Motivated employees with the ambition to attain the best possible performance are a core asset of any PES. Elaborate human resource and strategic performance management systems comprise different approaches to foster the motivation and ambition of employees by recognising and rewarding performance. Against this background, Austrian PES (AMS) has introduced several awards which act as non-monetary incentives in addition to its financial bonus system. Based on the results of the performance management system (the Balanced Scorecard – BSC), the most successful local offices are honoured once a year at the ‘Best of AMS’ event. The most successful service line, the best good practice project, the best ideas of the year and the ‘most women-friendly local office’ are rewarded by the Management Board of Austrian PES during an internal event. The award presentation (including the criteria for the individual categories) is reviewed and adjusted on an annual basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the PES</th>
<th>AMS – Arbeitsmarktservice Österreich</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When was the practice implemented?</td>
<td>Started in 2002, on-going</td>
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<tr>
<td>What were the practice’s main objectives?</td>
<td>Recognising and rewarding performance as well as fostering ambition and motivation of individual employees.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| What activities were carried out? | The awards were launched in 2002 and are annually reviewed and adjusted in order to take into account strategic objectives and specific plans of the Austrian PES. In 2015 the following were rewarded:  
  ▶ the 3 local offices with the best overall performance (according to the BSC);  
  ▶ the best local office and the ‘most women-friendly local office’ of each of the 9 regional units (again according to the BSC);  
  ▶ the best ‘AMS ServiceLine’ (e-channel);  
  ▶ the best regional unit of the ‘AMS on tour’ campaign for employers;  
  ▶ the 3 offices with the highest relative number of lectures for further training of employees;  
  ▶ the best 3 ideas in the idea management system ‘Ideefix’;  
  ▶ the best good practice project.  
  From 2016, the best career guidance centre for youth (BIZ) will also be rewarded. Thus, from 2016 onwards all core processes (jobseekers, employers and youth) together with the e-channel are integrated in the award system, continuously developed since 2002. Furthermore, the system also covers innovation (ideas), overall performance and further training of employees. The awards are all part of a large internal event in which the management board hands over the awards. |
| What outcomes/results have been achieved? |  
  ▶ Measurable increases in employee satisfaction.  
  ▶ Strong performance-orientation at all levels of the organisation together with sharing of information on good practices and new ideas.  
  ▶ Systematic involvement of local offices in change management processes. |
In general, incentive systems need to be designed properly to avoid negative side effects like frustration. This also holds for non-monetary incentive awards. It is essential that the selection criteria are transparent and comprehensible for all employees. They should be fair, i.e. based on real achievements, and not influenced by external factors.

For the Austrian award system the following success factors can be highlighted:

- Continuity and successive development of the awards system;
- Starting point was the rewarding of the most customer-oriented local office;
- Further development by introduction of qualitative components;
- Transparency and comprehensibility of the awarding criteria are supported by the involvement of quality managers of the regional units;
- Commitment of top management is of utmost importance; management board is involved in the assessment process and hands over the awards personally;
- The award system has to be communicated and promoted intensively within the organisation to ensure acceptance and trigger positive effects;
- The framework of the awarding matters, i.e. awards are granted during a large event and winners are asked to ‘step in front of the curtain’;
- This framework can also be used to share experiences and to motivate.

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