

Checklist for building an effective driver incentive programme

A well-designed incentive programme motivates drivers, improves safety outcomes and supports long-term engagement. Use this checklist to plan, launch and sustain a programme that delivers measurable results, without adding complexity to your operations.



Set clear goals

Identify the behaviours you want to improve (e.g. speeding, harsh braking, idling).

Align goals with fleet-wide priorities like reducing collision rates or fuel costs.

Define specific, measurable outcomes to track success (e.g. 20% reduction in harsh braking incidents over 3 months).

Set timelines for evaluation and adjust as needed.



Choose fair, trackable metrics

Use consistent, objective data integrated with your telematics system.

Avoid broad scoring (e.g. "safe driving") and focus on specifics like rapid acceleration or following distance.

Compare drivers to anonymised peers in similar roles, vehicle types or conditions.

Include only metrics drivers can influence, to keep the programme fair and actionable.



Design a reward structure

Offer a mix of short-term and long-term incentives (e.g. weekly progress bonuses + quarterly awards).

Recognise individual performance, but explore ways to build a sense of shared progress (e.g. leaderboards or fleet-wide milestone rewards).

Balance financial rewards (e.g. gift cards, bonuses) with non-monetary ones (e.g. "Top Improver" parking spot, company newsletter shout-outs).

Consider using levels or milestones to reward ongoing improvement over time.



Build transparent programme rules

Clearly outline how performance is tracked and how points are earned.

Automate reward distribution and tracking through a platform connected to your telematics data to keep the process objective and fair.

Avoid fine print and make rules easily accessible.

Be explicit about what counts against progress and what's forgivable (e.g. one-off events).



Involve drivers from the start

Ask what types of rewards feel most motivating.

Hold a kickoff session or pilot with a small group of drivers for early feedback.

Adjust based on feedback, as even small tweaks can make a big difference.

Reinforce that the programme is designed to help, not monitor.



Coach continuously

Use data insights to offer targeted, constructive coaching.

Focus on what's improving, not just what's wrong.

Revisit goals as drivers improve to make sure progress doesn't stall.

Schedule monthly or quarterly 1:1s to review performance and set new goals.



Communicate the programme clearly

Launch with clear internal messaging (e.g. email flyers, kickoff meeting).

Use dashboards or mobile apps to show drivers their real-time performance.

Reinforce messages regularly (e.g. monthly safety updates or team huddles).

Share why it's important (e.g. improved safety, lower risk, better morale).



Reduce administrative overhead

Use tools that automate tracking, scoring and rewards.

Opt for platforms that sync directly with your telematics.

Reduce disputes by giving drivers access to their scores and metrics so they can self-correct.

Choose a system that scales without extra admin lift.



Highlight progress, not just top scores

Celebrate milestones (e.g. "30 days with no distracted driving events").

Highlight consistent effort and upward trends, not just high scores.

Feature stories of driver improvement in newsletters or meetings.



Measure and review results

Track key outcomes like incident reduction, engagement rates and driver retention.

Survey drivers for feedback on reward relevance and fairness.

Review what's working quarterly, but avoid constant changes.

Share results with leadership to maintain programme support.



How to address driver concerns and resistance

Emphasise improvement and recognition.

Explain how data is used (and not used), especially around scoring fairness.

Provide examples of how progress is rewarded, such as earning a reward for reducing phone use week over week.

Show how all drivers are held to the same standard and adjusted for context.

Offer quick wins early on to build momentum.