

KUDOS. CULTURE GUIDE

# Kudos 2026 Celebrations Calendar

Your essential tool for building a vibrant and engaged workplace throughout the year.



2026

## What's inside

Keeping track of every meaningful workplace celebration can be overwhelming. From heritage months to appreciation days, this curated calendar helps you plan purposeful initiatives that strengthen your employee experience and drive engagement. Think of this calendar as your year-long culture companion packed with ideas, reminders, and inspiration to help your people feel valued, seen, and supported all year round.

In this calendar, each month includes ideas to spark recognition, boost morale, and align your people strategy with the moments that truly matter. Designed for HR leaders, the 2026 Celebrations Calendar makes it easy to turn everyday moments into meaningful recognition, because your culture deserves to be celebrated every single day.

Stay up to date by [joining our newsletter](#) community and get more exclusive content and updates all year long.

[Subscribe](#)



# JANUARY 2026



# Celebrations in January

THU  
1

## New Year's Day



SAT  
17

## International Mentoring Day

International Mentoring Day is dedicated to celebrating and raising awareness of the powerful impact mentorship can have on individuals and communities. At its best, mentorship can help people grow in confidence, build skills, and see new possibilities for their future.

### HR Tip



Kick off the year with a clear picture of where your culture stands. Review last year's engagement data, feedback, and surveys to identify what worked, and what needs refining. Set your HR goals around employee well-being and culture growth, not just operations.

### Recognition Tip



Start the year on a strong note by sending "Welcome to 2026" appreciation messages. Encourage leaders to recognize teams for setting goals and to set the tone for a culture of appreciation in 2026.

MON  
19



## Martin Luther King Jr. Day

*U.S. Federal Holiday*

Martin Luther King Jr. Day is observed in the U.S. as a federal holiday to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a prominent social activist in the American Civil Rights Movement. This day is also known as Civil Rights Day or Human Rights Day.

# FEBRUARY 2026



# Celebrations in February

MON  
2

Groundhog Day



WED  
11

## International Day of Women and Girls in Science

International Day of Women and Girls in Science is recognized by The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to promote equal access and gender equality for women and girls in science.

SAT  
14

Valentine's Day



## Black History Month

Black History Month is an annual observance dedicated to celebrating the achievements, contributions, and rich cultural heritage of Black people in America, Canada, and beyond. The month honors key figures and events in Black history, highlighting the struggles and triumphs of the Black community throughout history. It serves as a platform to raise awareness, promote understanding, foster appreciation, and encourage reflection.

MON  
16

Family Day

*(Most Canadian Provinces)*

## Recognition Tip



Valentine's Day and Random Acts of Kindness Day make February perfect for peer-to-peer appreciation. Encourage employees to send "thank-you" messages to colleagues who've supported them — no big gestures, just genuine gratitude.

MON  
16

**Presidents' Day**  
*(U.S., Federal Holiday)*

MON  
16

**National Random Act of Kindness Day**



TUE  
17

## Lunar New Year

### *Year of the Horse*

The Lunar New Year marks the first new moon of the lunar calendar year. Often associated with Chinese New Year, it also encompasses Korean, Vietnamese, and other Southeast Asian celebrations, each with unique customs. In 2026, Lunar New Year falls on Tuesday, February 17, with festivities ending at the Lantern Festival on March 3. Chinese New Year also signals a zodiac shift: 2026 is the Year of the Horse, following 2025's Year of the Snake.



TUE  
17

## Start of Ramadan

*(Ends March 19)*

### HR Tip



Employee Appreciation Day (Friday, March 6) is coming up! Now is the time to get a head start on planning and approvals for any initiatives and activities for this special day. Here are [20 Ideas to Celebrate Employee Appreciation Day](#). Follow [Kudos on LinkedIn](#) for more Employee Appreciate Day resources.

# MARCH 2026

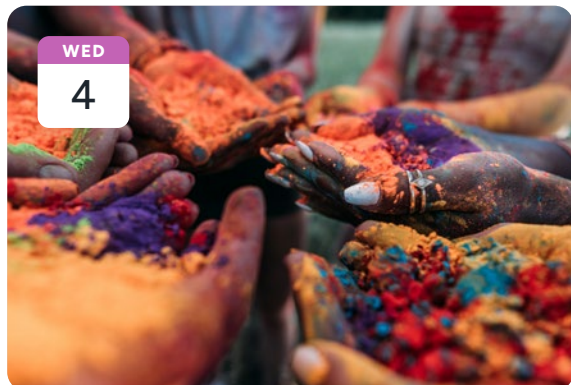


# Celebrations in March

## HR Tip



It's Employee Appreciation Month! As recognition starts to flow this month, use this time to refresh your rewards and recognition strategies. Make sure managers are equipped with what they need to make recognition easy and meaningful.



## Holi (Hindu)

Holi is a popular and significant Hindu festival celebrated as the Festival of Colors, Love and Spring. In the workplace it can be honored by inviting colleagues to learn about its meaning and spirit of joy, inclusion, and new beginnings.



## Women's History Month



## Employee Appreciation Day

**Employee Appreciation Day** is a special occasion for recognizing the hard work, dedication, and contributions of employees in the workplace. Employees should be recognized all year long, but this day provides employers with an opportunity to show extra appreciation. Employee Appreciation Day serves as a reminder of the value that each individual brings to the success of their team and their organization.

## Recognition Tip



Make Employee Appreciation Day a full-month celebration. Host daily mini-challenges: gratitude walls, shoutout chains, or a "Thank You" Slack thread. Encourage executives to send personal notes of appreciation to every department.



SUN  
8

### International Women’s Day

International Women’s Day (IWD) has been celebrated since the early 1900s and serves to honor the achievements and contributions of women around the globe.

FRI  
20

### International Day of Happiness



TUE  
31

### International Transgender Day of Visibility

TUE  
17

### St. Patrick’s Day

THU  
19

### End of Ramadan

**APRIL** 2026

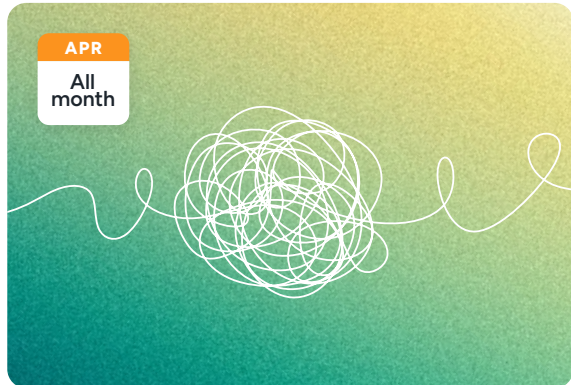


# Celebrations in April

## HR Tip



With Stress Awareness Month and World Health Day upon us, this is the ideal time to assess well-being programs. Remind your team of EAP availability (if applicable), promote mindfulness initiatives, and remind your teams of the health benefits and resources available to them to promote well-being in your organization.



## National Stress Awareness Month

National Stress Awareness Month is dedicated to raising awareness about the impact of stress on mental and physical well-being. During this month, various initiatives aim to promote stress management techniques, mindfulness practices, and overall mental health awareness to help individuals cope with stress in their daily lives.



Good Friday



Easter Sunday



## World Health Day

World Health Day is a global observance that emphasizes the importance of world health and well-being. Established by the World Health Organization (WHO), this day serves as a platform to raise awareness about health issues and mobilize support for initiatives that address global health challenges.



Earth Day





### **Administrative Professionals Day**

A day to recognize and thank administrative professionals for keeping the workplace running smoothly with their skill, care, and dedication.

### **Recognition Tip**



Recognize your administrative and support staff this month — they’re the backbone of organizational efficiency. Create a shared “Thank You Board” (digital or physical) where employees can post appreciation notes for office heroes.

**MAY** 2026

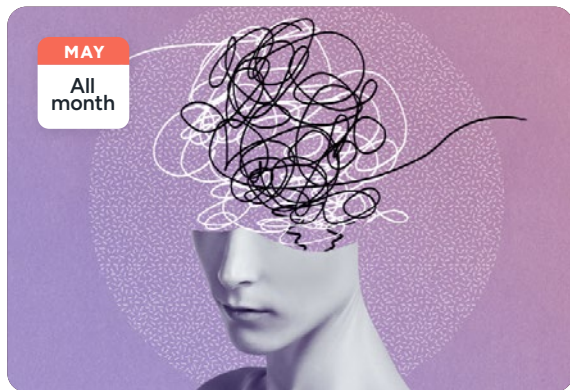


# Celebrations in May

## HR Tip

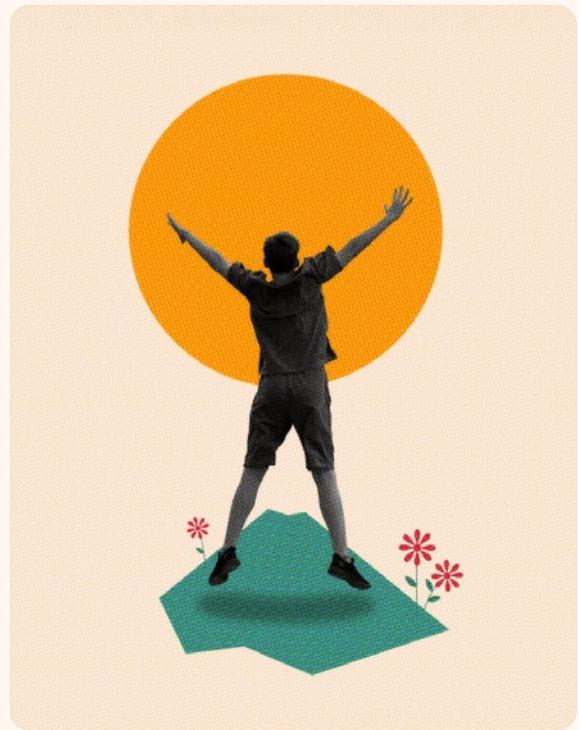


Employees thrive when their employers care; they can show up to work as their authentic selves because they know they're valued and supported. Encourage leaders to model vulnerability, talk about burnout, and share resources that promote a balanced workplace. Browse through our [well-being blog section](#) to learn more and get inspired.



## Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Awareness Month is dedicated to increasing public understanding of mental health issues, reducing stigma, and promoting overall well-being. The goal is to emphasize that mental health is an integral part of overall health and to encourage teams to prioritize mental well-being, seek help when needed, and work towards creating a more supportive and compassionate workplace for everyone.



## Recognition Tip



Pair recognition with well-being: host a "Recognition & Recharge" day. Send recognition messages paired with time-off tokens or self-care rewards. Reinforce that recognition also means respecting and prioritizing rest.



TUE  
5



**Cinco de Mayo**

SUN  
10

**Mother's Day**

TUE  
12

**International Nurse's Day**

MON  
18

**Victoria Day**  
*(Canada)*

MON  
25

**Memorial Day**  
*(U.S. Federal Holiday)*

MAY  
All month



**Asian American & Pacific Islander  
Heritage Month**  
*(U.S.)*

**Asian Heritage Month**  
*(Canada)*



**JUNE** 2026



# Celebrations in June

## HR Tip



Celebrate diversity and inclusion. **Pride Month** and Juneteenth are opportunities to highlight allyship and cultural learning. Facilitate inclusive storytelling sessions or spotlight employee resource groups.



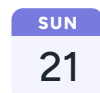
## Pride Month

Pride Month is a time dedicated to recognizing and honoring the LGBTQIA2S+ community, as well as raising awareness about the ongoing struggles for equal rights and acceptance. Pride Month serves as a platform for celebrations, parades, and events that promote visibility, inclusivity, and the rights of individuals. Beyond festivities, Pride Month encourages ongoing dialogue, education, and support to create a more inclusive and accepting world for everyone.



## Juneteenth

Juneteenth, also known as Freedom Day or Emancipation Day, is an annual celebration that commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans. Juneteenth holds profound historical significance, symbolizing freedom and the resilience of the African American community. This day honors the legacy of emancipation and advocates for continued progress toward equality and justice for all.



## Father's Day



## HR Tip



Recognize the employees who champion inclusion and belonging. Create an “Everyday Ally” award or highlight DEIB contributors in your internal newsletter. Recognition can drive equity when it’s visible and intentional.

**JULY** 2026



# Celebrations in July

## HR Tip



Mid-year check-in time! Conduct informal interviews or surveys to understand morale, workloads, and engagement levels. Use these insights to adjust programs before the second half of the year. Encourage managers to check-in with their teams on yearly or quarterly goals, career growth opportunities and milestones.



**Canada Day**  
*(Canada)*



**Independence Day**  
*(U.S.)*



**Nelson Mandela Day**



**Parents Day**



## National Friendship Day

Celebrate workplace friendships by showing appreciation and fostering connection.



## Recognition Tip



Summertime energy can dip — reignite it with **team building activities!** Celebrate collaboration wins, encourage employees to share their vacation highlights, and reward departments that exemplify teamwork during the busy summer stretch. Here's [\*\*21 Team Building Activity Ideas to Engage Your Team.\*\*](#)

# AUGUST 2026



# Celebrations in August

## HR Tip



Plan ahead for fall initiatives. This is the perfect time to finalize your Q4 engagement campaigns and update benefits or onboarding materials before open enrollment season. Recognition and reward platforms, like **Kudos**, play a pivotal role in helping create a community of engaged employees, where people feel secure, acknowledged, and know their voices matter.



## Family Fun Month

Each year, August is recognized as Family Fun Month, providing the perfect opportunity to celebrate the joy of togetherness and family. During this month, families are encouraged to spend time together, create lasting memories and enjoy the last moments of the summer season.

## Recognition Tip



Turn back-to-work energy into momentum. Recognize employees who've gone above and beyond during the summer. Try a "Spotlight of the Month" feature to highlight one culture champion from each team.

MON

3

**Civic Holiday**  
*(Canada)*

SUN

9



## International Day of the World's Indigenous People

The International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples recognizes and celebrates the diverse cultures, languages, and traditions of indigenous communities worldwide. Established by the United Nations, this day aims to raise awareness about the challenges faced by indigenous peoples, including issues related to human rights, cultural preservation, and sustainable development.

SUN

9

**International Coworking Day**

# SEPTEMBER 2026



# Celebrations in September

SEPT

All month

## Hispanic Heritage Month

MON

7

## Labor Day

(Canada and U.S.)

TUE

15



## IT Professionals Day

IT Professionals Day recognizes the people who keep our technology reliable, secure, and running smoothly. Show appreciation by thanking them for their behind-the-scenes problem solving and the steady support that makes everyone's work easier.

MON

21

## World Gratitude Day



## International Week of Happiness at Work

International Week of Happiness at Work is a global initiative focused on promoting happiness and well-being in the workplace. Recognizing the profound impact that employee happiness has on productivity, creativity, and overall job satisfaction, this week encourages organizations to prioritize positive workplace cultures.

### Recognition Tip



Encourage leaders to spotlight growth — not just results. Recognize employees who've learned new skills, taken initiative, or mentored others. Celebrate progress and curiosity, not just performance metrics.

### HR Tip



As we enter Q4, focus on learning and development. Launch a mentorship program or internal training refreshers to align teams for Q4 goals. Don't forget to honor HR Professional Day and celebrate your own team!



### HR Professional Day

HR Professional Day is a dedicated occasion to recognize and celebrate the crucial role of Human Resources (HR) professionals in the workplace. They play a pivotal role in building a positive work environment, managing talent, creating a thriving culture, and ensuring the well-being of employees.



**National Day for Truth and Reconciliation**  
*(Canada)*

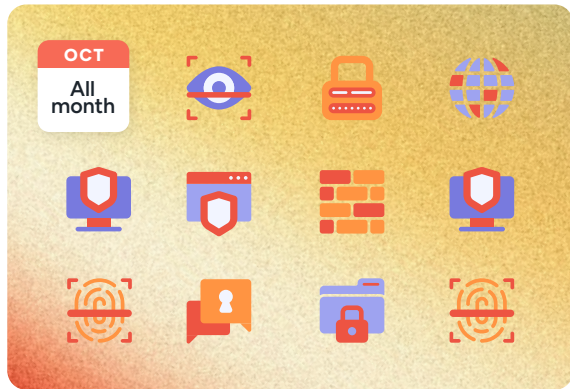
# OCTOBER 2026



# Celebrations in October

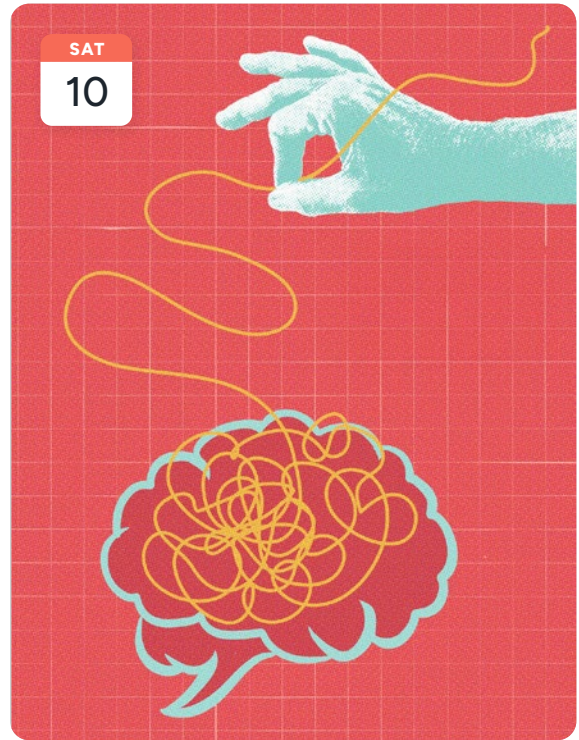
## Recognition Tip

Recognize your “Cyber Stars” — the IT and security pros who protect your organization. Create a campaign like “Celebrate Cyber Champions” and recognize individuals who completed security training, reported a phishing email, or demonstrated outstanding work in cyber safety.



## National Cyber Security Awareness Month

Observed every October, Cyber Security Awareness Month is a global initiative aimed at educating individuals and organizations about the importance of staying safe online. Established in 2004, this month-long campaign emphasizes best practices for protecting sensitive data, recognizing potential threats, and building cyber-resilient habits.



## World Mental Health Day

World Mental Health Day is a global initiative dedicated to raising awareness about mental health issues and promoting mental well-being. Established by the World Health Organization (WHO), the day encourages open conversations to destigmatize mental health challenges and emphasizes the importance of mental health care accessibility.

## HR Tip

Cyber Security Awareness and Mental Health Day both fall this month — a perfect combo for focusing on safety and trust. Host sessions on digital well-being and ensure psychological and data safety are treated equally seriously.

MON  
12

Canadian Thanksgiving

MON  
12

Columbus Day  
*(U.S.)*

SAT  
31

Halloween



# NOVEMBER 2026



# Celebrations in November

## HR Tip



As the year winds down, reflect on gratitude and giving. Plan your holiday initiatives early and communicate time-off schedules to reduce stress. If you need employee gift ideas, consider investing in something your **employees really want**, instead of the traditional one-size-fits-all gifts.

MON

2

## National Stress Awareness Week



SUN

8

## Diwali

Diwali, the Festival of Lights, is a major Hindu celebration marked by lamps, sweets, and time with loved ones. It represents the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil, and is celebrated across South Asia and worldwide.



## Recognition Tip



It's the perfect month to express thanks. Launch a "30 Days of Gratitude" challenge where employees send one recognition message per day. Feature standout recognition messages in a weekly roundup to keep appreciation visible.

WED

11

## Veteran's Day *(U.S.)*

WED

11

## Remembrance Day *(Canada)*

FRI

13

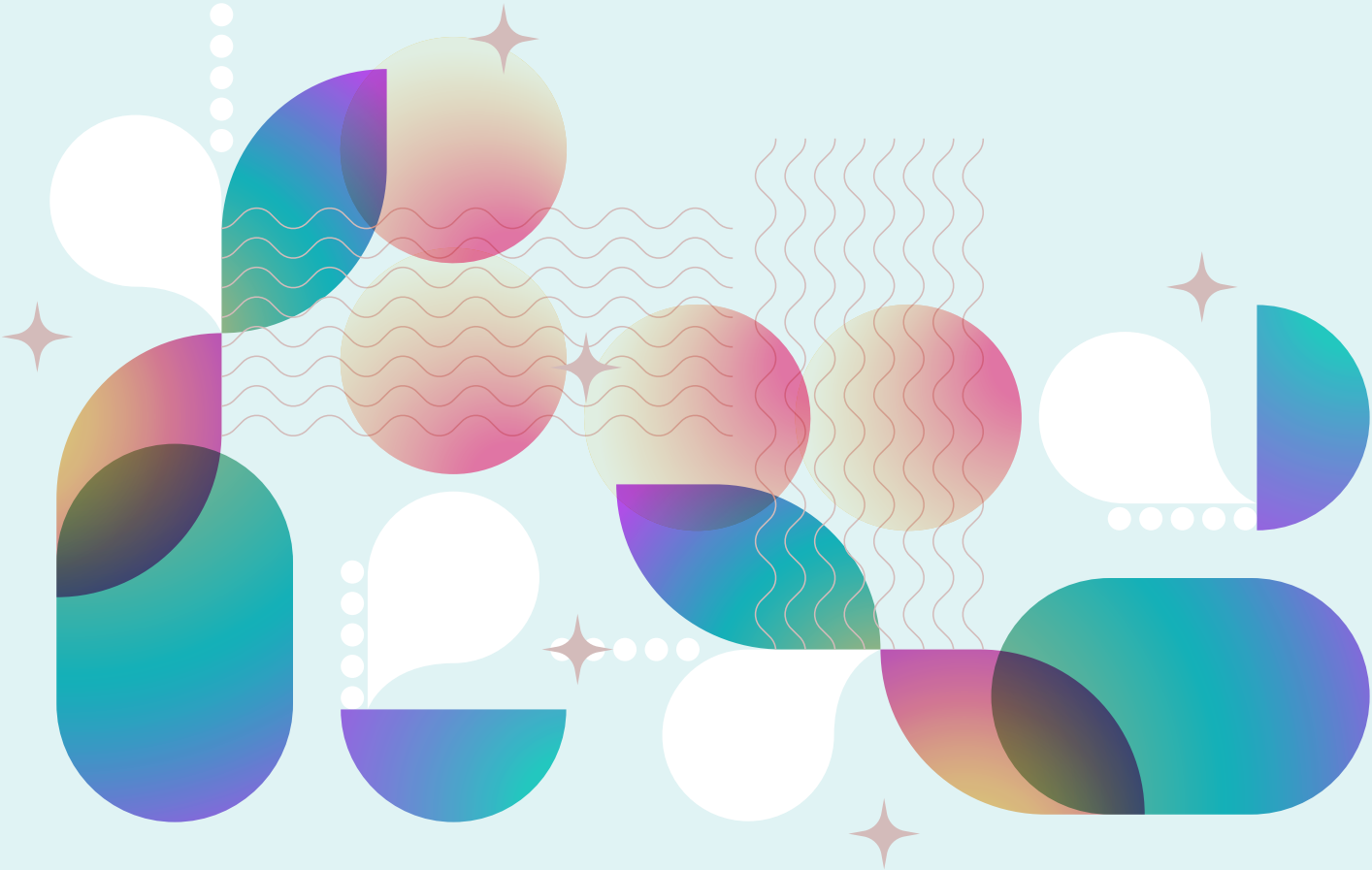
## World Kindness Day

THU

26

## American Thanksgiving

# DECEMBER 2026



# Celebrations in December

TUE  
1

**Giving Tuesday**



**International Day of Persons with Disabilities**



**Start of Hanukkah**  
*(ends on December 12, 2026)*

## HR Tip



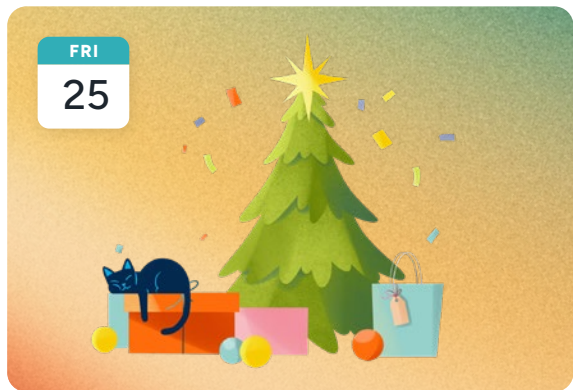
Celebrate the close of the year with reflection and recognition. Host an all-company “Year in Review” to share successes and express appreciation for collective achievements. Reinforce the link between recognition and retention and use year-end feedback surveys to shape your 2027 HR roadmap.



## International Volunteer Day

International Volunteer Day is a global observance that recognizes and supports the selfless efforts of volunteers who contribute to making the world a better place. To promote and facilitate the importance of volunteering and giving back to the community, organizations can host a company-wide volunteer event, partner with charities or offer employees dedicated time off for volunteering.





Christmas Day



**Start of Kwanzaa**  
*(ends January 1)*



**New Year's Eve**

### Recognition Tip



Send personalized end-of-year messages or group eCards. Recognize not just big wins but consistent effort and resilience. Recognizing your team is crucial year-round, but sending recognition this time of year is extra special. Explore these [holiday-themed recognition message examples](#), plus AI prompts to help you craft the perfect holiday message to your team.

# Free Printable 2026 Wall Calendar

New this year, we have a downloadable wall calendar available as an accompaniment to this guide. You can **download it for free** using the button below and print it yourself.

If you would like to inquire about ordering a printed copy, please reach out to us at: [marketing@kudos.com](mailto:marketing@kudos.com).



Download PDF



# How Kudos Can Support Your Culture

Kudos is an employee recognition and rewards platform designed to help you build, sustain, and scale a culture of recognition that drives engagement, performance, and connection.

## Meaningful Recognition at the Core

Kudos' recognition model is built to increase participation and impact. With flexible point-giving, customizable messages, and AI-powered Recognition Assistant, employees and leaders can send thoughtful, timely recognition that aligns with company values and goals. This flexibility supports a recognition culture that's more frequent, inclusive, and aligned with your company values.

## Motivate Participation with Incentives

A dedicated Incentives hub that makes it easy to drive participation in key initiatives — whether it's training, compliance, wellness, or culture campaigns. Launch structured campaigns where employees claim rewards for completing tasks and use automated point distribution to reduce admin workload.

## Celebrate All the Moments That Matter

Milestones are more visible and personal in Kudos. Automate celebration cards for birthdays, anniversaries, welcoming new hires, personal and professional milestones and onboarding. Kudos also elevates recognition through flexible, manager-enabled awards and nomination programs. A centralized Celebrations Hub gives HR teams and managers the tools to manage celebrations efficiently.

## Meaningful Rewards for Everyone

Recognition goes further when it's tied to tangible value. Kudos supports a robust Employee Rewards Program with multiple reward providers and regional options, and a points system that can be customized and scaled to your budget.

## Announcements That Get Read

A dedicated Announcements section where company-wide communications can be scheduled, segmented, and tracked. Pin high-priority updates to the Upcoming & Important section for even more visibility.

## Set Up for Scalable Success

Kudos goes beyond being a simple recognition platform — our Client Success Team is with you every step of the way. From planning and implementation to rollout and adoption, our team ensures your organization is set up for success from day one. We help you align features to your culture goals and ensure long-term success.

## Are you ready to make recognition a cornerstone of your organization?

Let's start the conversation by booking a demo to discuss how Kudos can be your ideal partner for success.

[Let's Chat](#)



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