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## 10 Ways To Stimulate Employee Motivation

By Paul Graham

Today's fast-moving business environment demands that the effective manager be both a

well-organized administrator and highly adept in understanding people's basic needs and behaviour in the workplace. Gaining commitment, nurturing talent, and ensuring employee motivation and productivity require open communication and trust between managers and staff.

### 1. Understand their behaviour

People at work naturally tend to adopt instinctive modes of behaviour that are self-protective rather than open and collaborative. This explains why emotion is a strong force in the workplace and why management often reacts violently to criticisms and usually seeks to control rather than take risks. So, in order to eliminate this kind of perspective and to increase employee motivation, it is best that you influence behaviour rather than to change personalities. Insisting what you expect from your employees will only worsen the situation.

### 2. Be sure that people's lower-level needs are met.

People have various kinds of needs. Examples of lower-level needs are salary, job security, and working conditions. In order to increase employee motivation, you have to meet these basic needs. Consequently, failures with basic needs nearly always explain dissatisfaction among staff. Satisfaction, on the other hand, springs from meeting higher-level needs, such as responsibility progress, and personal growth. When satisfaction is met, chances are employee motivation is at hand.

### 3. Encourage pride

People need to feel that their contribution is valued and unique. If you are a manager, seek to exploit this pride in others, and be proud of your own ability to handle staff with positive results. This, in turn, will encourage employee motivation among your people.

### 4. Listen carefully

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In many areas of a manager's job, from meetings and appraisals to telephone calls, listening plays a key role. Listening encourages employee motivation and, therefore, benefits both you and your staff. So make an effort to understand people's attitudes by careful listening and questioning and by giving them the opportunity to express themselves.

### 5. Build confidence

Most people suffer from insecurity at some time. The many kinds of anxiety that affect people in organizations can feed such insecurity, and insecurity impedes employee motivation. Your antidote, therefore, is to build confidence by giving recognition, high-level tasks, and full information. In doing so, you not only refurbish employee motivation but boost productivity as well.

### 6. Encourage contact

Many managers like to hide away behind closed office doors, keeping contact to a minimum. That makes it easy for an administrator, but hard to be a leader. It is far better to keep your office door open and to encourage people to visit you when the door is open. Go out of your way to chat to staff on an informal basis. Keep in mind that building rapport with your staff will effectively increase employee motivation.

### 7. Use the strategic thinking of all employees.

It is very important to inform people about strategic plans and their own part in achieving the strategies. Take trouble to improve their understanding and to win their approval, as this will have a highly positive influence on performance and increasing employee motivation as well.

### 8. Develop trust

The quality and style of leadership are major factors in gaining employee motivation and trust. Clear decision making should be coupled with a collaborative, collegiate approach. This entails taking people into your confidence and explicitly and openly valuing their contributions. By simply giving your staff the opportunity to show that you can trust them is enough to increase employee motivation among them.

### 9. Delegate decisions

Pushing the power of decision-making downward reduces pressure on senior management. It motivates people on the lower levels because it gives them a vote of confidence. Also, because the decision is taken nearer to the point of action, it is more likely to be correct. Consequently, by encouraging them to choose their own working methods, make decisions, and giving them responsibility for meeting the agreed goal will encourage employee motivation among your staff.

### 10. Appraising to motivate

When choosing methods of assessing your staff's performance, always make sure that the end result has a positive effect on employee motivation and increases people's sense of self-worth. Realistic

targets, positive feedback, and listening are key factors.

If you follow these simple steps in increasing employee motivation, rest assured you will have a good working relationship with your staff at the same time boost you company's productivity. Just bear in mind that people are employed to get good results for the company. Their rates of success are intrinsically linked to how they are directed, reviewed, rewarded, trusted, and motivated by the management.

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### **Effective Ways to Motivate Employees**

**By Myron Curry**

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##### WHAT'S THE DRIVE

What is it that drives an employee? More specifically, what is it that causes an employee to WANT to do his or her job? After all, the answer to this question is the key to the motivation of employees and employer happiness. And, even more important than knowing what it is that motivates an employee is whether or not this "motivation" is something that will cause an employee to go through the motions of doing the job or instill actual desire for a job well done in the employee's mind.

The answers to these questions and more are what should always be on every employer's mind if they are to create effective, productive workforces. A lack of motivation is a true killer, as anyone certainly knows.

##### SHOW ME THE MONEY...OR NOT

Popularized by the movie Jerry Maguire, starring Tom Cruise and Renee Zellweger, "Show me the money" has become a commonly used term in society. And, often, this is the basis for what most people think is at the top of the list for employee motivation. But, is it?

Naturally, higher pay is never frowned upon. There is not a person in the world that couldn't use more money. Between bills, children, higher education, and personal desires, among many other reasons, money is a factor that can never be ignored. It is a need that we must all have filled.

Many companies use money as incentive for motivation. Is this wrong? Not necessarily. Big pay raises and bonuses are always something that a person can use and these are things that will certainly never be turned down. Cash is a motivator that will always be popular. And, if possible, money is always a good choice to use for employee motivation because who doesn't like money?

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But, money should not be the ONLY tool used from the toolbox of motivation. There are many other choices for motivational increase. In fact, many employees who claim money is the only thing that will drive their motivation higher do so because there is a lack of any other form of compensation. This frame of mind adheres to the comment so often heard, "Well, they better pay me more money or give me a bonus because I'm sure not getting anything else out of working here." In other words, there sure isn't anything else the employee is receiving that even remotely resembles compensation to increase motivation.

### SOMETHING ELSE

Employee contribution is something that can increase employee motivation. If an employee is regularly able to contribute thoughts, ideas, and suggestions to problems at hand or regular work activities, that is a feeling of accomplishment which goes a long way. It makes an employee feel as though he or she is important and, hence, their motivation is elevated.

Recognition is another form of motivation. If all an employee hears is the things he or she does wrong, the opposite affect of motivation will occur. Of course, an employee is going to do things wrong, at times. But, they will inevitably do things right, as well. Let them know when this happens, always.

If an employee feels he or she has the respect of his or her peers and colleagues, this is another motivation booster. Stifle negative comments in the workplace. Do not allow employees to talk down to one another and/or "drag each other through the mud". Likewise, make sure you don't do the same when other employees are able to see it happen to a fellow co-worker. That's bad for moral and only downplays motivation.

Keeping an employee "in the loop" is something else that is important to motivation. When an employee feels he or she is not up-to-date with what is occurring in the company or their department, that is a message to the employee that says, "You are not important." That's not the kind of message that increases motivation. Keep information flowing to each employee; let them know what the company is doing and the direction it is taking.

Stay flexible. Make an absolute effort to ensure your employee is not tied up in red tape. If an employee is not able to solve problems with a degree of flexibility because there are too many company rules hampering common sense progress, an employee feels nothing but frustration. Motivation is not built on frustration.

Constant check-in with higher-ups when working on a project undermines an employee's confidence and willingness to think for themselves. It also deteriorates motivation.

Make sure plenty of sufficient resources are available for an employee's use. Motivation cannot thrive if an employee is constantly faced with having inadequate resources to do the job.

Create a fun and stimulating work place. Let everyone address each other on a first name basis or have a "casual dress day". Encourage employees to create a work environment that is as comfortable as possible and not so office-like by bringing in personal pictures and things such as plants, for

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example. This will only promote creativity and, in the long run, increase motivation.

Communicate with your employee. Find out what interests them and what doesn't. Speaking with an employee frequently shows that you care about them in more ways than simply wanting them to keep up with productivity. This will increase an employee's motivation as well.

### POINTS TO REMEMBER

Keep these points in mind and motivation will have a chance to soar:

- \* Employee contribution important
- \* Recognition from an employer a must
- \* Retaining respect of peers and colleagues
- \* Keeping employee informed
- \* Stay flexible and make sure the employee can avoid as much red tape as possible
- \* Constant check-in with higher-ups only leads to micro managing and lack of motivation
- \* Make sure an employee has sufficient resources available to them
- \* Create a fun and stimulating work environment
- \* Make sure you communicate

Keeping these methods of compensation in mind is what it takes to understand what it is that drives your employee to want to do a better job. They must WANT to do a better job or the work they do will never be as excellent as it could be. If you are ever in doubt as to what it is that drives your employee, simply ask, either in a group meeting or one-on-one. In fact, asking an employee what it is that motivates him or her is a good idea right from the start. Then, you can always be sure of what to provide.

All in all, make sure that money isn't the only thing you can offer an employee to increase his or her motivation. If it is, then as soon as the money is better somewhere else, your employee's motivation will definitely increase...working for the other company.

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