean something for the employee, so managers must understand which form would be most appreciated by the employee.					

**Table 346. Round Two, Participant 13 Analysis**

Participant	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
<p>13. "Tami"</p> <p>Round Two: Member of broader company</p> <p>Sector: Public Fortune 500 company</p> <p>Type: Mid-Management – Development</p>	<p>Validates work value/meaning</p> <p>Motivation tool</p> <p>"It gave me energy to keep working on the project."</p> <p>"Provides validation from your superior, that what you're doing is important."</p>	<p>Motivation tool</p> <p>"It's very motivating to continue working hard because hard work was recognized."</p>	<p>Seen as an advocate</p> <p>Strengthened Connection</p> <p>"I felt really positive about her and her ability to advocate for me."</p> <p>"This award definitely our first little chip away at feeling a connection, because he understood how hard I was working and how meaningful the work was."</p>	<p>Demotivating</p> <p>Not working as hard</p> <p>"It definitely affects you and your motivation in that maybe you won't work as hard."</p>	<p>Seen not seen as an advocate</p> <p>Relationship waned</p> <p>"It eroded my relationship with that boss. I felt like they didn't go to bat for me and advocate for me."</p> <p>"So it definitely left me with questionable feelings towards what my boss thought of me and how strong a leader he was."</p>
Participant's lessons learned	<p>"I think it used to be way more important to me. Being recognized has changed as I've grown in my career. Early on, it was so important to me to be recognized formally, in front of a group and in front of peers. I wanted to be valued amongst my peers. Now, being promoted, being recognized as a leader, and adding value are important. It's not money motivated. I think just that part keeps growing as you get further and further along. I don't need to be given an award. I don't need a bonus. I don't even necessarily need to be recognized in front of my peers anymore."</p>				
Researcher's lessons learned	<p>Managers who recognize are seen as advocates by the employee and recognition needs change and evolve over time.</p>				

**Table 357. Round Two, Participant 14 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
14. "Cory"	Non-monetary & small tokens of appreciation matter	Strengthens connection	Unappreciated	Ambiguity
Round Two: Member of broader company	"It wasn't even about the small reward that we got. It was just about the fact that somebody noticed we were doing a good job."	"I have more of a personal connection."	"My last boss told me he doesn't value hard work and that it's all about results."	"I don't know if my boss had my back or not."
Sector: Public Fortune 500 company		"Recognizing that I'm working on all these different projects makes me feel like he's involved and he wants to be involved."		
Type: Mid-Management – Digital				
Participant's lessons learned	"I don't think that if my boss never recognized me that we'd have the same relationship, so I don't know if we'd have the same level of trust."			
Researcher's lessons learned	Ambiguity is not well received by employees. Recognition helps them know where the stand with managers and the manager's expectations.			

**Table 368. Round Two, Participant 15 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
15. "Joy"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Upper-Management – Operations	Non-monetary & small tokens of appreciation matter  Tailored to me  "It can simply be one on one or in a large group setting. It can include benefits, like income and pay or time off, whatever is most important to the employee or the person that you're recognizing."	Made employee feel appreciated  "I was proud and appreciative for the recognition."	Motivation tool  Encouraged to work harder – do more  "It makes it a little bit easier to go the extra mile when the folks that you're trying to deliver the work for actually appreciate the extra effort that it takes to sometimes get those things done. I think it's a motivator in terms of pushing out more work."	Increased feeling of manager support  "Very appreciative, felt very supported, felt that there was genuine care and concern with my future with the company and with the department."	Devalued  "A manager who does not have a lot of concern for me or my future wellbeing is not a good manager."	Unmotivated  Devalued  "He wasn't concerned with making sure that I was positioned well within the organization. I felt very unsupported."	Loss of trust  Self-centered boss  "My manager was very self-centered in that it was really about him and what he needed to do and whether or not he looked good, versus whether or not he was providing the kind of support that I needed."
Participant's lessons learned	"If there's not a lot of appreciation, then I don't see how there can be a lot of trust that this person really understands the effort and the work. If they don't understand it, then I don't know how they can value it. And if they don't value it, then I can't trust that they would protect it. So to me, appreciation, recognition, and trust kind of go hand in hand."						
Researcher's lessons learned	A manager who recognizes employees strengthens their security in that manager. Employees feel more protected and secure.						

**Table 379. Round Two, Participant 16 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
16. "Cara"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Lower Management – Administrative	Feels appreciated but does not believe that it's vital  "I kind of fuel my own fire because I've had to for most of the time I've been at this company."	Sincerity is at the heart  "It's great when it comes and it's sincere."	Must be Genuine/since  "So the manager just can't quote or regurgitate examples of great work unless they had personal experience with what the employee contributed."  "If a manager doesn't somehow internalize it and make it personal to let the employee know that their appreciated, it's all discredited."	Unmotivated  Devalued  "The manager and the director knew of my contribution, and took the credit for the strategic work that I did. However, they did give me credit for buying the supplies for the meeting."	Must be sincere/genuine  "Well, this sounds cynical, but you can tell the difference between when the recognition is sincere or when the officer of the department told the manager to do it."
Participant's lessons learned	"As I mentioned, sincerity in recognition is what's most important to me. You can recognize me publicly as much as you want, but if it is not from the heart and an overtone of sincerity, I'm not interested."				
Researcher's lessons learned	Genuine recognition is defined as whether it "come from the heart" of the manager. It must be personalized in some way to show that the manager affirms or agrees with the recognition. Otherwise, it is seen as insincere.				

**Table 38. Round Two, Participant 17 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
<p>17. "Tori"</p> <p>Round Two: Member of broader company</p> <p>Sector: Public Fortune 500 company</p> <p>Type: Mid-Management – Shared Services</p>	<p>Non-monetary &amp; small tokens of appreciation matter</p> <p>"Recognition is not just about getting something monetary, it is what inspires and it is what motivates your people."</p>	<p>Made employee feel appreciated</p> <p>"To be able to come back and have someone say to me, that managers are talking about me in a good way and at higher level meetings feels so good."</p>	<p>Strengthened respect</p> <p>Manager seen as an advocate</p> <p>"I respect her, because of the respect that she had for me."</p> <p>"She is an advocate for our team. So she was not going to let us go unnoticed."</p>	<p>Started to take personal accountability</p> <p>"I stopped waiting for someone to recognize me and started to tell managers what I was doing and I started to reposition my own value in their eyes."</p>	<p>Ambiguity</p> <p>"If I never hear you acknowledge me, I don't know that I would trust you to be able to speak positively about me or have my best interest."</p> <p>"If you're never complimentary about anything that I do in a positive way, or if you just seem oblivious to my contributions, I would be a little nervous about that."</p>
Participant's lessons learned	"If you were the type of manager that you really never recognized or acknowledged anything that I did, and I was someone who reported to you, I think I would be concerned if you had to go before someone to talk about me or my work because I wouldn't trust that you really understood what I did or that you were an advocate for me because I never heard it from you."				
Researcher's lessons learned	Manager advocacy is defined by the level of recognition an employee receives. Employees are not confident that a manager will speak positively on their behalf if the manager fails to provide recognition as an ongoing practice.				

**Table 391. Round Two, Participant 18 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
18. "Sierra"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Mid- Management – Innovations	Must be genuine and tailored  "It needs to be specific. You not only demonstrate their value but acknowledge how somebody specifically brings value to an organization because you're acknowledging their particular set of skills."	Made employee feel motivated empowered valued  "It was validating, empowering and motivational."	Motivation tool Encouraged  "The project wasn't necessarily in my skillset, so to be recognized for my work validated that if I can push myself out of my boundaries, I'm able to tackle pretty much anything."	Increased feeling of manager support  "I had a lot of confidence in her capabilities as a leader because she, in turn, believed in me."	Devalued Unmotivated Quit job  "I didn't put that level of detail in there. Things kind of fell to crap. I remember being really worried about my job on one level, but on another level, I felt like, because I was so confident in what it was that I was able to do, I needed them to see the difference in my attitude. I actually left not too long after that."	Unmotivated Devalued Demoralizing  "I think it was actually really demoralizing. I kind of checked out for a little bit, because I left before 5:00 every day. I didn't stay very engaged and I didn't offer above and beyond."  "If I would have been recognized better, I would have never left."	Loss of respect  "I lost a whole lot of respect. I wasn't ever rude, but I didn't take too much stock or invest too much in what they were saying anymore."  "So why should you go that extra minute? I'm going to give you the baseline."
Participant's lessons learned	"I think that once you feel motivated and empowered, you're also loyal to the environment and the values of the company."  "I would also state that I would have stayed in my previous role longer if I felt like I was getting recognized more for the work that I was putting on the table, as opposed to my work being taken for granted."						
Researcher's lessons learned	Lack of recognition is a leading indicator of attrition.						

**Table 402. Round Two, Participant 19 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
19. "Cam"	Sincerity and genuine	Increased confidence	Motivation tool	Strengthened respect and admiration for manager	Devalued Unmotivated	Unmotivated Disengaged	Loss of respect
Round Two: Member of broader company	"It's important to know that the individual who's recognizing you has taken the time to understand you as an individual and what you bring to the table."	"It made me feel very confident about my skills and abilities. It made me feel appreciated and valued by the company."  "It inspires people to do more and it allows for more positive work environments if you're recognized for your efforts. And it helps keep teams healthy."	Encouraged to work harder – do more  "I felt inspired to do more work like that. I definitely felt like I could do more in the hopes that I could continue to impress our leaders and show that I add good value to the company."	"I respect that individual very much. If anything, I have more admiration for them because it just shows that they remain connected to the things that their people do, it's amazing."	"It made me feel as though regardless of the work that I do, I may not always be recognized, or it would be easy for someone else to take credit for what I do if I'm not the one who is aggressively trying to communicate all that I do all of the time."	"I think I became disengaged from the group and the team in general, because when you see things happen like that, you no longer are enthusiastic about your work, or you don't feel inspired that you will one day move up. I definitely felt disengaged."	"I didn't respect that person. I just felt that some leaders like employees who are aggressive, that communicate openly, and who are more extroverts. There are people behind the scenes, who are quietly doing work, and they don't get that recognition."
Sector: Public Fortune 500 company							
Type: Lower-Management – Administration							
Participant's lessons learned	"Recognition increases connection. It is important to me because I want to know how I'm doing. It's a gauge of your performance. So being recognized is a way to validate that my skills are valued."						
Researcher's lessons learned	Managers who genuinely recognize all levels of employees equally (introverts and extroverts alike) are seen as fair and inspiring.						

**Table 413. Round Two, Participant 20 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
20. "Taylor"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Mid-Management – Operations	Non-monetary & small tokens of appreciation matter  "Simply thanking somebody or letting somebody know that you appreciate or you noticed what they've done and how they've done it."	Motivation tool  Encouraged to work harder – do more  "It's important to incentivize and encourage me and motivate me to want to keep going and doing my job even better."	Strengthened respect, appreciation, and support for manager  "It made me appreciate her even that much more. I had a higher level of respect and appreciation for her, just simply because of how supportive she is. To know that she took the time to recognize me when she did not have to meant a lot."	Devalued Unmotivated  "It's demotivating especially when you want to be doing the very best that you can, you would hope that somebody notices that you're doing that."	Unmotivated Devalued  "I refused to allow for it to affect my work, even though it could have. It could have made me hesitant and reluctant the next time around to want to step up."	Negative reaction  "You wonder, was it just laziness on my boss's part? Was it truly an oversight? Or, was it just lack of awareness in how important recognition can be for individuals?"
Participant's lessons learned	"Even if you're an individual such as myself that doesn't go around tooting their own horn and patting themselves on the back, but any and everybody would appreciate, every now and then, having a manager letting them know that they recognize and appreciate what they're doing."					
Researcher's lessons learned	Although an employee may not explicitly solicit recognition, all appreciate some degree of positive acknowledgements.					

**Table 424. Round Two, Participant 21 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
21. "Gloria"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Mid- Management – Operations	Recognition must be genuine tailored  Non-monetary & small tokens of appreciation matter  "It inspires and motivates to be committed to the work. It brings value to the work."  "It doesn't have to be money. You just have to figure out what it is the person appreciates most and then give them the recognition that they prefer."	Motivation tool  Work is valued and meaningful  "It's important to me because verifies whether I'm on track and if I'm meeting my manager's expectations."	Encouraged to work harder – do more  "It gave me a sense of confidence in what we were doing and that we were headed in the right direction."	Devalued Insecure Not willing to take risks  "There was really no clear direction, and you're working through that and you're not getting direction and you're not getting recognition on what you are asked to do, it really did have a very negative effect on me."	Devalued Insecure Not willing to take risks  "There was not a lot of positive recognition which made it a very challenging year. It was difficult to stay focused on the work."	Loss of respect  "My manager was disconnected and uncommitted."  "I was not sure that he was committed to me and that he really had my best interest."
Participant's lessons learned	"One of the things that I learned in that process was in order to get recognition, you have to be able to communicate your accomplishments against the plan at all levels."					
Researcher's lessons learned	There is a level of employee accountability in ensuring that managers understand that they are delivering against the strategic plans and goals.					

**Table 435. Round Two, Participant 22 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience
<p>22. “Roma”</p> <p>Round Two: Member of broader company</p> <p>Sector: Public Fortune 500 company</p> <p>Type: Mid-Management – Research</p>	<p>Non-monetary &amp; small tokens of appreciation matter</p> <p>“For me, it’s the small things. So recognition is important to me, but it doesn’t necessarily have to come in the form of a physical reward. It’s definitely just those softer gestures that mean the most to me.”</p>	<p>Motivation tool</p> <p>Work is valued and meaningful</p> <p>“So it was definitely a time that I felt proud of my accomplishments and surprised with the recognition too because I’m not one that necessarily needs to be patted on the back.”</p>	<p>Encouraged to work harder—do more</p> <p>Meaning</p> <p>“It says that you’re doing the work that you should be doing, so just keep going with it.”</p>	<p>Increased feeling of manager support</p> <p>“I definitely feel that my boss has my back. So I do think that she is an advocate for me. I think that she wants to see me succeed and I think that she will fight for me.”</p>	<p>Devalued</p> <p>Insecure</p> <p>Not willing to take risks</p> <p>“I would just cringe. I’m doing all of this and I’m not getting an ‘atta-boy’ recognition for it? So it definitely affected me negatively.”</p>	<p>Devalued</p> <p>Insecure</p> <p>Not willing to take risks</p> <p>“Just another area where you have this stellar, rock-star individual, this top performing employee, and as opposed to recognizing him for all of his efforts—often going above and beyond, for so long- they didn’t and he’s since left.”</p> <p>“There was a period when I scaled back a little bit. What’s the point of putting in all this effort if it’s not going to go anywhere?”</p>
Participant’s lessons learned	Participant did not provide this information.					
Researcher’s lessons learned	Employees do not see value in exceeding expectations if there is no recognition given. Doing exceptional work is not motivating without some degree of recognition for doing so.					

**Table 446. Round Two, Participant 23 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
23. "Howard"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Mid- Management – Shared Services	Recognition must be genuine  "If handwritten notes or gift cards don't mean anything to an employee, yet that's the type of recognition that is being provided by the boss, I may have a negative effect because it's irrelevant to the employee."	Motivation tool  Work is valued and meaningful  "There was a sense of additional motivation. There was a sense of energy. You felt it reinforced the confidence that you had and showed that the work that you were doing was appropriately focused."	Encouraged to work harder – do more  "I felt positive and I felt really good about the work that I was doing and the direction I was going in general."	Increased feeling of manager support  "I felt very appreciated and supported. I felt dedicated, motivated, energized toward my boss."	Devalued Insecure Demotivated  "So I think without the recognition that's brought for the work, it's easy to start questioning why am I doing this? Why is this important? Is it really worth it for me to spend an extra 20 minutes at the office or to take this call at 8:00 at night?"	Skepticism Insecure  "At the same time, there was a sense of why are we not hearing it more broadly? Why is the recognition only coming from your boss, and why is it not coming from other departments or other leaders that are in a position to provide feedback or recognition?"	Loss of respect  "Betrayed, disrespected, and undervalued. There was a sense that the trust was broken. You almost felt as if someone had betrayed you or stabbed you in the back. You just felt bad. You felt bad about it"
Participant's lessons learned	"Recognition is most impactful for me when it occurs when you are not there, when it's almost in the form of sponsorship. When you hear from other leaders that your boss was speaking highly of you is the best kind of recognition to me. It's more valuable than sitting in a room and being recognized amongst your peers."						
Researcher's lessons learned	Recognition helps people outside of your immediate team understand your value and contributions to the company.						

**Table 457. Round Two, Participant 24 Analysis**

Participant	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
24. "Pam"  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Mid-Management – Operations	Motivation tool  Work is valued and meaningful  "I had a lot of pride in my work. I felt that they valued and understood the time, commitment and accountability that I had. It just made me feel really good that they understood that."	Encouraged to work harder – do more  "It made me want to do more and it gave me more energy. It helped me to keep going because I got this award and now I have to keep up these standards and expectations."	Increased feeling of manager support  "They appreciated the efforts and the results that I brought to the company. I was aligned with their strategic plan and getting results."	Devalued  Insecure  Not willing to take risks  "I started doubting myself, doubting my value in the department. I was so confused. It really changed my opinion about where I wanted to go in that department."	Devalued  Insecure  Not willing work as hard  "I'm just going to do great, but I'm not going to give 150% anymore."	Loss of respect  "I was really angry and disappointed and probably didn't trust my manager anymore because I could not understand why he had me work on something that significant and didn't recognize me for it. I was angry."
Participant's lessons learned	"Not being recognized for my work makes me question whether I am focused on the right things and that perhaps, I need to get better aligned with my boss."					
Researcher's lessons learned	Manager recognition assures employees that they are aligned with company goals and expectations.					

**Table 468. Round Two, Participant 25 Analysis**

Participant	Recognition outlook	Feelings related to positive recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from positive recognition experience	Feelings related to negative recognition experience	Effect on work resulting from negative recognition experience	Effect on manager resulting from negative recognition experience
25. “JoJo”  Round Two: Member of broader company  Sector: Public Fortune 500 company  Type: Mid-Management – Development	Recognition must be genuine  “You can tell when a manager genuinely recognizes you, you can just tell.”	Motivation tool Work is valued and meaningful  “I’m a Millennial, and we love encouragement. We love positive feedback and pats on the back. So that just makes me feel like I want to keep going on at this company, you know.”	Encouraged to work harder—do more  “I definitely felt like I wanted to charge ahead and keep doing this.”	Devalued  “So I hate when I can’t present my own work. I hate when other people that are above me get to present it.”	Not Affected  “It doesn’t affect my work, honestly. I’m kind of always going to be a go-getter. I want to keep proving to people that I am qualified and a good thinker and I’m strategic and going to get results. I’m still working as hard as ever. It’s not my personality to throw in the towel because I’m very competitive by nature.”	Loss of respect Confusion Not genuine  “She can be a little bit cynical and say that I did an awesome job, but it’s something that makes me question if someone told her to say it to me, because five minutes later, she’ll be like poking holes in everything I just did.”
Participant’s lessons learned	“Millennials were raised with hearing they did a great job all the time. I’m not nearly as bad as people that are ten years younger than me that had to have a trophy for every single sport they played.”					
Researcher’s lessons learned	Age and generational differences must be considered. Some demographics may have higher expectations to be recognized than others.					

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