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The Holiday Recognition Villains

Every holiday movie has a villain. So does every recognition program. Don't be cast as one.



Six villains, six habits that quietly drain recognition. For each one you'll find the crime, how the team feels about it, and the fix that turns the story around.

Plot twist: every villain can be redeemed.

Character names are used for commentary and are the property of their respective owners. This guide is not affiliated with or endorsed by any studio.



VILLAIN NO. 1

from *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*

The Grinch

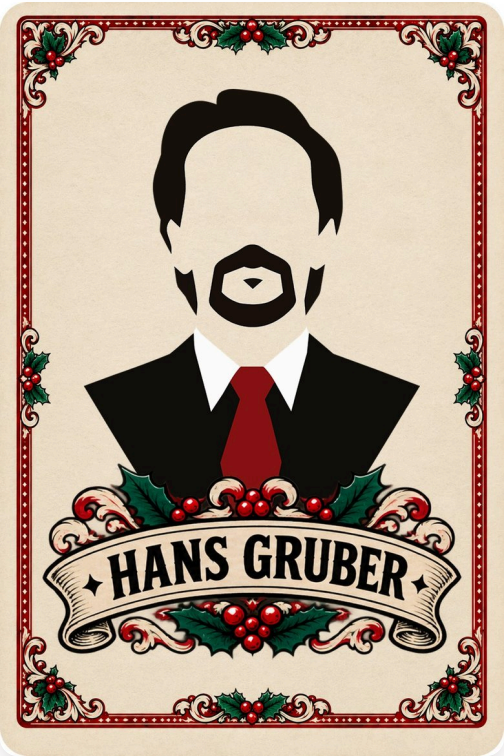
The crime

Cancels the celebration to save budget.

How the team feels

Invisible. A whole year of work, and nothing marks it.

> The fix
>
> **Recognition doesn't need a big budget, just consistency.** A specific thank-you every week does more than one lavish party a year.



VILLAIN NO. 2

from *Die Hard*

Hans Gruber

The crime

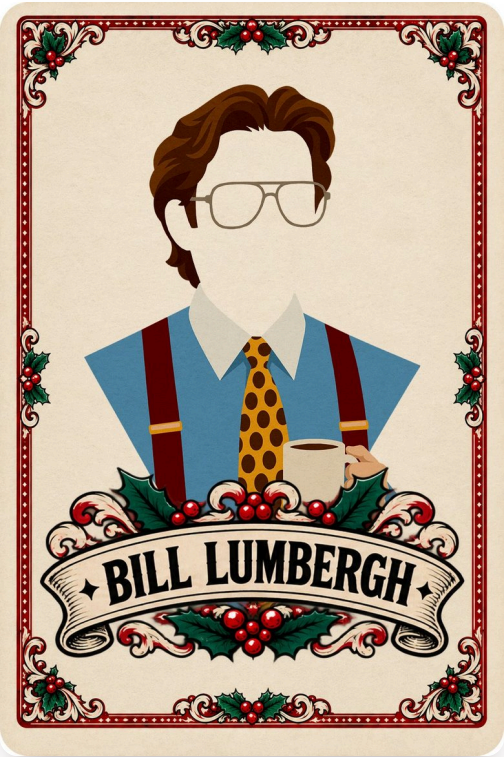
Hijacks the holiday party and makes it about himself.

How the team feels

Like extras in someone else's movie. They showed up, but the story wasn't about them.

> The fix
>
> **Put your people at the center of the event.** Hand them the mic: their wins, their stories, their names.

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VILLAIN NO. 3

from *Office Space*

Bill Lumbergh

The crime

"Yeah, if you could just come in Saturday..."

How the team feels

Taken for granted. Extra effort becomes the expectation.

> The fix
>
> **Say thank you for the extra effort, specifically.** Name what they gave up and what it made possible.



VILLAIN NO. 4

from *The Devil Wears Prada*

Miranda Priestly

The crime

Only notices mistakes.

How the team feels

Never good enough. People stop taking risks and start hiding work.

> The fix
>
> **Catch people doing things right.** Point out good work as fast as you'd flag a miss.

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VILLAIN NO. 5

from *The Simpsons*

Mr. Burns

The crime

Can't remember anyone's name.

How the team feels

Replaceable. If the boss doesn't know who did it, did it count?

> The fix
>
> **Recognition is personal or it's noise.** Use their name, and say exactly what they did.



VILLAIN NO. 6

from *Home Alone*

Harry and Marv

The crime

Forget the people left behind.

How the team feels

Forgotten. Frontline and remote staff hear about the party secondhand.

> The fix
>
> **Plan reach for every shift and location.** If the night shift can't come to the party, bring the party to the night shift.

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