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# Motivation in the Workplace

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# Motivation in the Workplace

## **FAQ's About Employee Motivation**

The success of your business depends on the people who work for you. By working hard and exhibiting all their talents, your employees play a critical part in keeping your customers satisfied. This is where employee motivation is critical. It is the "bosses" responsibility to motivate employees, which in turn will give them an overall better outlook on their job and will help them to strive to do their jobs to the best of their ability.

One of the hardest and most important things that a boss can do is to keep good employees, not just manage them. Motivation is a key aspect in keeping employees happy and to creating a positive work environment.

The ways to motivate your employees will differ depending on who you ask, since there are so many viewpoints that are all different and the majority of the answers are right ones. A manager should realize that there are many ways that one can be motivated and be open to suggestions about how to do this.

Since each person is different, then it makes sense that the ways in which each person is motivated will also differ. One mistake that is commonly made when trying to increase employee motivation is to "over-do" it. Do you give unearned praise to employees since this can lead to other employees feeling badly about their performance?

### **What does "Motivation" actually mean?**

Some may think that motivation is a matter of giving gifts or verbal praise. Some may even think that a raise is a way of motivating employees. While these things are important, there is much more to motivation.

There are several ways to motivate an employee that is genuine and deserved. Giving an employee a pat on the back, or mentioning their achievements in a memo or letter are good ways to motivate. The key is to know your employees well enough to give them what they really want. It could be time off, a vacation, a raise or even just some praise.

Ultimately, these kinds of things will result in a better quality of work from your employees as well as a better relationship between you and the employee. Not to mention a better outlook on the job through the eyes of the employee himself. All of these things will also lead to better customer relationships, since a happy employee tends to make a customer feel more welcome and appreciated. This will lead to higher sales, which is the ultimate goal in any business

### **How does motivation help people?**

A person can benefit from motivation in so many ways. Motivation will help to achieve personal goals or perhaps even goal sets by you the manager. There are times when goals can seem

unattainable. This is when the right employee motivation can make all the difference since it is likely to give the employee that extra boost of confidence. This will also help them to push through a tough time and continue to work hard to attain their goals.

Gaining a more positive outlook on the task or job is a direct outcome of the right employee motivation. This will be a critical step in your business since it will make your customers happy as well. This sounds like an easy thing to do, however when your employees are not happy, it shows.

Motivating employees to see the good in the work that they do everyday and to see how they are helping someone is a great way to make your employees and your customers gain a positive perspective of your business. If your company is stuck in a "rut" it may be time for a change. Perhaps a change in the scenery or a change in the way the entire business is run.

Who will have better ideas on how to achieve this than the people who work there everyday? Asking employees for their input is another way to motivate employees. The power to change is a hard thing to grasp, however with the right motivation, your employees will likely become an active part in the process.

If your company is stuck in a "rut" it may be time for a change. Perhaps a change in the scenery or a change in the way the entire business is run. Who will have better ideas on how to achieve this than the people who work there everyday? Asking employees for their input is another way to motivate employees. The power to change is a hard thing to grasp, however with the right motivation, your employees will likely become an active part in the process.

Motivating employees builds self-esteem. Self-esteem is crucial to the productivity of your employees. You want employees who believe in themselves and the power to do great things for your company. By handing down some well-deserved motivation, you will increase self esteem in your employees and at the same time be making an important step for the betterment of your company.

With the right motivation employees will become more likely to motivate and help others. They will learn to manage their own development within the company. This will result in less work for you and better productivity from the employee.

### **What are some common reasons why we fail to motivate our employees?**

There are times when motivation is needed but simply isn't given. This can be the result of management whom is not aware of the power of motivation, or even due to managers who simply are absent from the workplace where the employees reside.

Often times we can not control the area in which we work, however inadequate equipment to complete a job creates a serious lack of motivation by employees. Just like you enjoy coming home to an inviting, clean, warm home, your employees want to come to a clean, inviting office. Updating equipment and creating an atmosphere in which your employees can thrive is an excellent way to motivate them, however it is one of the most commonly over looked ways to motivate. This is partially because it is difficult to do.

Try to motivate your employees for only a short period. I am sure that you will see results that you have only dreamed of.

## **Make them Smile: 5 Ways to Motivate Your Employees and Send Them Home Smiling**

When a manager walks into a work place among their employees, that manager has the power to change the outlook of the employee for the entire day, maybe longer. You are the most important maker of motivation and morale among your employees.

Words, body language, even the expression on your face can make the difference in how an employee perceives your opinion of them. All these things tell the employee how you feel about them, what they mean to you and how valuable they are to you as a manager and to the company.

Making the employee feel as though they are needed and appreciated is a key factor in maintaining high employee morale and motivation. If your employees feel that they play an important part in the company by the work they provide, then they are much more likely to say that they like their job and to strive to better themselves at that job. For some, feeling valued is just as important as competitive pay, and advancement opportunities.

### **Building Employee motivation:**

Make your presence known. Coming to work and announcing your arrival is a great way to motivate employees and put a smile on their face first thing in the morning. Walking through the doors and simply saying good morning with a smile on your face can make all the difference in the world.

Verbal Praise. This kind of praise doesn't have to be over dramatic or over the top, most times showing respect for your employees by saying simple things like please and thank you are easy and effective ways to motivate your employees. Simply saying "you did a great job" when the employee deserves it is another way that verbal praise can work to motivate employees.

Set clear expectations. Communicating deadlines, objectives, and requirements of a job is essential to completing the task efficiently. Sometimes these things are reported very well but they may change. Usually these changes are not discussed in detail and therefore it causes employees to feel that they are either not important enough to be told why the changes are taking place, or that the manager has made a mistake.

Neither of these thoughts will lead to a motivated employee. One way to prevent this is to always get some kind of feedback from the employee about the job so that you are certain that he knows what is expected. If there is a change in a project, tell the employee why. Make them part of the solution to the problem.

Give employees regular feedback. Let the employee know when he is doing a good job. This also works the other way, let the employee know when you are not pleased with the outcome

and why. This is a great opportunity to let the employee know how they can do better next time. Also, now is a good time to ask the employee if there is anything that you as a manager can do to help with the change. Wait for feedback from the employee. Talk it over and have a real discussion. This will make the employee feel like you are not upset about the job, but that you are genuinely concerned and willing to help correct the problem.

Create consequences. Make sure to not only tell the employee when you are pleased with the work, but also provide rewards and recognition for outstanding work. A personally written thank you card is a very effective and inexpensive way to do this.

When an employee is not working up to the expectations set by the company, it is UNmotivating to other workers, after all, they may think, "If he isn't doing it why should I?" That is why it is so important to make clear consequences for those who do not perform as expected. It is very important to be consistent with these consequences.

Employees will like working with you and you will like working with them more and more if you will take a few minutes out of your day to make sure that they are happy. Spend time with employees and show them that you care and value them as an important part of the company and you will see outstanding results.

## **Make them Smile: 5 More Ways to Motivate Employees**

We have discussed how important it is to motivate your employees and keep that morale high in the work place. You as a manager play the most important part in motivating your employees. These are five more ways that you can effectively create a positive work environment while increasing employee motivation and morale; making them smile.

Know your employees. It is essential that you know your employees. Know about their family; know about what they do after work, what interests them. This is not meant to be prying into an employee's personal life, but knowing an employee can help you to determine what motivates that employee.

Different people are motivated by different things. What does the employee want? What do they want from this job, from their life, and for their future? Reaching goals can be difficult. Helping someone to reach a goal at work is impossible if you do not know what that goal is.

Learn more. It is your responsibility to create motivation in the workplace. Therefore it is up to you to continue to learn new and innovative ways to motivate employees. You might choose to take classes that are offered at a local college or online. Some companies will offer managers an educational assistance plan.

This will give you a fabulous opportunity to continue to learn new ways to motivate your employees. If your company does not offer these resources, then talk to them. Go to your human resources department. Talk to them about the importance of continuing your education. Going forward and learning new things is the way that a business goes upward.

Spend time with your employees. Take a few minutes out of your day to just talk with your employees. Give them an opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns or simply how the day is going. This will show the employee that you care about his or her happiness within the company. You can also schedule performance reviews either once a month, once a year or however often is comfortable for you.

This will allow you time to sit down and spend a little more time with the employee and give you a chance to discuss the highs and lows of the period in which the review is being done. Positive conversations, even on a casual level are a great way to increase employee motivation.

Consider the employees feelings about the job. Most employees start out in a job on the bottom with hopes of advancement. One way to increase employee motivation is to discuss the possibility of advancement or anywhere that they would like their career to go.

It might be a different position, or a promotion, even working for a different company, your employees should know that you care about the things that they care about. Let them know that you are there to help them achieve their goals and they will work harder for you!

Share the news. You as a manager know what it feels like when a higher employee seems to be keeping something from you. Even though there may not be a secret, the boss still hasn't informed you on what is going on. Your employees may feel this way all the time. It is very important to keep employees informed about issues that arise in the company even if it does not directly affect them.

Employees want to know about the company and they want to be involved. It is a good idea to have regular "catch-up" meetings, just to make sure that everyone is on the same page. Prepare employees if a major or even an out of routine event is going to happen, such as a visitor coming. Another way to boost motivation among employees is to hold meetings when the company is planning on changing existing policies. Ask for feed back from the employees and ask if they have any ideas about how to resolve the issue.

Ultimately it is up to you to create a work environment that is good for you and good for your employees. A wise person once said "You are only as strong as your weakest link". Increasing motivation among employees will make each link a little stronger and make your team a better one.

### **Motivate by Example: Five Things to Do that Will Motivate Others**

Motivating yourself can be simple for some people, but what if you have the need to motivate others. Motivation can come in all forms. Perhaps you are a parent and need to get your child to clean his or her room or maybe you have a teen that needs to make better grades. You could even be an employer that needs to get your employees excited about a new job or task. You can motivate others and sometimes the easiest way is by example.

Motivation is the reason why we do certain things. All people are different and will respond differently to motivation. Some are intrinsically motivated, meaning that they have the ability to

get themselves ready without the need of others. Others are extrinsically motivated, meaning that they need something such as rewards or encouragement to stay motivated. When you have the need to motivate others, it is helpful to know and understand what makes each person feel motivated. This can sometimes be difficult, but here are five things to do that will help you motivate others.

In order to motivate others, whether it is your child, spouse or employee, the first step of motivation is purpose. You must make them understand that the job or task you need them to complete has a purpose. Without a purpose, the person might wonder why that particular job or task is important.

If they fail to see a purpose, they might not see that the job is important and it will be difficult for them to become motivated. When you explain, or show that person that you need the task completed and why, they will better understand why it needs to be completed.

Another way to motivate others is by creating a sense of importance. When others feel that the work that they do, no matter how small or how big, they will feel motivated to get it done. To create a sense of importance around the job or task, you should show them that they have the power to make the project work.

It is easy for many people to give up trying when motivating others. This leads to one person, usually your self, doing the entire job. When you are in a work situation, this can lead to stress and the feeling of being overworked. It is important to let go some of those responsibilities and give out part of the jobs to others. Delegating responsibilities will make the other person feel more motivated because it says that you trust them.

People are also motivated by personal benefits. If someone knows that this particular job or chore will benefit him or her personally, they are more likely to feel motivated. This is when it is necessary to find what makes that person "tick" or what makes them want to do something. If it is a child who cleans their room, they may benefit from finding a long lost toy. Maybe an employee will get the added benefit of overtime hours or advancement in the work place. Rewards have a way of getting the most unmotivated person ready to work.

In addition, you can create motivation by example by staying excited and energized. When you are eager and ready to work, whether it is around your house or in your workplace, others will feel the same. When others look to you for guidance, then lead them by example.

If you stay motivated yourself, then others will follow. When you are motivated and always ready to tackle a project, other will feel the excitement and will want to join you. This is a great way to lead by example without telling your children or employees what they have to do. Motivation can be created by staying focused and energized.

The last thing you can do to help others feel motivated is by offering support and encouragement. Have empathy for those around you and when their motivation is slacking, instead of getting angry, offer support. Let them know that the work they do is important to you, and that without them the project is not possible. Have them understand that while the task may be difficult, it is not impossible. Encourage them without doing the job yourself and you will find that those around you have a better time staying motivated.

## **Motivation at Work**

Those who are successful in the workplace are usually those with a lot of drive and determination. These are the people who are motivated to work. Every person who works has a different reason for working. While most people do work for money, many others work because they love their jobs and because they want a sense of fulfillment. Others work because they want to help others or to feel accomplished in a certain field. There are lots of reasons why people are motivated to work. People work because they are motivated by certain reasons.

One reason why people are motivated to work is because of the money. This is the main reason why people work. Money is a major factor in working. Money is also the reason why most people are motivated to get degrees or higher training for their jobs. They want to better themselves in their workplace to make a higher salary.

Compensation for work helps pay the bills, puts food on the table, buys clothing for the kids and allows for people to enjoy leisure activities such as vacations. When people receive good pay for the work they do, they are more motivated to work harder and do better at their job. An employer who underestimates the power of money is making a mistake. Not fairly compensating an employee can mean losing that person to a high paying job. Money can motivated almost any employee to work harder.

After money, another reason why people spend eight hours or more a day at work is because they want recognition for their performance. Without proper recognition, employees will not be as motivated as they are when they are properly praised. Recognition can come in many forms though.

Employees want raises, promotions and recognition among fellow employees. In fact, after money, recognition is one of the main reasons why people search for better jobs. They want to work for a company where they feel secure with their future and know that they have a chance for promotion.

In addition, employees want others that work with them to feel equally responsible and work just as hard. Most employees feel that fellow workers should be fired or suffer demotions if they do not work as hard as they do. The failure to discipline non-working employees can result in a lack of motivation.

Another reason why people feel motivated to work is because they want their employer to recognize what is important to them. Those who work want flexibility in their schedules and feel that if their employer cannot offer this, then they will look for another job. They feel more motivated to do a better job when the employer can offer good communications.

Workers want their supervisors to know that they have good ideas too and they do not want to feel bad about expressing their ideas. Employees also will feel more motivated when they feel comfortable about talking to their supervisors even if it is a complaint. They will take comfort in knowing that they have sympathetic supervisors and can go to them when they need to express problems or concerns in the workplace.

Employers can also boost morale and motivation among employees by understand what each employee needs. Some may feel that they want to be in control of their work environment. They will not feel motivated if they constantly have a supervisor looking over their shoulder and critiquing their work.

On the other hand, if they understand and know what to expect, they can give you better work, too. Workers will feel more motivated if they can start their work and know that their supervisors trust them and what they do each day. They want to know when they make mistakes so they do not make the same mistake again. This helps them have the self-confidence at work.

The best way to promote motivation throughout the workplace is to provide an environment where all employees feel valued and important. It is necessary for supervisors to understand that each individual is different and is motivated for different reasons. They need to understand what each employee wants and their reason for working. There are many opportunities to motivate employees and they will respond to this by giving their best work they possibly can.

### **Motivation in the Workplace: Decisions, Decisions...**

Imagine this situation and try and determine how you would feel as an employee in the situation.

You have been working for this company for five years now. Everyday you do almost the same thing. You don't really know anyone that you work with other than a casual hello here and there in the office. This is because you stay very busy just doing your job. One day you receive a memo stating that the dress code in the office is going to change. Everyone must wear long pants each day.

There is no explanation, and since you usually wear a skirt, you assume that it has something to do with you, but are never told why. How would you feel in this situation? Would it make you feel better if a problem with the dress code was brought to your attention and you were given the opportunity to give feedback on the issue?

#### **Consider this.**

You have been working at your job in a factory for about six months now. Ever since you began working there you have thought that the policy concerning time sheets could be done better. After you had gotten to know your manager a little better you make a suggestion to him about how to change the policy.

He tells you that there is a suggestion box in the lounge and that he thinks it is a good idea to add the suggestion to that box. He also tells you that the factory manager reads the suggestions once a week. You put your suggestion in the box in October and in January there has been no change or any talk of change. No one has approached you about the situation. Would you feel ignored? Would you feel that your suggestions meant very little to the management?

It is common to feel that you should be able to have some say so in decisions being made that will ultimately affect your working environment. Most say that they do not want to be the one to make the final decisions, however they would at least like for their opinions to be heard. In order to motivate employees through allowing them to make decisions, there are some things that you should do:

Do not punish or reprimand someone because of their input. Everyone's opinions should be considered, even if they seem outrageous. You will build confidence and motivation by acknowledging everyone's opinions.

Be sure to give the person who is making the decisions ample time and tools to make a good decision. The person should not feel rushed or otherwise burdened by the process.

Try not to override decisions once they have been made. After you give a person or a group of people the power to make a decision, let the decision stand. However, it is not a good idea to voluntarily let the person fail in order to teach a lesson to that person. It is a better idea to coach the person before the decision is made.

Set a clear standard of expectation. Let the person or group know exactly the issue at hand and what you would like for them to do.

Recognize those who take part in a group to make decisions. These people should be rewarded for their time and effort that they put forth to make the company better.

There are times when employees think of involvement as a bad thing. They may think that employee involvement is something that isn't their job or something that they shouldn't have to do! The overall goal here is to do what the employees feel comfortable with. It is not necessary to form groups and committees for simple decisions.

If overused, groups and committees may become a hassle for your employees, which is certainly not what you want to do. You want to make the employee feel that their opinion is valuable and useful. You should make your employees feel as though they are capable of making their own decisions and capable of giving feedback that is worth something. This will increase motivation and participation as well as overall productivity for your company.

## **29 Motivations Quotes for Business and Other Work Environments**

Some days a motivational quote can provide a quick pick-me-up for employees and even management. They can be a breath of fresh air when it comes to a drab afternoon. These are also a great way to jazz up a newsletter or a memo or even to simply print and attach to a bulletin board. Using quotes like these are perfect ways to create a motivational and successful work environment.

As Mr. Rick Pitino says "The only way to get people to like working hard is to motivate them. Today, people must understand why they're working hard. Every individual in an organization is

motivated by something different." --Rick Pitino

### **Motivational Quotes:**

Mahatma Gandhi: You must be the change you wish to see in the world.

Jim Stovall: You need to be aware of what others are doing, applaud their efforts, acknowledge their successes, and encourage them in their pursuits. When we all help one another, everybody wins.

Robert Frost: The only way around is through.

Warren Buffett: You only have to do a very few things right in your life so long as you don't do too many things wrong.

Les Brown: You must remain focused on your journey to greatness.

Theodore Roosevelt: Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.

Charles F. Kettering: Where there is an open mind, there will always be a frontier

Henry Ford: Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're right!

Jim Rohn: You must either modify your dreams or magnify your skills.

William Hazlitt: Who likes not his business, his business likes not him.

Denis Waitley: Winners take time to relish their work, knowing that scaling the mountain is what makes the view from the top so exhilarating.

Le Iacocca: Management is nothing more than motivating other people.

Dwight D.: Motivation is the art of getting people to do what you want them to do because they want to do it.

Drucker: The most serious mistakes are not being made as a result of wrong answers. The truly dangerous thing is asking the wrong question

Max Schmelling: Why did I want to win? Because I didn't want to lose!

J. Paul Getty: To succeed in business, to reach the top, an individual must know all it is possible to know about that business.

Pierre Corneille: To win without risk is to triumph without glory.

Tony Dorsett: To succeed... You need to find something to hold on to, something to motivate you, something to inspire you.

James Broughton: The only limits are, as always, those of vision.

George Kneller: To think creatively, we must be able to look afresh at what we normally take for granted.

Peter McWilliams: To the degree we're not living our dreams; our comfort zone has more control of us than we have over ourselves.

Johann Wolfgang Von Goeth: To think is easy. To act is difficult. To act as one thinks is the most difficult.

Tryon Edwards: To waken interest and kindle enthusiasm is the sure way to teach easily and successfully.

Spanish Proverb: Tomorrow is often the busiest day of the week.

Lyndon B. Johnson: The noblest search is the search for excellence

Charles M. Schwab: The man who does not work for the love of work but only for money is not likely to neither make money nor find much fun in life.

Chinese Proverb: The miracle is not to fly in the air, or to walk on the water; but to walk on the earth.

John Naisbitt: The new source of power is not money in the hands of a few, but information in the hands of many.

Henry Ford: The man who will use his skill and constructive imagination to see how much he can give for a dollar, instead of how little he can give for a dollar, is bound to succeed.

Many employers will add these quotes inside the employees' paycheck envelope. Sometimes it may be a motivational quote, other times a silly antidote. Include employee birthdays or other important events to help your employees feel a part of the team.

### **Promote Self Discipline and Increase Employee Motivation**

Employers often face the problem of how to keep their employees motivated and excited about their job. Motivating others is not always an easy task and many companies wonder how to get their workers ready to tackle a job. One way to look at motivating employees is to use self-discipline. When an employer is able to use self-discipline, it often creates motivation among employees.

In order to create motivation among employees, it is essential to create a work environment where all employees feel valued and know that the job they do is important. When employers do not practice self-discipline and create this type of environment, employees will not feel motivated or encouraged about their work. When creating motivation in the workplace,

employers need to look at how to encourage their employees, and how to develop relationships that work well in the work place.

There are several steps that a supervisor can take to create motivation in the workplace. The first step to take is to make expectations very clear to employees. A job description is a good place to start, but sometimes workers need more specific rules and guidelines. They need to understand what will and will not be tolerated at work and consequences if these expectations are not met.

Another way to create motivation among the workplace is to recognize positive behavior. When you see an employee using self-discipline and motivation, make sure you take the time to compliment and praise the employee. Make the employee feel appreciated and let them know that their contribution is important.

When this is done, not only will that employee feel good about their job, but also others will feel motivated to show you good work. Also, consider rewards for employees who exceed expectations in the form of special assignments, leadership roles, more pay, time off or even special job training.

When you want to create motivation among employees, treat your workers like adults. It will not encourage them if you talk down to them or treat them like children. They do not need each rule outlined for them. They know that their work needs to be consistent and do not expect you to hover over their work. Also remember that while you need your employees to work, they need time to socialize. Give them that opportunity during the day and they will provide you with better results.

Workplaces can also increase motivation when good training is provided for all employees. When a new employee is hired, give them the chance to fit into the business by training them properly for the job. This will not only help them do their job, but it will also give them the self-confidence to work independently. You can also provide opportunities for your current employees to train and learn new skills and jobs. Employees want to do a better job and advance their career. These new skills can help motivate them to do a good job.

In addition, motivating employees can be easy when you keep communication open. Allow your employees to come to you when they have a new idea or even when they have a complaint. Many businesses let their employees use email to contact supervisors. This is just one way to keep the line of communications open. Also, it is crucial for supervisors to communicate with their workers, too. If there is a job that is not being done well, employers should let their office know. When communication is kept open, employees will feel more comfortable working in that environment.

Employers can also help keep their employees doing a better job by providing clear policies and procedures and making those available to all employees. If you find you need to add a new policy, ask those that work for you and get their input before making it a rule. Let your employees know whom they can go to if they need to report something.

Also, it is important that employees feel safe when they have a question or concern about something that is happening in the workplace. If they need to report something that makes

them uncomfortable, they will lack motivation. It is also important to enforce all policies and guidelines every time.

### **Q&A: Find Out What Motivates Your Employees.**

Motivation is essential in the workplace. It is your job as a manager to motivate your employees. To do this one must learn what kinds of things will motivate them as each person is motivated in different ways. If you were to ask an employee or an applicant "What motivates you?" You might find that it is a hard question to answer.

Sometimes it is more effective to ask other types of questions in which the answers give you clues as to what kinds of things motivate a person. One of the most effective times to find out these things begins with the first meeting. During an initial job interview you can find out a lot about a potential employee. These are some good questions to ask employees in order to find out what motivates them to do a better job.

#### **"Describe an ideal working environment for you"**

This question will tell you a lot about whether a potential employee is a good fit for your company. This will tell you if your future employee will be more suited for a desk job, a job in which he or she primarily would prefer to work in groups or alone, or perhaps if they would prefer to work outside or in the field. This question can tell you a lot about what kind of environment your employee will work the most efficiently in.

"Imagine that in the future, ten years from now, you are receiving an award. What would the award be for? What is the award and under what circumstances did you receive the award?"

A question like this one will tell you about what kinds of goals that the person has for himself. Also it will tell you what is meaningful to that person. One person might say that he is a great manager, which would indicate that advancement is something that might motivate this person.

Another person might say that he or she is receiving an award for community service, which might indicate that the person is motivated by helping others. This type of question can be worded a bit differently, but the outcome is the same, you will be able to tell what the goals of the person are which is an excellent way to determine what motivates that person.

#### **"What goals outside of work have you set?"**

This is a great question that will allow you to become more familiar with what types of things motivate a person outside of work. This question is different from asking what kinds of career goals that the person might have set since at times a person is inclined to say things they think you might want to hear.

This question is different in that people are less likely to do that. Maybe they are setting personal goals such as, losing weight or being a better husband or wife. These kinds of answers would indicate that family and personal happiness is motivating to this person.

Perhaps they want to climb a mountain or go skydiving! These types of answers might indicate that the person is motivated by new and exciting challenges.

**“When you are ready to retire, what one thing would you have achieved in order to feel that you were successful in your job?”**

This question will let you know to some extent what the person defines as successful. One person might say that if they had come to work on time and did the best they could do everyday then they have been successful. Another person might say that if they had saved enough money for retirement then they will feel successful. The idea of success is truly an indicator of what kinds of things motivate a person.

**“Tell me about a time when you motivated another person on the job.”**

When a person can tell you about what motivated another person, especially if they were the ones doing the motivating, then you will know that they are “motivatable”. In other words they are able to move forward. They are able to be motivated to work harder to achieve goals set either by the company or personally.

Use these questions to get clues into what kinds of things will be motivators for your employees. They will also help you to see what kind of job that is best suited for the individual. A job that is a perfect fit for an employee is a job in which that employee will be happy and motivate others around them.

### **Rules Smules: Minimizing Rules and Restrictions Can Make for a More Motivating Work Environment**

People are motivated by a variety of things. A person’s motivation can be as different or unique as they are. Some people are motivated to change their appearance while others are motivated by their own happiness or their family’s happiness.

Others are motivated by money. When it comes to work, many people are not motivated to do much of anything except show up and collect a paycheck. It is our job as managers to create an environment in which employees are motivated to do a better job and move forward.

A popular Gallop Poll stated that about 20% of people questioned described themselves as “actively disengaged” at work. Most of these people also said that they were not given the proper tools to do their job or that they were not given clear directions for completing the task. From this Poll, we are shown statistics that are amazing.

These employees who are being described as “actively disengaged” are costing employers more than 300 billion dollars a year! This same Poll showed that these people are more likely to miss work or to be late and are also described as less loyal to their jobs.

One of the most common mistakes that employers make is creating too many rules and regulations for employees to follow. This is highly un-motivating for the employee! They feel

that they are not being allowed to creatively carry out tasks for fear of constantly breaking a rule! Furthermore, their feelings were likely not considered when these rules were created in the first place. Feeling as though you are an active member of the team and that your feelings are considered when making decisions (even when they are not) is very motivating for an employee!

Making employees feel that they are not trusted is another major mistake that management often makes. Creating rules and policies that question an employee's trustworthiness is common practice in major businesses. For example only allowing a certain number of days off when a family member dies assuming that if there was no limit on the number of days, the employee would take advantage of their time off.

These are some tips for how to create a work environment in which employees do not feel like they are not trusted and that they can express themselves: An environment that fosters motivation in the workplace.

### **Guidelines for a Motivating Work Environment**

Keep rules and policies to a minimum. Rules are there to protect your business and create organization, if a rule does not serve that purpose only, then you will need to consider retiring that particular policy.

After the rules are established, it is essential that all employees know what is expected of them. Make sure that the rules and/or policies are published and posted in a manner in which all employees are aware.

Create a code of conduct. Make this a collaborative effort which involves all or most of the employees that work with you. Use this to identify values that should be held on high in your organization.

Follow the rules. As a manager it is your job to be sure that not only the employees are following the rules, but that you are as well. All members of management should follow the rules that have been established. The employees should notice a sense of consistency from the management team rather than employees knowing which managers will let them "get away" with things while others will not.

Management should recognize and address inappropriate behaviors on an as-needed basis rather than picking and/or "waiting" for someone to mess up. Use counseling or a progressive discipline approach rather than a "you're in trouble" approach.

Clearly communicate work place expectations and guidelines for professional behavior.

Ask for employee feedback on rules and policies that are in use. Also ask for ideas about editing the policies. Sometimes your employees have great ideas; after all, they do the job everyday!

Be sure that these newfound ideas of consistency in enforcing policy don't come as a shock to employees. IF you have been letting employees "get away" with things in the past, you should

meet with them and explain the policy as it is published and let them know about your change and the change that is expected in them.

## **Holidays and Celebrations Build a Team Environment and Employee Motivation**

Holidays are usually considered something that is celebrated with family and usually means a day off from work. However, celebrating holidays can bring employees closer together just as it does a family!

Close working relationships between employees, and between employees and management, can mean building of motivation throughout your workplace. Building high morale and motivation at work leads to higher productivity and an overall more positive work environment. The celebration of holidays and traditions can increase employee motivation and build morale.

These traditions are easy to plan and don't have to take a lot of money or time, simply acknowledging the holiday with a small get together is enough to let the employees know that you care about them on a personal level. These traditions can range from a food drive around

Christmas and/or Thanksgiving to costume parties or a dress up day in the office around Halloween. Even something as simple as encouraging employees to wear green around St Patrick's Day can create a motivating environment in the office. These kinds of traditions are a fun way to get employees involved and working together.

It is a good idea to stay away from celebrating holidays that are related to a specific religious sector in order to honor the feelings of all of the employees. You might want to have a winter celebration around Christmas time instead of a Christmas celebration. Another idea is to come up with some fun ideas for traditions that are specific to your company. "Funky Tie day" is one that is commonly celebrated in offices around the US.

These are some simple guidelines to follow when planning an employee motivating tradition in the workplace.

### **Create a group of people to organize the event.**

Ask for volunteers to plan company parties or events. Remember that these should be on a voluntary basis only. It is important to get people involved from all parts of the company. For example, you might ask a member of management as well as someone from accounting.

### **Allow new members to join the planning groups each year.**

This will foster a way to get to know new employees and will also be a sort of training for when the older members of the planning committee leave the company.

### **Pay attention to special needs.**

Be sure that there is plenty of food for the vegetarian on your staff. Be sure that there are plenty of low fat deserts for the dieters on your staff. Be aware of any food allergies an employee may have. Some food should be labeled clearly with ingredients to avoid a serious food allergy reaction at your business event. These kinds of details can make the difference in a successful, motivating event and one that is irritating and sometimes disrespectful to some employees.

### **Keep good records.**

If you are doing a charity event with your employees it is essential to keep records from year to year. This is a highly motivating part of the event. You will want to "beat" last years record, this is a great way to create a team like work environment and also to promote motivation. Even if you are not doing a charity event, it is helpful from year to year to know how much food or supplies were purchased and for how many people.

### **Have plenty of volunteers on board.**

Make certain that all the needed jobs have been assigned and that there are enough people to cover the work. When a group pulls together they build motivation for the work that they are doing. They form a team. However when there is not enough people to complete a task, everyone feels as if they are being treated unfairly.

Motivation in the workplace is essential for a good working environment. Different things motivate different people, and it is important that you recognize this. Some will not want to participate in these activities and it is best to respect their wishes. But for most, creating new company traditions and celebrating holidays is a great way to increase motivation which will ultimately increase team work and productivity in the office!

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