

8 ways to celebrate Administrative Professionals Day

Administrative Professionals Day, also sometimes referred to as Admin Day or National Secretaries Day, is right around the corner. The holiday occurs every year on the Wednesday of the last full week of April and is meant to be a time for companies to recognize the contributions of administrative professionals. The last week of April is also often recognized as administrative professionals week. You can choose to celebrate the specific day or spread your celebrations throughout the week.

The hard work of administrative professionals across many job titles such as secretaries, receptionists, executive assistants, and administrative assistants is essential to the continued success of a business. These employees keep the office running smoothly. However, much of this work occurs behind the scenes and they often don't get the appropriate recognition for everything that they do. This holiday is a great time for business owners to recognize the support of their admin team members in a meaningful way.

Celebration and Gift Ideas

Consider planning a special celebration or giving your administrative employees a gift as a token of your appreciation for their hard work. If you have a large amount of support staff, you'll need to be careful not to break the budget, but there are a variety of meaningful options that you can choose from at all price points. Here are some ideas on how to celebrate Administrative Professionals Day:

1. Give Them A Shout-out

Show your administrative employees how much you value them by giving them a bit of public recognition. If you have a weekly staff meeting or a daily stand-up, take a moment to give your support staff a shout-out. You can also do so on your company-wide Slack or Microsoft Teams chats and encourage other employees to join you in showing their appreciation for the administrative team members that keep the company going.

2. Order Lunch

Treat your administrative staff to a special lunch. You can have a team lead take them to a restaurant of their choice, order in, or order a catered lunch for everyone and make it an office party. You can extend this approach to remote employees as well by doordashing food to them at home and hosting group Zoom call for everyone to take a longer happy hour style lunch break.

3. Gift Cards or Ecards

A gift card is a nice option for any employee, but it's especially fitting for administrative professionals. Many administrative professionals spend the majority of their work weeks taking care of other people. Executive Assistants remain focused on making sure that executives have well-managed schedules, travel itineraries, and everything that they need to get their jobs done. Office Managers spend their days trying to create a positive experience for everyone in the office as well as any visitors. A gift card encourages them to treat themselves to

something.

It can be a gift card to establishments that everyone typically enjoys such as Starbucks, Target, or Amazon if you aren't sure exactly what they'd like. You can also choose a Visa gift card to let them decide for themselves where they'd like to spend their gift. Another popular option is to give out gift cards to a nice local restaurant so that they can go out for a date night with their partner or have a nice dinner with a friend.

4. Personalized Gift Baskets

Consider having executives and managers create personalized gift baskets for their direct administrative reports. Since many administrative employees and assistants work directly with high-level company or department personnel to manage their schedules, incoming communications, and administrative needs, it can be more meaningful for a thank you gift to come directly from the manager that they support.

In addition to making the show of appreciation a bit more personal and meaningful, it can also result in a better gift selection. Instead of picking generic items for all of your administrative staff, you can put the responsibility into the hands of people that work more directly with each person. Since they interact frequently with their direct support staff, they likely have a better idea of what each employee likes, needs, or would most enjoy. Set a specific budget to make it fair and equitable for everyone while avoiding giving the same generic gift bundle to every administrative employee.

5. Have Everyone Sign a Card

A card only requires a small monetary investment. If you want to go the extra mile you can skip the trip to hallmark and have some of your internal team members get creative by designing customized cards. If your graphic design team has a few free hours, you can enlist them to create something truly special that your team members will cherish.

Once you've bought or created a card pass it around to the team. The work of administrative professionals touches many members of the company. An Executive Assistant may directly support one specific Executive, but they likely help a bunch of different employees schedule appointments or coordinate projects with that executive. As such, there may be a number of people that want to express their appreciation. Similarly, a Receptionist or Office Manager supports the wider employee population, and the whole team is likely to have something positive to write down in a card. Getting everyone involved with personalized messages will make the card more meaningful and can show your administrative staff how much they are truly appreciated.

6. Solicit Feedback and Listen

The [International Association of Administrative Professionals \(IAAP\)](#) is the organization that founded the holiday in 1952. Though they were called the National Secretaries Association at the time and the holiday was initially referred to as National Secretaries Week. The IAAP takes a different attitude towards the holiday. They believe that it should be less about hallmark cards and flowers and more about giving administrative staff members a voice. The IAAP encourages administrative professionals to use the day to advocate for themselves and to speak up about what they need from their employers in order to be successful.

Employers should take this to heart by considering the broader meaning of the holiday. Use it as a time to not only recognize administrative staff, but to empower them to speak up by soliciting their feedback. There is a lot that you can learn from your support staff, as they often have a clearer on-the-ground view of what goes on in the office. They're also responsible for supporting the rest of your employees, so if they don't have the support and tools that they need to do their jobs it can have a ripple effect throughout the company.

7. Lighten Their Load

Look for opportunities to lighten your administrative employees' workload and give them a much-needed break in honor of Administrative Professionals Day. There are a couple of ways that companies approach this:

- **Give administrative employees a half-day Off.** This option is often best combined with one of the other approaches to ensure that they don't come back to a backlog of tasks to catch up on. You want to reduce stress, not just postpone it.
- **Have other team members help out to take something off of the administrative staff members' plate.** Some companies will even do a job-swap and let executives or managers sub in for their support staff for a day. This lightens the workload for admins and gives their supervisors better insight into their workload and responsibilities.
- **Provide them with new tools that will make their jobs easier.** Look at what you can provide in order to make their work easier. Is there a software solution that could streamline some of their work processes? Do they complain that a certain program is cumbersome or the printer doesn't work well? Bonus points if you combine this with this last option and ask them what tools they would like to be given.

8. Invest In Their Development

Professional development is important to employees all across the organization, but are you doing enough to support the development of your administrative staff? Support staff is often overlooked when it comes to job growth and professional development. Allocate some time throughout Administrative Professionals Week to check in with each administrative team member to discuss their career goals, explore what learning opportunities they'd be most interested in, and facilitate a discussion on what they need to do in order to get to the next step in their career path with the company.

Regular communication around professional development and growth is beneficial for both the employee and the organization. Having these discussions can reduce turnover and keep employees more motivated and engaged. It also allows employees to grow their skills and start working their way up the ladder if they desire to do so.

Keep The Momentum Going

Administrative Professionals Day shouldn't be the only day of the year that you show appreciation to your support staff. After the holiday is over, try to incorporate any feedback collected so that you can better support the people that support you.

Also remember that employee recognition is associated with higher levels of engagement, job satisfaction, and retention. Giving frequent feedback and recognition to employees at all levels within your organization can help you maintain a strong and happy workforce.