

ST. FRANCIS DE SALES COLLEGE NAGPUR



BEST PRACTICES

- **Awards to Students**
- **Orientation of New Students**

Best Practice I

Title of the practice:

AWARDS TO STUDENTS

Objectives of the Practice:

The main objective of the practice is to create an atmosphere of healthy competition among students. Hard working and consistent students in various spheres- overall development, academics or sports, tend to turn out into leading performers. These students need to be recognized for their performance, not only by their teachers and peers, but also on a wider platform- the complete College. Such appreciation leads to the realization of the importance of hard work, not only among the awardees, but also among the other students. Appreciation and incentive are thus the two keystones of this practice inculcating the value of diligence.

The Context:

A teacher derives immense joy out of the success of the students. This not only reflects the achievement of the student himself or herself, but also the effort put in by the respective teacher in recognizing and honing the potential of the student. Sometimes, students tend to fall into a state of academic disinterest, lethargy and inactivity, and are seen to move toward other distractions typical of youth. It has been, and will always be the firm opinion of teachers that students be kept on their toes in their quest. Teachers attempt to this by providing the best through systematic guidance in academics, sports and general personality development, which they supplement with timely incentives. The practice has been therefore envisioned and aptly designed by all senior teachers, especially those on the verge of retirement, so that they continue to contribute to the success of students for posterity.

The Practice:

Various awards are instituted by serving staff members in the name of their parents, or by retiring or retired staff members in their own names. This is done by contributing a lump sum donation to the College, which is held as a fixed deposit in the name of the Principal by the S.S.S. College Employees Credit Cooperative Society. The interest accrued upon the deposit is used for giving the awards, which are in the form of gold and silver medals.

A Screening Committee, under the SHIKHAR Cell of the IQAC, deliberates upon the performance of the students in their overall development, academics and sports. Students achieving highest marks from among their peers in the University examination are considered eligible for the awards from the academic sphere. In sports, awards are given to outstanding sports persons. The award of greatest attraction is that for the best outgoing student, who 'best represents the spirit of the SFS College'. This student is chosen by the screening committee and generally the selection is vetted by the Staff Council. A trophy is accordingly awarded to the best student every year.

The Award Committee further plans the Annual Awards Day function, with active participation by students, especially the members of the VIDYARTHI Cell of the IQAC. The Chairman of the College and other members of College Management make it a point to be present to applaud the performance of students. All College students are present for the function to cheer the achievement of their peers.

Awards instituted by donors are generally for final year students. The College, therefore, on its own, gives away awards as incentives and encouragement to the best performers of lower classes. All donors are invited by the Principal and the Awards Committee for the Annual Awards, Day function. Also invited are the proud parents and guardians of the awardees. The donors give away the awards instituted by them, and interact with the Management, awardees, parents, students and the currently working staff. This way, the donors, who are former teachers, stay in touch with the institution as well as younger teachers in their subjects, and time and again, give their much sought after and valuable advice, born out of their nostalgia and their vast experience in teaching. This always goes a long way in the betterment of staff and students.



Awards Day 2020

Evidence of Success:

The awards are publicized not only through the Academic Calendar given to the students every year, but also by the teachers, in course of their regular delivery of the curriculum. The target is thus set for the high performers to win the award. Students feel encouraged to compete for the top position and excel in studies. It is seen that the students themselves come forward and seek the guidance of their mentors and teachers in their quest for the award.

Achievements of the students are not reflected only in the Awards in the College, but as winners of many accolades in Intercollegiate and University events. Many students regularly feature in the University Merit lists.

Every student feels that he or she should also be one day awarded as the best outgoing student. Every student thus tries to participate in multiple activities and be on the forefront, creating a healthy spirit of competition, benevolently overseen by mentors, teachers and Cell coordinators. Shy students have been seen to become active, outspoken and bold leaders through their tenure in College. The function is held in the spacious College Auditorium, which is always full to its capacity for this programme.

Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

No major obstacles have ever been faced in the implementation of this best practice, which has been in vogue for the past many years, and has been going on in a smooth, efficient and well-planned manner. For this practice, the funds required for purchase of medals are the only material resources required.

However, much goes into the Awards Day function through the tireless efforts of the Awards committee and student volunteers. Expenditure for the other non-instituted awards, and for conduct of the function itself, is borne by the College through a budgeted amount earmarked for the purpose. In spite of this, if there is a shortfall in funds, it is met through benevolent contribution of the Management.

Best Practice II

Title of the practice:

ORIENTATION OF NEW STUDENTS

Objectives of the Practice:

New students who have taken admission to various programmes in the College need to be familiarised with the College, its Motto, Vision, Mission, facilities, rules, discipline, etc. They also need to be briefed about the Semester examination pattern followed by the RTM Nagpur University for its different programmes, and the internal assessment methodology adopted by the institution. The practice also seeks to familiarize every student with the peers as well as the College staff- Principal, Teaching and non-teaching staff, etc. It seeks to make them aware of the location and utility of various facilities offered by the institution.

The Context:

The practice is meant to serve as an 'ice breaking' exercise by the College serves to make the students feel comfortable in their new surroundings.

Students admitted to the undergraduate programmes in the College come from varied backgrounds. They are admitted after passing the +2 or HSSC Examination from different Boards, which have own patterns of examination. They are students from different mediums of instruction, including English, Hindi and Marathi. Further, their earlier education is from various Junior Colleges, which have their own set of rules, regulations, values and ways of functioning. The practice has been pioneered by the institution for more than the last five years by holding a special Orientation Programme and affiliating University has introduced this practice as late as 2018 as '*Deeksharambh*'. The programme serves to introduce them to the essence of the institution through a warm welcome by the Principal, staff and coordinators of Cells.

The Practice:

New admissions generally begin after the declaration of HSSC. Classes too, begin soon after sufficient admissions are completed, and various subject teachers begin to orient their students on a smaller scale by conducting bridge courses. This serves to orient the new students to their subject and subject teachers, but they remain unfamiliar with other new entrants, office staff and facilities. Keeping this in view, a day is designated to hold a special Orientation Program, which is held in the College Auditorium to accommodate the large number of new entrants. Students are informed through notices as well as through social media groups, if formed till then, about the Orientation Programme.

Logistics in the form of seating arrangement, podium, sound system and projection system are reviewed and kept in place in advance.

The Program begins with an address by the Principal, who welcomes them on behalf of the College. A senior and experienced faculty member then explains with the help of Power Point presentation, the examination system followed by the affiliating University for the different programmes, and warns them against pitfalls in the carry through or 'Allowed to Keep Term' facility provided by the University. This teacher also explains the internal assessment system in the College- the Unit Tests and Preliminary examinations, and goes on to explain the internal assessment methodology followed for submission of marks to the University.

Students are made aware of Program outcomes and program specific outcomes to make them aware of expectations of the College from them. They are briefed about the various Cells functioning in the College to guide them toward their personality development through co-curricular and extra-curricular activities by these cells. They are also briefed about keeping in touch with scheduled activities, circulars, time tables etc. through the College website and the College Calendar.

Coordinators of different Cells take turns to speak about their objectives and activities. Anxieties of the students are laid to rest especially by the coordinators of the Anti-ragging Cell and the Internal Complaint Cell against Sexual Harassment. Information is provided by the respective in-charges for enrolment in NCC or NSS and the benefits from these. They are briefed about importance of participation in sports. The Librarian provides details all the available resources in the library for general reading as well as examinations. This is followed by a tour given to familiarize with different departments premises of the college.

Evidence of Success:

The comfort levels of the new students see evident improvement through this practice. They are seen to adjust well with the routine of the institution much faster and easily. The values of discipline are imbibed early into them, when they become well versed with the etiquette expected of them, when interacting with teachers, non-teaching staff and peers. There is ease of movement to classes, and to the library and College canteen during intervals since they are now acquainted with the surroundings. They become aware of various schedules and deadlines, both academic and extra-curricular, and actively seek out the Cell in-charges for enrolment and participation in spheres of their interest and expertise. This is especially so where enrolments, such as in the National level organizations viz. NCC and NSS, are time bound. The points touched upon by various speakers during the Orientation programme also serve to give them the required Dos and DON'Ts along with the other necessary information. Students not only become familiar with their peers, but also become acquainted with senior students. In the past five years, there have been no instances of ragging or sexual harassment, which is the best pointer towards the success of the Practice.

Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

The key to the success of the Orientation programme lies in the ability to target the maximum possible number of new students. However, the admissions process continues late into the first semester, with revisions in the admission process and number of seats from the Government and University, which may further be complicated if there are outstanding legal issues on the state or national level. When the new students cannot be accommodated in a common time slot, Orientation Programmes have to be held separately for different programmes, which not only tends to become repetitive for the faculty, but also involves setting up of the required arrangements a multiple number of times. Late entrants invariably miss the Orientation Programme and find it more difficult to adjust. They have to be instructed separately on all fronts by their subject teachers, mentors and peers. No major resources, especially on a monetary front, are required.