Tech Mahindra: Best Advance in Employee Recognition Program

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December 2023

Brandon Hall Group
HCM Excellence Award
TALENT MANAGEMENT
GOLD
2023

Company Background

TECH mahindra

Company-at-a-Glance	
Headquarters	Pune, India
Year Founded	1987
Revenue	$ 6.0 Billion
Employees	157000+
Global Scale (Regions that you operate in or provide services to)	Tech Mahindra is a leading global enabler of digital transformation, consulting and business re-engineering services and solutions.
Customers/Output, etc. (Key customers and services offered)	TechM currently has 1200+ active global clients, including several Fortune 500 companies. TechM offers the right blend of physical and digital design, powered by technology. TechM uses digital capabilities to transform client's internal businesses and technology operations and delivers industry-leading outcomes. TechM's solutions help clients accelerate their digital transformation journey by building intelligent and digital-next businesses, backed by next-generation technologies.
Industry	Information Technology / IT Enabled Services
Stock Symbol	NSE: TECHM
Website	https://www.techmahindra.com/

Budget and Timeframe

Budget and Timeframe	
Number of (HR, Learning, Talent) employees involved with the implementation?	2
Number of Operations or Subject Matter Expert employees involved with the implementation?	1
Number of contractors involved with implementation	2
Timeframe to implement	12

Business Conditions and Business Needs

Business Context: Business Context: Tech Mahindra (TechM) as a digital solution provider has scaled up considerably over the past few years with a growing customer base spread across 90+ countries with an employee headcount exceeding 150000. These world-class customers are looking for the best-in-class client services and innovative solutions built using the latest technologies in the market. To do so, TechM requires a talent pool who are skilled, motivated and driven to help the organization become an industry leader. The COVID-19 pandemic ushered in a great demand for digital skills which led to an exodus of employees from the IT industry to other sectors. Arresting this 'Great Resignation' was critical for business continuity.

Recognition — A Basic Requirement: The IT-industry at present is in the cusp of a significant transformation due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the 'Great Resignation' and 'Quiet Quitting' that followed thereafter. In this changing time, it is important to retain talent, future-proof them and nurture them. Organization's commitment to these aspects will attract future talent. TechM understands the knowledge economy and hence, have kept human experiences at the center of everything. This gives the organization an edge over its competitors to attract talent and contain voluntary attrition. TechM's core values of Professionalism and Dignity of Individuals forms the basic foundation of its robust recognition framework. At TechM every individual is recognized for the talent they bring in to drive the business forward while aligning their individuality with the company's purpose, vision, and culture.

Starting right: Respect, appreciation, and recognition have been at the heart of TechM, right from the start. In 1945, the first-ever advertisement of Mahindra Group, TechM's parent organization, talked about the company's five guiding principles. Three of these principles mentioned the following:

- Recognition of the fact that the laborer is worthy of his hire, and that in co-operative working lies the dignity of human toil.
- Confidence in the ultimate success of their ventures, and in the capacity, and aptitude of the people to give effect to them.
- Acceptance of the fact that ability is the sole test of merit and advancement and that neither color, creed, nor caste should stand in the way of harmonious working.

Over years, the expression of recognition has evolved to stay relevant with the times. However, the core principles from 78 years ago continue to drive dignity, trust, and reward at TechM, even today. The Employee Recognition Program at TechM continues to keep people at its heart. With changing times, it has acknowledged and responded to the needs and demographics of its diverse people.
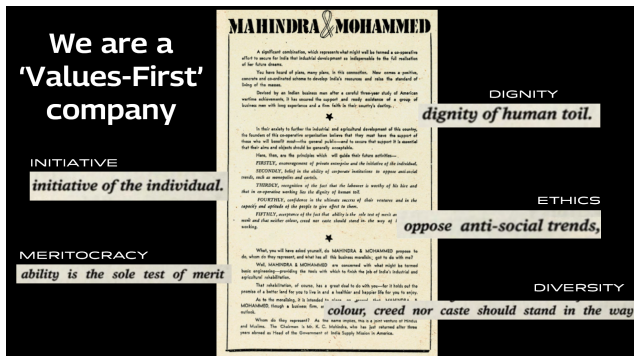
Getting Recognized for the Right Reasons: A large part of TechM's current workforce belongs to a generation (Millennials + Gen-Z) thriving on purpose, technology, and personalized experiences. It seeks social media validation, communication, and proliferation (or simply, likes, comments, and shares). It is further differentiated by geographies, cultures, and time zones. Therefore, the program builds upon a basic sentiment applicable to this generation: It's not just about getting recognized but getting recognized right. What people need, appreciate, and enjoy is the rightness of recognition.

- **Right type (what)**: TechM's recognition framework aims to reward and recognize the employees for the right type of contribution to the business success. TechM recognizes employees for their overall contribution to the organization's values and core purpose.

- **Right time (when)**: Timely recognition is a business necessity and also a right thing to do. This laid ground for TechM to include an instant, timely, and frequent recognition for a job done well instead of shelving it for annual celebrations.

- **Right reasons (why)**: Since recognition is a basic human requisite, and also a business necessity, it should be rationalized. Without a proper rationalization, employees might will not strive to achieve it and thus would defeat the purpose entirely. As a preventive measure to this, TechM has laid clear framework for each of its reward category, thereby making it transparent and clearly defined to the employees.

- **Right platforms (where)**: TechM understood the need to digitize the recognition framework which enables the employees to share their recognitions outside their professional sphere, indifferent social media platforms through a quick-easy single button share option. This allows them to include their communities in their celebration.

- **Right recognizer (who)**: Recognition by the right person adds a great gravitas to the process of rewarding the employees. To translate this to practice, TechM has ensures a flawless inclusion of the highest leadership and management into the recognition framework alongside the employee's immediate mentors and peers.

- **Right manner (how)**: While it is commonly perceived that recognition is mostly related to certificates and monetary rewards, TechM alongside those shows appreciation in a non-conventional way through languages of appreciation (words of appreciation, quality time, acts of service). This has shown to yield a better culture and overall better employee productivity, thereby helping in business growth while creating an employee centric brand.

Appreciate

Building a culture where good **work and behavior** get appreciated every day

Recognize

Creating a mechanism which rewards **tenure**, **performance** and **contribution**

Celebrate

Curating special moments to celebrate **what matters** together with the ones **who matter**

Rewards Philosophy: This quote by William James – 'The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated' – encapsulates TechM's Rewards and Recognition philosophy. This philosophy revolves around appreciating, recognizing, and celebrating

by – building a culture where good work and behavior are appreciated; creating a mechanism which recognizes tenure, performance, and contribution; and curating special moments to celebrate together with the ones who matter. This stems from the human nature to make a difference in the lives of others. When one appreciates a colleague for a job well done or recognizes a peer for achieving extraordinary results or celebrate a professional milestone with another, their own lives are enriched and enhanced. This also stems from the innate desire within every TechMighty to contribute – either through their work or sharing information based on their knowledge or simply doing something to uplift lives of underprivileged in society – to do something useful. This philosophy also recognizes that each TechMighty matters to the organization. They bring unique perspectives to the workplace and celebrating them for all that they do is an expression of the organization's #lovetobeTechM culture. This is underscored by research from the Harvard Business Review that states — "Feeling genuinely appreciated lifts people up. At the most basic level, it makes us feel safe, which is what frees us to do our best work." Through this, TechM is delivering value through a culture of appreciation, the intent to recognize, and hyper-personalized human experiences.

Intending boldly: TechM lives its philosophy of appreciating, recognizing, and celebrating by strategically aligning it with core components of its people function, starting with values (dignity of the individual is one of the five core values of Mahindra Group). It intentionally covers employee value proposition (EVP), culture, and engagement strategy.

- Celebrate is one of the three pillars of Freedom to Explore, TechM's EVP: to Connect (aspirations to achievements), Co-create (new approaches and breakthrough solutions) and Celebrate (seamless blending of life and work).
- Celebrating Each Moment is one of the three tenets of TechM's culture: The TechM Way of Driving Positive Change, Celebrating Each Moment, and Empowering All to Rise.
- Recognition is one of the five components of CARES, (Mahindra Group's and) TechM's engagement strategy aligned to the five dimensions of Career, Alignment, Recognition, Empowerment and Strive.
- To adopt to the 'reset' in the world of work, TechM defined a new Vision 2024 linked to a new TechM NXT.NOW strategy. This strategy for the People Function makes Rewards & Recognition a critical part of building remote engagement.
- The culture of appreciation is reflected in the myriad ways recognition is done within the organization. Right from programs like ShadowBoard, GLC, WLP & Ascend for high-potential individuals to avenues like Josh, Brand Advocates and

Green Marshals for those who like to pursue their passions, recognition is a way of life.

Recognition is the glue that brings the EVP, Culture and Engagement (TechM CARES) together. With these components at the centerstage, TechM has been among the early movers in the industry in developing a global, digital, and human system of rewards and recognition.

EVP

Celebrate is **one of the three** pillars of our EVP

Culture

Celebrating Each Moment is **one of the three** tenets of our culture

Engagement

Recognition is **one of the five** components of our engagement strategy

Evolving continuously: As the world changes, the definition of recognition changes, too. Digital transformation across industries leads to adoption of new technologies, transforming people experiences. The post-pandemic world pushed empathy, connectedness, and care to the centerstage. The new world order and the hybrid ways in which we function today also demands new outlooks in recognition. TechM has

proactively sensed and responded to these disruptions, by refreshing its employee recognition program suitably to stay in sync with the times.

Digital transformation: Recent years were dominated by the pandemic that triggered a change, accelerating digital adoption, and disrupting the way companies work. The rise of technologies like 5G, quantum computing, robotic process automation and data science has led to digital transformation across industries as businesses relied on technology for continuity of services. The demand-supply equation of talent, advent of new digital skillsets improvement in business outlook has caused a disruption. These conditions have cumulatively affected the general mood of the IT industry, resulting in mass resignations. Arresting attrition has suddenly become top priority. Companies have realigned strategics to attract, develop, and retain talent.

Post-pandemic world: The pandemic has changed everything – from what people come looking for to what keeps them hooked on. The post pandemic world has seen an increase in empathy. Companies that realized this sentiment and came up with recognition frameworks that did not just limit to rewards and benefits but extended to human behaviors proved to be more successful than the others. Appreciating, thanking and acknowledging people's contribution emerged as a major game changer in the business. Bottomline is, a timely and appropriately recognized employee feels valued and therefore approaches work with a greater zest. This increases productivity which helps in the growth of the organization.

New world order: In the new world, it has become important to connect recognition with vision. People want to be recognized, more than anything, for having contributed meaningfully to social progress as much as business success. They expect getting recognized in more ways than just monetary and non-monetary rewards. And finally, experiences and moments that matter have replaced traditional forms of appreciation. To sum up, the definition of both why one is recognized, and how one is recognized have changed. The modern employee wants to be told they're good when they've caused greater good – aligned to their company's purpose and values.

"Rewards and recognition have to go beyond the cash we pay out to our associates. That's like having a bottle of water on the table. It's basic expected hygiene, you don't get kudos for that. An R&R program has to go beyond that, and for us at Tech Mahindra it's about creating a culture of appreciation—cultivating a feeling of gratitude, giving back, and sharing. If you can achieve that, that's when you have made a real difference." **– Vrinda Pisharody, Head - Internal Communications and Reward & Recognition, Tech Mahindra**

Overview

Objectives of TechM's reward and recognition framework: A knowledge economy primarily functions on the talent of the employees which is its principal driving force. With the turn of century, the requirements of the workforce have changed significantly. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a heightened need to acknowledge, appreciate, and recognize the contribution of the employees. Timely recognition became the need of the hour. TechM was ahead of the time with a functional rewarding framework in place for its employees. Over the years, TechM has openly advocated the need of having a traditional and non-traditional ways of recognition. The objectives of TechM's recognition program can be summarized as follows:

- Recognize employees who are committed to the Company's growth through their sustained high-quality efforts and excellence.
- Recognize employees who epitomize the values of the organization and are role models to be emulated by their peers.
- To encourage desired behaviors which boost the success and goodwill of the organization.
- Reward employees for participation and contribution in activities of strategic importance, to promote a healthy work-life balance.
- Recognize employees for their continuous and long-term association with the organization through Milestone Award

When holistically looked at, the objectives are categorically placed for meeting the following criteria:

- Recognizing the right behavior through team collaboration
- Recognizing the adherence to the organization's culture
- Recognizing employee's effort to reach excellence by achieving the goals of the company.
- Recognizing the employee's loyalty to the organization through the years of association
- Recognizing success as well as failures
- Recognizing the employee's family's contribution to the employee's work
- Recognizing the employee's efforts to contribute to the society.

Appreciation, Recognition and Celebrations: Recognition is an intrinsic human need. TechM believes in nurturing its employees since they are the central driving force of the organization.

Monetary recognition & non-monetary appreciation: To build a performance-led, high culture, TechM's People Function has adopted a robust reward and recognition system both monetary and non-monetary to appreciate and acknowledge the employees and their community enabling them to drive high-class performance. TechM identified that a recognized and appreciated employee delivers more work thereby positively impacting the business of the organization. In this regard, TechM identified that while monetary awards- which is the traditional form of recognition- form a critical component of the rewards framework, thanking in the form of non-monetary appreciation- which is the non-traditional form of recognition- is equally important.

Recognition for all: TechM's various campaigns and initiatives focus on nurturing an appreciative culture and the company has seen an increase in the wishes and appreciation over the years. TechM have a 360-Degree approach to recognition ensuring top–down, bottom-up and peer-peer recognition going beyond just the traditional manager – subordinate recognition.

Moments that matter: In addition to appreciating and recognizing, TechM creates experiences that make celebrating with the most special individuals possible. People are given opportunities to celebrate with their teams, families, and extended communities. TechM acknowledges that an employee can't function as an individual entity. It requires an entourage to make them deliver the results. It is with this perspective that TechM designed the Amazing Family Awards. It celebrates from recognizing and congratulating a new mother through Jr. TechMighty (known also as Baby Bravo) to including the family in celebrating the Milestone awards for successful completion of every 5 years with TechM.

Celebrating every moment: A huge portion of TechM's population is from the Millennial and GenX generation. These people have a different perspective when it comes to recognition and rewards from their employer. They are the generation of social media sharing. In this, KUDOS plays a big role. KUDOS enables people to share the recognition with the external world with a click of finger. The recognition from KUDOS can be shared to the employee's different social media handles. This lets the employee share their achievement and moment of joy which is one of the aspects of TechM's culture.

n =1 philosophy: Nurturing and amplifying a culture of appreciation was one of the key objectives of TechM's rewards and recognition framework. An appreciative culture ensures a more productive and constructive working environment. It improves teamwork and the overall morale of an employee. TechM understands each individual has a different need, and so it has formulated the n=1 philosophy, that is, the individual at the heart of everything. It is wholly aligned with TechM's larger purpose, vision, philosophy, strategy, and initiatives in other areas like wellness, career, and diversity as well. Simply put, Tech Mahindra acknowledges that appreciation means different things for different people (follow the section on measurable benefits to find out how these goals were achieved). In line with n = 1, the program covers all five universal languages of appreciation to drive a create a culture of recognition across all levels, teams, and geographies. These are:
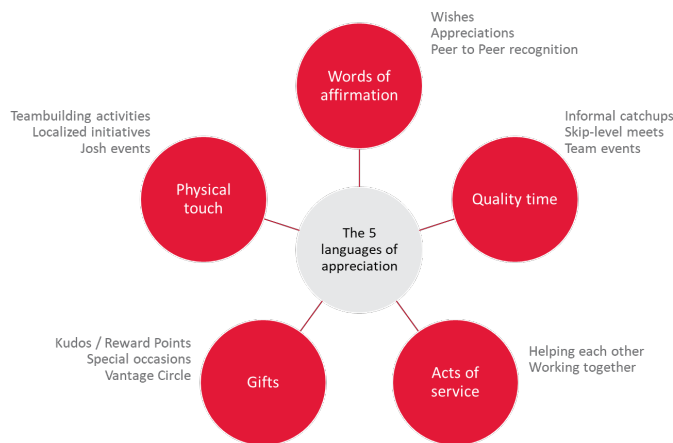
- Words of affirmation wishes, appreciations, peer to peer recognition.
- Quality time: informal catchups, skip level meets, team events.
- Acts of service: helping each other, working together
- Gifts: Kudos, Vantage Circle reward points, special occasions
- Physical touch: team building activities, local initiatives, Josh events.

While people are accustomed to the traditional forms of recognition that involves monetary and non-monetary compensations, it is the non-traditional forms of recognitions that are the real game changer. TechM leverages the universal languages to create a culture of appreciation across all levels, teams, and geographies:

- **Words of Affirmation**: At TechM, recognition is not just about awards and certificates, upon achieving something monumental. The recognition framework is much more than that and deeply rooted with the everyday experiences of the employees. These words of affirmation can be shared through wishes, appreciations and peer-to-peer recognition on the KUDOS portal. It is deeply linked with the culture of the organization: Driving Positive Change, Celebrating Each Moment, and Empowering all to Rise.

- **Quality Time**: TechM believes that an employee feels included and recognized not just when there is a scheduled annual meet involving the leadership and the highest management but on a regular basis. To do this, TechM ensures the employees from the junior and middle management have ample amount of quality time with time with the higher ups through various channels of communications, like informal catchups, skip level meets, and year-long team events.

- **Acts of Service**: To imbibe the spirit of collaboration within the organization, TechM has created frameworks where employees have the opportunity to ask questions, raise concerns, express their perspectives, get involved in decision making and contribute to the growth of the organization as a whole. This sense of camaraderie creates a healthy professional space where employees can thrive together in harmony, helping each other and working together for the bigger organizational goal.

- **Gifts**: While TechM has successfully adapted the non-traditional ways of recognition, it has not altogether discarded the traditional ways too. The KUDOS recognition portal gives employees reward points on earning different rewards badges. These points can be redeemed for goodies or donated to charity.

- **Physical Touch**: Participating in unit specific engagement activities and problem-solving together helps employees share ideas, build trust, and accomplish team goals. The People Function designs programs that connect people across silos and encourages a greater generosity of spirit. This is done through the various team connects, location specific activities and JOSH events.

Mechanisms of Recognition: TechM runs its official rewards and recognition program on a digital platform called Kudos. It connects the entire company globally, and brings

people together to appreciate, recognize and celebrate each other. People can digitally, instantly, and creatively appreciate each other using this platform. KUDOS is TechM's digital rewards and recognition platform that creates a seamless rewards experience to match the expectations of TechM's vibrant and multigenerational workforce. It provides instant recognition and real-time redemption of rewards in line with TechM's culture of celebration. KUDOS enabled TechM to have above industry level budget utilization and rewards penetration. Through the Kudos portal, employees can acknowledge individual/team contribution; congratulate others and thank peers for their recognitions. Any number of appreciations can be given or received. This initiative has helped increase morale and builds a culture of recognition in the organization. The social nature of the Kudos platform enables peer recognition thus helping us build a culture of appreciation. Through KUDOS, employees earn digital badges which sometimes come with rewards points that can either be donated or monetized. Each badge earned praises behaviors displayed in line with organizational culture thereby reinforcing its understanding. Some of the salient features of the recognition program include:

- **360-degree recognition**: Anyone can recognize (and be recognized by) anyone: an open, multidirectional, non-judgmental system of recognition, where appreciation, wishes and rewards flow in all directions.
- **Two-pronged approach on recognition**: TechM's program focuses on building a culture of appreciation (through wishes and appreciations), rewarding performance (through Kudos and awards at the unit, individual, location, organization and group levels) and appreciating milestones (through long service anniversary awards and high-touch experiences)

- **Monetary and non-monetary rewards**: What makes TechM different is the availability of both monetary and non-monetary awards. In fact, TechM reports 64% penetration of non-monetary awards, against an industry average of 20%, testifying what matters the most.
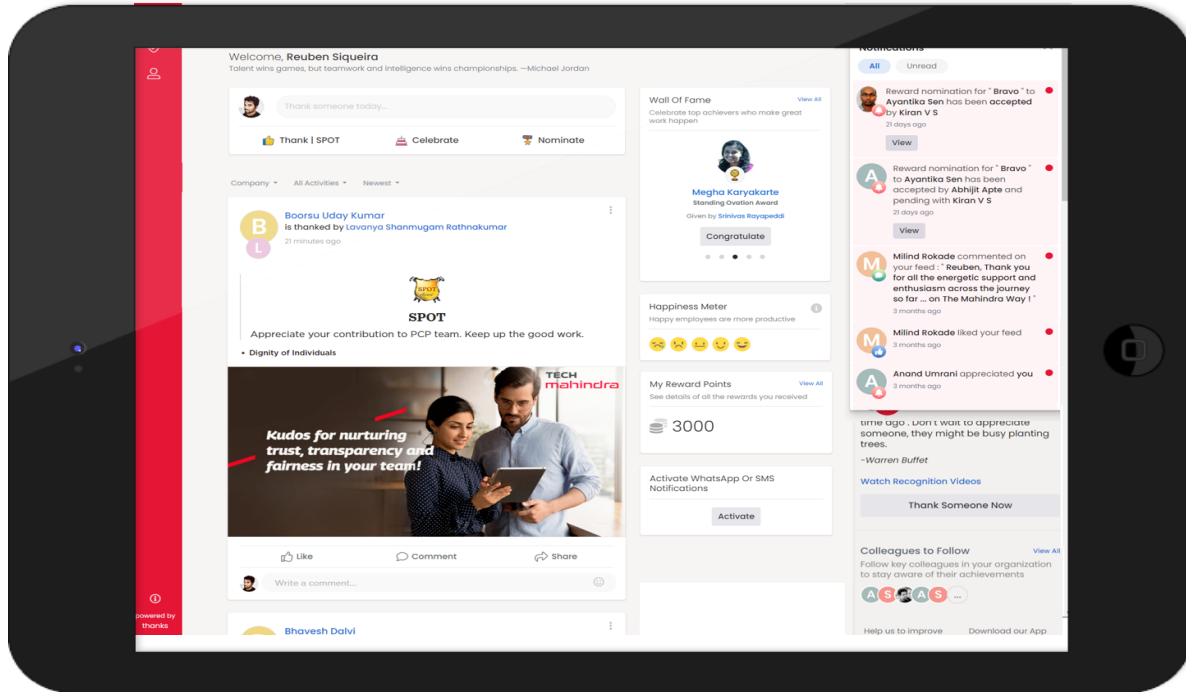
Design and Delivery of the Program

Recognition in the 'New Normal': The jargon surrounding recognition framework in an organization has undergone a major shift owing to the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic on the people. Mental wellbeing has taken precedence, and it has become a major factor in modern lives. Recognition has a direct linkage to the mental wellbeing of an employee since it is an intrinsic human need. A public acknowledgement and appreciation of an individual's effort gives employees a renewed energy to approach work with a keener zest. This in turn yields better result for the organization since a motivated and satisfied talent pool is the key driver of an organization's success. Modern workforce has shown a seismic shift in their criteria of employment. It is no longer solely dependent on compensation and benefits. The new age talent is endowed with a higher Emotional Quotient (EQ). This makes it important for the organizations operating in the present knowledge economy to give out effective messages showing how they value and acknowledge the employee's everyday contribution to the organization's success and growth. A strong and relevant recognition framework helps to serve this purpose. However, all modern organizations have a multi-generational workforce. It is therefore also important to would a recognition program that is relevant for all.

- **Non-traditional recognition framework**: TechM identified this shift in the nature of the workforce. So, in order to cater to the changing needs, TechM has formulated a dynamic recognition program that includes both the traditional and non-traditional forms of recognition. While people are accustomed to the traditional forms of recognition that involves monetary and non-monetary compensations, it is the non-traditional forms of recognitions that are the real game changer. TechM over the last few years have championed this. It does not solely rely on the big budget awards but have successfully created a culture of appreciation and thanking within its ecosystem through the digital portal of recognition- KUDOS. The key to this lied primarily to the People Functions team that enabled a channel of open communication from the top management level to the entry level, encouraging empathetic approach to talent management and encouraging TechM's people manager to have empathetic communication between their employees.

- **Traditional Recognition Program**: While as an organization it is important to adopt non-traditional ways of recognition, it would be wrong to all together discount the traditional recognition framework. A fine balance between the two is the key to the success of the organization. Traditional recognition is done on a grander scale to give the employees and their families to celebrate not just work, but moments of happiness together. In this respect, TechM has bifurcated the recognition framework neatly:
  o Performance awards (awarded through digital platform KUDOS)
  o Organizational awards (awarded on a grand physical event, across various occasions)
  o Milestone awards (recognizes an employee's loyalty to the organization by celebrating their completion of five years (or multiples of 5) with the organization)

Recognizing everyday performance through KUDOS: Through the Kudos portal, employees can acknowledge individual/team contribution; congratulate others and thank peers for their recognitions. Any number of appreciations can be given or received. This initiative has helped increase morale and builds a culture of recognition in the organization. The social nature of the Kudos platform enables peer recognition thus helping us build a culture of appreciation. The rewards can be encashed for experiences and we encourage employees to do so thus creating memories for themselves and their families. We have a comprehensive basket of awards which are designed to be relevant and comprehensive ranging from individual and instantaneous awards like – SPOT to Monthly & Quarterly aggregated awards like Bravo, Pat on The Back, and Standing Ovation, etc. This one-stop platform brings recognition to the "Desk of every Employee". Kudos portal was recently revamped to offer better user interface and redemption options.

- KUDOS is a digital technology platform that creates a seamless rewards experience to match the expectations of a vibrant and multigenerational workforce spread across the globe.
- KUDOS provides instant recognition and real-time redemption of rewards in line with TechM's culture of celebration.
- Employees earning these digital badges are then displayed on a "Wall of Fame". Each badge earned praises behaviors displayed in line with organizational culture thereby reinforcing its understanding.
- Rewards are democratized with all employees being able to appreciate, wish and give a SPOT award while monetary awards going through a one-step approval process.
- KUDOS gives employees the ability to post their wins on personal social media accounts which has increased its appeal with Gen Y&Z.
- All awards have varying reward points assigned. Employees have three options to redeem their KUDOS points – gift vouchers (e-gift/ physical vouchers), cash-outs and pro-social (donation).
- KUDOS has enabled TechM to have above industry level budget utilization and rewards penetration.

Performance Awards: The entire process of Performance Awards starting from defining rewards to allocating budgets to nominating employees for Awards to their approval is executed on the KUDOS portal. TechM has a comprehensive basket of awards, and they are designed to be relevant and comprehensive ranging from individual & instantaneous awards like – SPOT to Monthly & Quarterly aggregated awards like Bravo, Pat on The Back, and Standing Ovation etc. The platform also has specialized awards like Digital Warrior, Best AQTiViST, and Innovation Awards that highlight the organization's business focus and encourage excellence in areas of automation and digital. Other awards like Special Award, Team of the Quarter and Grand Salute ("Livewire" for Technical Excellence and "The Guru" for People Manager) ensure that the core values and Rise tenets are demonstrated and respected. Other awards like Special Award, Team of the Quarter and Grand Salute ("Livewire" for Technical Excellence and "The Guru" for People Manager) ensure that the core values and Rise tenets are demonstrated and respected. All the awards have varying reward points linked with them and employees can redeem these points in the Kudos portal against cash and /or by shopping online. The social nature of the platform enables peer recognition thus helping TechM build a culture of appreciation. These rewards can be encashed for experiences and employees are encouraged to do so thus creating memories for themselves and their families.

The list of Performance based awards is given below:

- **Bravo** : Bravo is awarded for successful completion of a one-time task beyond the call of duty, impacting the Team/Project. This award recognizes employees who are open to taking up challenging assignments, who are quick learners and have demonstrated ability to work enthusiastically with people for issue resolution/special assignments.

- **Pat on the Back (PoB)** : Pat on the Back appreciates employees for their proactiveness in issue resolution and for demonstrating a high level of perseverance. This award recognizes the employees who have the ability to connect with the larger organization and drive positive change within their project.

- **Special Award** : Special Award is a monthly award given to an Individual for overall excellence in delivery or competency demonstrating a high level of value creation to the Business. This is one of the high-ranking award in the rewards portfolio.

- **Innovator of the Month** : This award is given to an employee who has introduced innovative ideas around processes, systems, products, or business challenges.

- **Best Activist** : Managers who strive for adoption of automation solution in their projects, mentor their teams on various solutions /tools and guide them on training & certifications are nominated for this award.
- **Standing Ovation** : Standing Ovation is awarded for exemplary performance demonstrated throughout a given month that results in a hugely positive impact for the business and the organization.
- **Best Team Award** : The Best Team Award is awarded quarterly to teams for demonstrating indomitable team spirit and excellence as a team. leading to exceptional customer feedback, business/process improvement or value-add to the organization as a whole.
- **Digital Warrior** : This award is given to an employee who challenges legacy processes and takes the initiative to improve unit related processes through digital technologies.
- **Grand Salute** - Livewire for Technical Excellence : Livewire is a quarterly award given to an individual who has demonstrated high level of competence in managing the process and technology pillars.
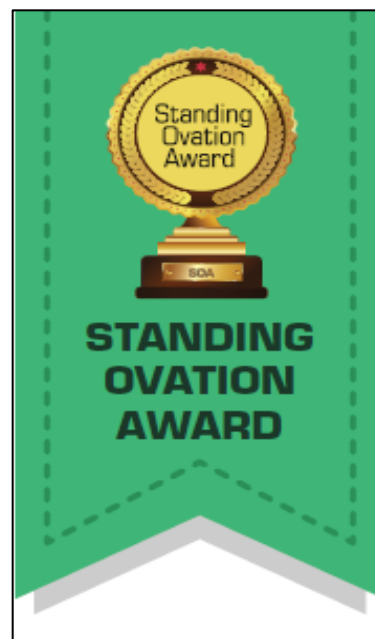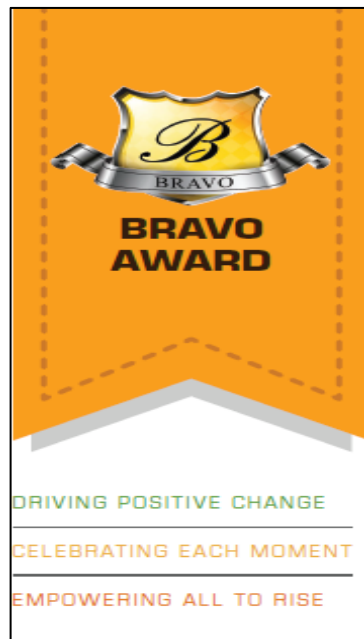
Quarterly

Grand Salute LiveWire
Points Credited: 5000

Grand Salute Guru
Points Credited: 5000

Best Team
500 points (per team member)

Special Award
Points Credited: 10000

Monthly

Innovator of the month
Points Credited: 2000

Standing Ovation
Points Credited: 2500

Digital Warrior
Points Credited: 2500

Best AQTiVist
Points Credited: 2500

On the Spot

Bravo (Cookies)
Points Credited: 500 Points

Pat on the back
Points Credited: 1500 points

Organizational level awards: Annual awards like the Star Awards, Location Awards, Ace Awards etc. have played a large role in boosting the overall happiness of the organization and incentivizing performance since appreciation is a fundamental human need. TechM in order to create a healthy space for employees to thrive and grow have the following organization level awards:

- **Star Awards**: The Star Awards are the apex awards of the organization and thank the top employees and teams for the outstanding work done through the year. A big event is organized where winners and their families are flown in and treated to a special day at an offsite location.

- **Location Awards**: This is to laud employees for their extraordinary contribution in a location level during the annual day. The awards cover a range of contributions from wellness and employee engagement to learning and social contribution. The objective is to provide visibility to the star performers at the location level and recognize and celebrate excellence.

- **Fellowship Awards**: TechMNXT. Fellowship Program was established to honor each year's biggest innovators within the organization. The winners represent TechM as panelist's various technology events and developed & demonstrated (individually) an innovative solution at an external event.

- **Ace Awards**: ACE is a unique program that felicitates outstanding employees in the presence of their family. As part of this program, a personalized letter is sent to the Spouse/ Parents of the ACErs letting them know how proud TechM is of the employee. This is followed by an exclusive felicitation ceremony organized across locations for the ACErs and their family members with the CXOs and the location leaders.

- **Spotlight Awards**: Responding to the pandemic, new quarterly awards were introduced to recognize and incentivize the efforts put in by the teams. Spotlight

awards are Quarterly awards that recognizes and rewards employees for their exceptional contribution to growth and collaboration.

Milestone Awards: The loyalty of an employee is one of the organization's most valuable assets and TechM acknowledges it. It appreciates tenure loyalty personalized hi-touch program for long service anniversaries (5-10-15 etc. years of service) that ensures that the employee is felicitated not just at work but recognized at home too.

5th Anniversary	10th Anniversary	15th Anniversary	20th Anniversary
5000 points	10000 points	15000 points	20000 points
Leave credit: 1 day	Leave Credit: 2 days	Leave Credit: 3 days	Leave Credit: 4 days
(All associates are eligible)	(All associates are eligible)	(All associates are eligible)	(All associates are eligible)

Figure – List of few badges won under the Milestone awards on Kudos.

These exclusive long service awards recognize the dedication, loyalty & contribution of Employees and are designed to ensure increased connect and personalization. The Long Service Award is conferred on employees who have completed 5,10,15,20,25,30,35,40,45,50 uninterrupted years of service. To ensure a 360-degree appreciation, milestone years of the employees are celebrated at work and at home, in digital and physical form. To ensure a 360-degree appreciation, milestone years of the employees are celebrated at work and at home, in digital and physical form.

- **Before the Anniversary**: A congratulatory mail is sent by the Head of Rewards a month in advance intimating them of their anniversary.   While automated emails are sent for other anniversaries, to make Employees feel special on their service anniversaries, their respective managers send personalized greeting mailers to the Employees on the service anniversary date thanking them for their commitment, contribution, and expertise. In order to support Reporting Managers in this activity, the Service Anniversary Mailer system has been digitized wherein system triggered advance intimation emails are sent to the RM from seven days before the actual Service Anniversary date, to remind them about the same. These alerts also contain a draft of the mail to be sent which the Reporting Managers with an option to add a citation to make it personalized.

- **On the Day of the Anniversary**: The employee receives a congratulatory mail from the Manager which is marked to the immediate team and relevant teams which ensures the employee's contribution is also acknowledged by several of his/her

peers. The employee is felicitated in the presence of his peers with the anniversary kit that consists of a beautiful Memento, a certificate, Fridge Magnet, Personalized Lanyard & Lapel Pin

- **Other Goodies**: The employee is given paid leaves, depending on their number of years of service (1 for 5, 2 for 10, etc.)   The employee is given reward points, depending on their number of years of service (5000 for 5, 10000 for 10, etc.). The reward points can be en-cashed in the salary or redeemed for gifts.

Unique aspects of Rewards & Recognitions: TechM recognizes the importance of giving its employees a second chance and hence celebrates failure so that lessons are learnt from them. By including employees' families into its engagement activities, the organization is showing those family members that they are an extension of the 'TechM Family'.

- People Champions :- "People Champions" are Managers (in middle management and above) who nurture their team members, enable them to grow, instill camaraderie to ensure all - Connect, Co-Create and Celebrate together while striving towards achieving the organization's collective goals.
- Celebrating Families: Every year, 2nd October is celebrated as Founders' Day and Family Day at TechM. On this day, employees and their families get together at the office and have a day of celebrations. This is a simple way of saying 'Thank You' to TechM's families.

- o Amazing Family Awards: Amazing Family Awards are TechM's way of publicly acknowledging the talent and achievements of not just TechMighties, but their families as well.
- o Brilliant Student Award: Employee students excelling in Class X and XII are recognized and rewarded on Founders' Day and made to feel special with a certificate and cash award.

Mahindra Veerta Award: Mahindra Veerta Award recognizes selfless acts of bravery by Mahindra employees.

Celebrating Failure: At the core of TechM's employee value proposition is 'Freedom to explore'. TechM provides opportunities for employees to take up greater challenges and they are encouraged to take calculated risks. TechM tries to eliminate the shame around failure and show its okay to be vulnerable. To show that TechM has an award institutionalized for Celebrating failed innovations! The idea is to demonstrate that it's important to take a leap of faith even it fails.

STAR AWARDS
Annual platform that celebrates excellence in various areas like Delivery, Innovation, Solutions, Relationships Growth, Operations and Support

ACE AWARDS
Recognizes employees who have consistent high performance are felicitated in the presence of their families across locations..

LOCATION COUNCIL AWARDS
Annual Awards at locations to celebrate excellence in Innovation, Automation, Digitization, Learning, CSR, Josh and contribution to building the location.

JUNIOR TECHMIGHTY
Celebrating a newborn baby by rewarding employees on becoming a mother along with a personal note from the CPO.

SPOT AWARD
Special praise on time (SPOT) is a peer-to-peer reward on KUDOS to instantly appreciate a positive incident/instance

MAHINDRA VEERTA AWARD
Award to recognize extraordinary acts of bravery (part of Mahindra Group Rise Awards)

LONG SERVICE ANNIVERSARY
Awarded to Associates who complete multiples of 5 years tenure. They receive rewards points on KUDOS, leave credits and a personal memento

AMAZING FAMILY AWARDS
Recognizes outstanding talent of employees and their families in academics and extracurricular activities.

SPOT Award:- Employees are encouraged to motivate and recognize their peers and their managers to create a healthy and transparent working atmosphere. The SPOT Award (Special Praise on Time) is a peer-peer / bottom –up appreciation me4chanism through

which any employee can recognize & thank any other employee for the support extended, irrespective of band, location or unit.

Other ways to recognize talent: TechM celebrates and empowers employees who live the brand philosophy and are change agents.

- **Riseonators as the voice of the people** : Riseonators are internal influencers at who are gifted communicators who listen to people and communicate fresh perspectives on the sentiment within to the local leadership.

- **ShadowBoard for emerging leaders** : ShadowBoard is a parallel board constituted by internal Employees below the age of 35 years who can contribute directly to the strategy of the organization.

- **Location Council for learning to take people-centric decisions**: Location Councils is a group of TechMighties across organizational levels who are part of the decision-making team at the location level. The Location Council drives various formal and informal employee engagement programs, analyze employee engagement trends and provide feedback from the ground to the senior management.

- **Toastmasters Club for those that love to speak**: The Toastmasters Club program is affiliated with Toastmasters International, a worldwide organization that helps people from all walks of life and from all age groups and nationalities, to improve their communication and leadership skills.

- **Josh Communities to inspire fun at work**: Josh is a voluntary group at TechM formed by "life enthusiasts" who run fun, delight and connect events at TechM.

- **Brand Advocates for social media engagement** : TechM identifies employees who are truly passionate, positive and proud to be part of the organization and makes them a part of a unique brand advocacy program to update them with the happenings in organization. They, in turn, promote the same on their internal profiles as well as their external social media platforms.

- **Unique perspective from the Talent Advisory Board** : The Talent Advisory board is a body that provides 'outside-in' perspective on the various strategic initiatives or programs that the HR department plans to launch. This team of employees helps test-drive options before they are implemented across the business.

- **Green Marshal for those that put sustainability first** : Green Marshals are a group of volunteers who actively contribute to "making sustainability personal". Green Marshals are entitled to certification annually for contributing to a cause and are automatically considered to be a part of annual awards & rewards program under corporate sustainability from time to time.

- **Individual Social Responsibility (ISR) for those that want to contribute back to society** : ISR empowers employees to contribute as individuals to the society and causes which are close to them. Under this scheme, employees can donate 1 hour of time (up to 16 hours annually) to contribute to any social outreach project they wish. Through this program employees also participate in several ISR activities that are planned across all the TechM locations such as blood donation, tree plantation, cleanliness drives, bicycle rallies, paint the wall, card making etc. as well as conducting training sessions for underprivileged youth and more under the TechM Foundation.

Integration

Aligned to the TechM way: The Employee Recognition Program is deeply integrated into the TechM way of life. The underlying premise of recognition at TechM is that appreciation is a fundamental human need and a public acknowledgement and recognition of their efforts, one of the biggest motivators for employees. Happy employees are naturally more productive and more engaged. Rewarding the right behavior sets an example for others to follow while improving productivity, enhancing loyalty, and promoting collaboration. Engaged employees also contribute immensely to business. They are more likely to stay with the organization thus reducing overall turnover and the attrition costs. Rewarded employees feel recognized and feel a stronger bond to their organization's mission and purpose, making them more effective brand ambassadors. They build stronger relationships with customers, helping the organization collaborate better and grow faster.

Brand philosophy: At the highest level, is aligned with Rise, the purpose of Mahindra Group, TechM's parent company. The company updated its Kudos platform following a rebranding exercise at the Group level, where the brand adopted refreshed a core purpose, brand pillars and elements. As a result, TechM appreciates people for demonstrating Rise behaviors – rising for a more equal world, rising to be future ready, and rising to create value – and living the purpose of driving positive change in lives of our communities. A shining example of this integration is how people choose to donate their reward points to causes and contribute time in driving social responsibility initiatives.

Quality Framework: TechM uses The Mahindra Way (TMW), a quality management framework by Mahindra Group, to translate its vision into strategy. Through this framework, the People Function has articulated Rewards & Recognition as a key element in its People Strategy, under the functional priority of Employee Engagement and

Wellbeing. With this structure, TechM designs career initiatives with people at the center of its universe.

People practices: It reflects in the ways of working at the company, which are flexible and hybrid. The Wealth of Wellness (WoW) program is another initiative of rewarding people with 8-dimensional health and wellbeing opportunities. The company's early leadership program rewards high-potential, high-performing people with advancement opportunities through diverse initiatives across roles and geographies.

People Strategy: The program is a core component of the People Strategy at TechM. The fundamental question that the Employee Recognition Program tries to answer from the employee's perspective is – "am I special?" TechM does that by aligning the people ecosystem with the needs of the employees to feel special, valued and cared for.

Built in the workflow: The People Function at TechM is committed to celebrating each moment and empowering all to Rise; a commitment that rests on its culture of appreciation. Be it quarterly recognition like the Spotlight Awards or its flagship rewards and recognition program, Kudos, TechM nurtures a culture where managers, peers, and team members alike are encouraged and appreciated for their outstanding work and positive impact. Rewards and recognition play a big role at TechM—the company nurtures appreciation and gratefulness throughout the system. Celebrating is an integral part of the TechM culture. For doing so, TechM has successfully integrated technology in its recognition framework through the robust recognition portal KUDOS. The digital recognition portal allows the employees to say thanks, praise someone or even nominate an employee for awards. This allowed TechM to put in place a timely recognition framework which yielded positive result for the People Function in not just retaining talent but also attracting it. Employees being praised on time showed an increase in the employee's morale which in turn proved to be favorable for business. In a knowledge economy like the IT industry, talent is the key driving force, and it therefore becomes a business imperative to acknowledge their effort.

Recognition for a Multi-Generational workforce: Over the years, TechM has grown significantly in terms of employee strength. This resulted in bringing talent from various walks of life. Given the diversity of the workforce, it was important to have a rewards program that resonated and catered to all stakeholders while addressing business needs as well. A majority of the internal stakeholders are Millennials/Gen Z, and they required a reward framework that was digital & instant, catering to their extended families and addressing a social purpose. With respect to rewards, TechM focuses on personalization and what motivates each individual to Rise. TechM believes in crafting personalized experiences instead of spending on lavish awards like international MNC or product

companies who have deep pockets, because it is not sustainable to compete where the headcount is 10 times lower, and budget is 10 times higher. Recognizing performance, nurturing an appreciative culture, celebrating achievements and urging the right behavior is an integral part of the TechM culture. The Rewards and Recognition framework at TechM recognizes employees and teams who have achieved outcomes by living the core values of the Mahindra Group.

KUDOS For Calamity: TechM's recognition framework is aligned to the core values of the organization and Rise tenets. It acts as a way of reinforcing the actions and behaviors that it wants its employees to display. This 360-degree framework includes appreciating employees, customers, housekeeping staff and the communities TechM works in. TechM's core purpose is to 'drive positive change in the lives of our communities.' In alignment with this, TechM opened the KUDOS platform for its employees to help the communities in time of needs. The KUDOS portal enabled a special feature that gave employees an opportunity to donate KUDOS points, leaves and portions of their salary using the KUDOS portal. The points were converted into monetary units and donated to the communities in times of their need.

Rewards and Recognition aligned to strategy: The People Function at TechM is committed to celebrating each moment and empowering all to Rise; a commitment that rests on its culture of appreciation. Be it quarterly recognition like the Spotlight Awards or its flagship rewards and recognition program, Kudos, TechM nurtures a culture where managers, peers, and team members alike are encouraged and appreciated for their outstanding work and positive impact. Rewards and recognition play a big role at TechM—the company nurtures appreciation and gratefulness throughout the system.

Recognition as a part of Talent Management strategy: TechM's People Function translated the organization's vision into people strategy using The Mahindra Way (TMW) Framework for quality management used at the Mahindra Group. Through this framework, the People Function has clearly articulated "Rewards and Recognition" as a key element in its People Strategy under the functional priority of "Employee Engagement and Well-being". TechM's career development initiatives are designed to keep the employee at the 'center of the universe'. Since the performance of its employees is the key driver to the growth of the company there is a lot of focus and efforts made to ensure that it is well thought through, holistic, transparent and fair. TechM has also designed it to be flexible to cater to the different needs of the different segments of its employees as well as to be real-time and relevant. TechM is committed to institutionalizing programs that TechM's employees need for their professional development and growth. TechM addresses leadership development through multiple dimensions - Programs that are

aligned to competencies and roles; Programs aligned to leadership skill development; Hi-potential fast track programs etc. Some of TechM's flagship programs include Young CEO, 1000 Leaders, Shadow Board, Achievers in the Making (AIM), Global Leadership Cadre (GLC), LEAP, Women Leaders program etc. that enable it to identify key talent and ensure a fast-track career path for them. Thus, employee selection for specified leadership development programs acts as a mode of recognition and aids in employee retention.

Rewards and Recognition in Employee Engagement Framework: TechM CARES is the engagement framework that is used to align all functional initiatives and programs. TechM also measures the success of its People initiatives through an annual internal employee engagement Survey- Tech MCARES across 5 key engagement dimensions levers viz., Career, Alignment, Recognition, Empowerment, and Strive (CARES)- as a formal process of obtaining structured inputs and insights from its employees. These insights enable the stakeholders who drive employee engagement to work towards increasing engagement levels through effective action planning. Based on the recommendations of the Action Planning Councils interventions are identified against each of the engagement levers with defined objectives, action required action owners, outcomes and outcome measures and expected closure dates. Subsequently, the implementation of each of these action items becomes one of the top priorities for the organization and is tracked closely by the senior leadership.
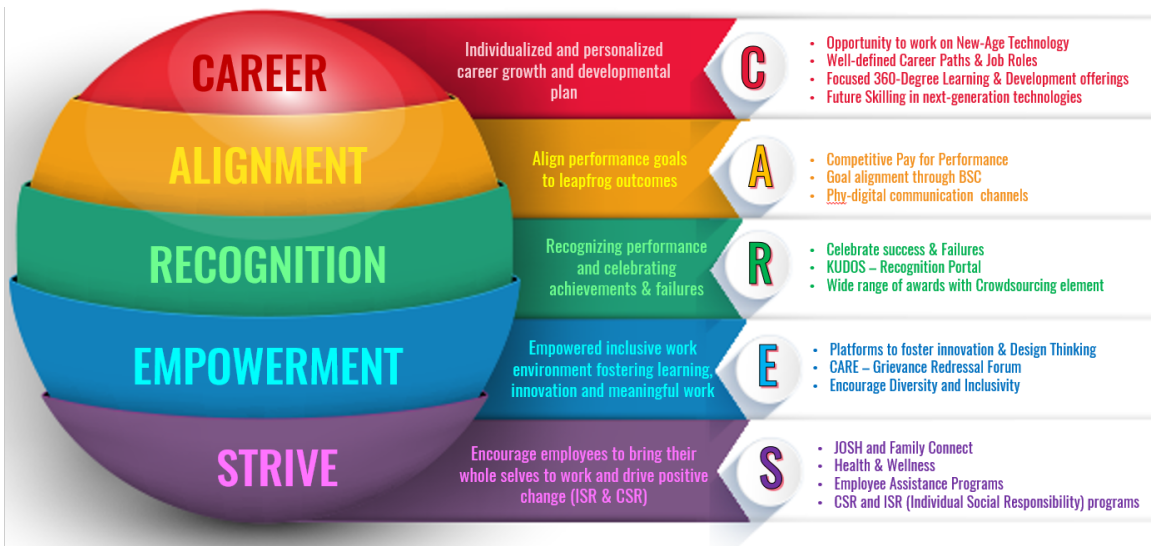
The Recognition dimension is all about recognizing performance and celebrating achievements as an integral part of the culture where every act of contribution is noticed and acknowledged. The aim is to recognize individuals and teams who have achieved significant business outcomes by living the core values and exhibiting Rise behaviors. From the employee's perspective, the Recognition dimension aims to answer the question – Do I feel special? Hence, the People Function strives to align the organizational ecosystem to make employees feel special and cared for. There are myriad ways through which this is done right from connecting with leaders, including families, celebrating failures, learning new skills etc. to innovating and delighting customers, all guided by the Employee Value Proposition – Freedom to Explore.

Specialty of TechM's Recognition Program: While the traditional recognition framework of an organization usually involves giving employees with benefits and rewards- be it monetary or non-monetary, TechM looks at it through a different perspective.

Recognizing the value of Opinions: An organization can merely run with the ideas and insights of the C-suites, but to make it a successful organization it is important to consider inputs from all. Not just inputs, but criticism too. TechM values the importance of this process and introduced a channel of communication with top leaders like the CEO and CPO through CEO connect, CPO connect (Ask-Harsh- Anything). Through these channels, the employees can pitch ideas, suggest changes, and asks questions on any topic involving TechM.

AI Coach: TechM has successfully integrated technology across all facets of the People Function, and everyday functionality of an employee's lifecycle at TechM. This has facilitated communication. AI Nudge has helped managers in everyday communication to their employees. It identifies usage of strong language and sends a pop-up to correct it.

This allowed to cultivate a sentiment of compassion and affection enhanced employee delight across TechM.

Recognizing Parents as Hero's: TechM realizes the contribution of family in an employee's everyday work life. Especially the children of the employee. To recognize their contribution, TechM has launched an initiative: My Parent, My Hero. This enables children to see the work their parents do at TechM and how it all adds up to the larger organizational picture.

Manager Sensitization Program: Managers have the most crucial role to play in an employee's workday. They can set the mood and tone right or can change it completely. Due to this, TechM has introduced organization wide manager sensitization program to practice empathy and be sensitive to the need of their employee. Recognizing the need to be more humane and sensitive is a crucial aspect of TechM's recognition framework.

"The differentiation that TechM has is in its belief that n=1, that is everybody is special. In a hybrid work scenario, it's more important than ever to appreciate, recognize and celebrate the work our associates do. Because everyone is special." –
**Harshvendra Soin, Global Chief People Officer & Head Marketing, Tech Mahindra**

Measurable Benefits

Chalking out priorities for the Recognition Program: With a belief in that an employee recognition program should have a greater purpose, TechM identified key areas that the program would address. It prioritized the following aspects for consideration while measuring the return on investment of the program :

- **Creating a culture of appreciation**: Communication regularly ensured people understood the value of thanking each other, even for smaller things. On Kudos, components like Wall of Fame and SPOT (Special Praise on Time) led to increased non-monetary appreciations and monetary awards. This led to an overall increase in the number of people getting appreciated.

- **Ensuring timely recognition**: Nudging business leaders to utilize recognition budgets and appropriately reward their teams throughout the year – and not at the end of it – helped TechM achieve industry-leading figures.
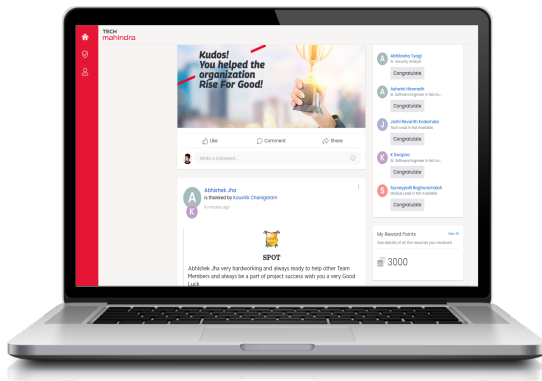
- **Rewarding right behaviors**: Promoting differentiated recognition badges for behavior (for example, Pat on the Back for proactive issue resolution, Standing Ovation for exemplary performance, Best Activist for adopting automation solutions, and Digital Warrior for improving processes using digitalization) excited people about getting rewarded for reasons beyond just performance and tenure.
- **Encouraging social sharing**: Prompt alerts about easily, immediately, and seamlessly sharing their recognition with digital communities helped people keep their worlds within and outside TechM connected and earned them additional praise from the external networks for their good work at the company.
- **Making a difference**: Creating avenues to make one's good work do good to society also, and campaigning for it suitably drove people to become a part of socially responsible activities. Through donations, volunteering, and support-in-kind, TechM employees stepped up regularly to support social causes, pandemic relief, and disaster rehabilitation work.

Impact of Rewards and Recognition: Recognizing those that Rise at T-E-C-H-M

- Thriving in an appreciative culture - Industry leader in appreciation with 73.85% recognition penetration
- Ensuring timely recognition = Thematic R&R campaigns means industry leading 99.7% utilization
- Concentrated organizational spotlight - Programs at unit & organizational level to motivate high-performers.

- Helping with social outreach - Employees donate rewards points towards social causes.
- Managing the right behavior - Differentiated badges and hyper-personalized incentives

Impact of TechM's Recognition Program: TechM reports the impact of its Employee Recognition Program under three broad areas. It measures how the program makes people want to stay, keeps them engaged, and inspires them to make the world a better place.

- **Increasing retention**: The program made people choose TechM as their preferred employer, day after day. The culture of appreciation, recognition, and celebration led to the company recording progressive growth in retention numbers over time. TechM closed for the quarter ending December 2022 with a peer-leading retention rate of 86% (annualized).
- **Improving engagement**: TechM reported a progressive, sustained increment in employee engagement, measured using the Mahindra Group's universal CARES strategy framework. CARES is a group-level tool that aggregates employees' structured feedback to understand the company's strengths and weaknesses as an employer, collects their suggestions on enhancing employment experience, and generates insights for future action planning. An online survey captures people's feedback across five dimensions five areas, namely, Career, Alignment, Recognition, Empowerment, and Strive, and subdimensions therein. In the latest annual survey, TechM recorded a score of 4.58 on 5, the highest ever in the company's history.
- **Building a better world**: The differentiating components of the employee recognition program, such as time off for supporting social causes, or the choice of donating reward points for building a better world, helped TechM drive positive change at a deeper level. The individual social responsibility (ISR) program, which encourages people to make a difference in the world in their capacities, saw consistent growth. In FY23, TechM recorded an 808% increase (from 821 to 7455) in the number of unique volunteers, which led to a 49% increase (from 31,884 to 47,525) in the number of volunteering hours. Additionally, TechM employees donated more than ₹17,00,000 from their reward points to support social causes.

Numbers: TechM enjoys a leadership position among industry peers in employee recognition. Here is a snapshot of the success of the program (in numbers), that support the above impact:

- 99.97% utilization of rewards
- 73.85% monetary and non-monetary recognition percentage (industry average: 58%)
- 64% non-monetary appreciation percentage (industry average: 20%)
- 57% login penetration (industry average: 52%)
- 51% monetary reward penetration (industry average: 38%)

The Employee Recognition Program effortlessly drove Tech Mahindra into a new era where recognition is a business imperative – it doesn't just keep people together, happy and engaged, but also helps them do well – for themselves, the company, and the society.

Overall

Appreciating, Recognizing, and Celebrating Employees: The Objective of TechM's employee recognition programs is to reward outstanding achievement at work; tenure loyalty. The recognition framework also highly encourages a culture of appreciation and drive positive change across all stakeholders. This is framed in perfect alignment with TechM's culture tenet to serve the bigger business purpose: To drive positive change in the lives of our communities.

In summary, the framework can be explained as follows:

- Recognizing the right behavior
- Recognizing adherence to the company's culture
- Recognizing employee's efforts
- Recognizing employee's loyalty to the company
- Recognizing success as well as failure
- Recognizing the contribution of an employee's family to their work
- Recognizing employee's contribution to the society

Instilling recognition as a culture: TechM engages a multitude of special initiatives in further integrating employee recognition as a part of the overall people practice. These initiatives go beyond traditional rewards and recognition, and impact people in altogether different ways. Some of these include:

- **The power of ideas**: TechM builds upon the collective power of people's ideas and is not limited by the experiences of the CXOs alone. It encourages people to participate in ideating for the whole company and welcomes constructive criticism from everyone. Through initiatives like Connect with the CEO, Ask the CPO Anything, leadership meets and townhalls, and multiple crowdsourcing teams (named and anonymous), TechM invites new ideas to build a better company. The reward for the people lies in their questions getting answered, suggestions being heard and ideas taking form to make an impact.

- **The impact of nudges**: One of the biggest reasons for people to stay or leave is their immediate manager. An appreciative manager goes a long way in ensuring people are happily and productively engaged than any other form of recognition in a company. Acknowledging this important aspect of employment, TechM invests in several unique tools. For example, the AI Nudge is a tool that identifies the use of strong language in email communications and coaches the managers to be softer, compassionate, and considerate. The Manager Sensitization Program teaches managers to be more sensitive towards the needs of the people. The People Care Managers is an initiative that frequently coaches people to be better managers and recognize their teams in different ways.

- **The value of connects**: When your family finds out how special you are to your company, your joy doubles. Building upon this valuable, TechM runs several recognition initiatives that directly connect with people's families. For example, through Josh's fun, connect and delight initiatives, the company makes families a part of people's celebrations. My Parent My Hero is another initiative which makes children feel proud of their parents as they spend a day at their workplace, getting to meet their parents' colleagues, managers, and teams, and understanding how they help in making TechM successful.

Challenges: Recognition in an organizational context can be loosely defined as giving employees positive feedback on achieving something good within the scope of their profile or sometimes beyond. Recognition need not necessarily be a monetary reward or a quantitative transaction. A timely shoutout for a task done well can also suffice the purpose. It motivates the employees to work further, knowing that the organization acknowledges their contribution. However, building a recognition framework is a difficult task with the following challenges:

- **To make it worthwhile**: Recognition is a critical organizational strategy. Especially when dealing with the modern workforce, recognition is necessary to retain talent. Employees do more than just work for compensation and benefits. There is an inherent need to feel valued and recognized for their work to drive the organization forward. With the present culture, employees have an idea of this too. The challenge comes to make it worth striving for rather than something that is given to all generally.
- **Finding the right chord**: Managers are responsible for recognizing the employees for their contribution to the company's growth. However, this is a task since one must find the right chord- recognition should not look like generous giving, nor should it look miserly. Finding the right balance while making it worthy to be given becomes a challenge.
- **Driving a culture of appreciation**: Recognition should not be a one-time yearly phenomenon for successfully achieving the KRAs, going beyond the call of duty, or a major phenomenon. Rather it should be a part of the everyday workflow. Building a culture of appreciation is difficult to incorporate, but once established within an organization, it shows great results for the organization and its people.
- **Availability of vendors**: TechM's recognition framework expands across all its territories. This allows uniformity in the system. However, finding vendors servicing across territories with the same line of products is a challenge, given the

budget and the economy of the various countries in which TechM currently operates.

Lessons Learnt: Appreciation is a fundamental human need, and public acknowledgment and recognition of the employee's efforts is one of the biggest motivators for employees. Happy employees are naturally more productive and more engaged. However, appeasing a large pool of employees from diverse backgrounds is not an easy task to achieve. Creating a stringent recognition framework will do companies more harm than the other way around. TechM has been mindful of this in all the years of its function and development. In an effort to create a more agile and flexible recognition system, TechM has tactfully adopted non-traditional ways of recognition alongside traditional ways of awards, bonuses, incentives, and promotions.

In doing so, it has learned the following lessons:

- **Say no to generic strategy**: It is an archaic idea to fit the diverse pool of employees in any single framework, let alone the recognition framework. The rewards and recognition framework has to be dynamic to cater to employees belonging to various generations of geographical territories. A one-size-fits-all approach does not work for the modern workforce. To make it appealing, TechM has learned to customize it as per the requirements of the time. More importantly, TechM values experience over monetary encashment. This compelled TechM to customize employee experiences in its dynamic reward and recognition framework.

- **Company Culture is a differentiator**: Organizations have seen a seismic shift in the mentality and attitude of the present-day workforce. Salaries and compensations are not the only deciding factor in attracting talent. An organization's culture and outlook on society have become key to selecting an organization. This makes it important for organizations to create a culture of appreciation within their ecosystem. With a like-minded workforce, it becomes easy to communicate the non-traditional methods of recognition.

- **Frequency of Recognition**: Recognition should be a frequent and timely practice within an organization's ecosystem. Since recognition is a means of motivation, it should not be kept as a bottled-up event once every year. Rather it should be juxtaposed with all major and minor achievements and good deeds. TechM understands this and incorporated SPOT (Special Praise on Time) awards to introduce a culture of appreciation throughout the organization.

Future of Rewards and Recognition: Recognition and appreciation are intrinsic human needs. Organizations have begun to realize the need to develop an appreciative culture within their ecosystem to enhance employee delight and satisfaction. Especially with the disturbing effect of the COVID-19 pandemic, appreciating and recognizing employees for their contribution to the organization's growth became even more important. Various survey results surfaced during the pandemic, indicating the need for recognition and its impact on employee retention and overall satisfaction. Glassdoor's Employee Appreciation Survey shows 53% of people said feeling more appreciation from their boss would help them stay longer at their company. This calls for a better recognition framework while inculcating a timely recognition and appreciation culture. Keeping this in mind. TechM has plans to do the following as a future of its Employee Recognition Program:

- **Integrating Recognition Portal in Outlook**: To increase the culture of appreciation and create a seamless experience, TechM is working to integrate its recognition portal within Outlook. This would save people time to traverse across portals to appreciate, thank or even give shoutouts for a job done well.
- **Exploring External Vendor**: TechM uses a 3rd party portal- KUDOS, as its Recognition Platform. It helps connect and celebrate milestones and achievements. Employees can be connected seamlessly and appreciate, wish, and nominate their teams and colleagues for awards and recognition. However, with the changing needs of the workforce, TechM is exploring other platforms with enhanced recognition features for an even more seamless experience for TechM employees.
- **Business with Purpose**: Today's workforce believes in businesses giving back to society and will join and leave companies if that purpose is not met. So, it is important to give avenues and opportunities to contribute to society and recognize that contribution.

Employee Testimonials:

"I appreciate the trust that TechM puts in us, the respect for the efforts and the Ideas First Result Next mentality. We may encounter failures or success equally, but we are encouraged to learn from it. Last year, we worked really hard to make a project pitch for a customer. Unfortunately, we lost the project right around the appraisal cycle. Like with my previous experience with other IT companies, we expected to get released and it would have a direct impact on our rating. Happy to say that we were wrong. Kudos to trust that our management put in us which led us to working on a new assignment under the same client which we have turned into a success story." – **Venkata Sai Chintada, CDU-DA-ASV,**

"When I received the mail from my manager, I felt like I am being paid for my hard work. But the best part is when everyone around you comes to know about your merit and greeting you for that. This feeling is totally unexplainable and the most valuable for me. There were no bounds to happiness when being cheered up by people I know. Points Redemption is a very good aspect in KUDOS. It helps us to redeem our points by various means." – **Haripriya Kamarajugadda, Bangalore, CPEG, Tech Mahindra**

"It was really a good experience. My team recognized me for this, and this reinforced my belief in myself and my people strategy. I got KUDOS points with help of which I purchased book which helps me build knowledge and remind me that the company has recognized me" – **Suresh Samudrala, Hyderabad, HREL , Tech Mahindra**

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