

### The Carrot Principle (2007)

In *The Carrot Principle*, Adrian Gostick and Chester Elton blend scientific research with good old common sense to provide managers with the tools they need “to engage their people, retain talent, and accelerate performance.”

The authors examined the findings from a 200,000 person study conducted by the Jackson Group over 10 years. Their discovery? The factor that has the greatest impact on productivity, employee satisfaction, and profitability is “purpose-based recognition.”

Gostick and Elton make the case that most managers do not recognize their people well. In fact, they identify 22 common reasons managers give for not doing so. Yet the research they cite is clear – managers who do not recognize their people, do so at their own peril. Managers who take the time to get to know their people and offer meaningful, heartfelt recognition succeed in motivating their people and retaining key talent.

The authors note that managers who are strong in “the Basic Four areas of leadership – goal setting, communication, trust, and accountability – are also managers who achieve the highest results. They are top performers because they understand that publicly recognizing achievements and performance is critical to motivating people. And effectively motivating people is critical to organizational productivity and profitability.

Much like Kouzes and Posner’s *Encouraging the Heart*, the book includes 125 practical means for recognizing employees. These ideas range from no financial cost – for example, saying good morning to each person and calling her by name – to items that require a moderate investment – for example, allowing an employee to remodel her office at corporate expense.

*The Carrot Principle* is an effective reminder for managers that nothing gets done without people. Recognizing those people is critical for both individuals and the organization to remain top performers.