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**Eight Ways to Motivate Part Time Employees**

**By Ed Sykes**

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In most cases, part-time employees present a special challenge when it comes to motivation. They do the "grunt" work, have little career choices, are often focused on other goals outside of your organization (college, hobbies, etc.), and are treated as outsiders by full-time employees. So what's a manager to do? How do we turn our part-time employees into outstanding employees?

The following are eight proven techniques to motivate your part-time employees:

**1. Orient them properly.**

Take time to describe job duties and go over what is allowed and not allowed, e.g., personal telephone calls, use of organization property, etc. Avoid confusion by designating one person to orient and give assignments to part-timers. This will eliminate the "well he told me one thing and she said something else" situation that can lead to a demoralized part-time employee.

**2. Find Out What Motivates Them.**

Ask your part-timers questions so that you can find out how to best motivate them. In my teambuilding and leadership programs, I discuss the "Sykes Seven Questions of Motivation" that you need to have the answers to if you are truly motivating your employees. One question you can ask your part-timer is, "What do you want to do in the future?" By asking the question, you can relate their future goals to your present needs. For example, the part-timer says he/she wants to be an artist. Listen, acknowledge, and embrace the answer and realize that you can possibly apply their skills now by allowing them to create recognition posters (I know you are already doing these, right?), work on the organization newsletter, or any other art project that will benefit your organization.

If you don't ask, you won't know what the hidden talents of these part-timers are.

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### 3. Check Yourself When Communicating

Sometime part-timers are looked at as an unnecessary evil. It may be great to have the extra hands, but not so great to deal with them. First, realize you are fortunate enough to have the extra help. Most people are anxious to have the extra help. Second, it is your job to develop them. Third, only communicate the positive when communicating with them.

Remember, for your part-timers, this may be their first experience in the workplace. They may be a little scared and may show it in a number of different ways (rebellious against requests, not working with others, or showing up late or not at all). Our job is to check ourselves whenever we communicate with part-timers so that they feel welcome. Check yourself when communicating requests so that they are always discussed with positive expectations. Check yourself when communicating with part-timer and full-timers so that both groups know you are glad to have them. It will go a long way to letting the part-timer feel motivated to be there.

### 4. Assign a mentor

Even after proper orientation, part-time workers will be confused. Assign them a full-time worker to be a mentor. The part-time worker will feel more like part of the team, and the mentor will feel good about the added responsibility.

**Important:** Pick someone who is patient, has good communication skills, is motivated to do the task, and has the time to answer questions.

### 5. Mix up the workload.

Don't overload part-time workers with "grunt" tasks only. It's a common temptation to assign all low-level work to part-time employees. Don't do it! It's demoralizing. Remember, "Variety is the spice of work life." This is where you would apply the information learned in technique number two to mix up the assignments.

### 6. Eliminate any Hard Feelings

Eliminate any perceived or real hard feelings between part-timers and full-timers immediately. Explain to full-time employees why you're bringing in part-time help and that their jobs are not being threatened.

**Important:** Sell them on the benefits of bringing in part-timers (make jobs easier, allow them to learn management skills, etc.)

### 7. Offer Flexible Hours

Many part-time employees are working part-time to meet special situations (College, family health situations, childcare issues, transportation issues, etc.). Use that to your advantage. By allowing flexible work hours, you'll retain your part-time workers longer, eliminating the need for costly retraining.

**Important:** Make sure part-time employees communicate and clear all scheduling conflicts in advance to avoid confusion.

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### 8. Offer Incentives

Most companies don't offer part-time employees incentives. Believe me, the part-time employee knows and resents this policy right away. That's a big mistake. Set up an incentive program based on your organization's revenue or behavior you need to see from the part-time employee. In the case of incentives for behavior, give a bonus or incentive for the following:

- \* Perfect attendance
- \* Perfect on time attendance
- \* Working well with others
- \* Working well with full-time employees
- \* Taking initiative to solve problems
- \* Great customer service

Important: Recognize the part-time worker as soon as the action was taken and praise publicly (my article "Appreciate to Motivate" will explain how).

If you follow the eight steps mentioned, we guarantee that you will be well on the way to motivated, productive part-time employees with less turnover and retraining. You will accomplish far more in less

time without the stress.

Ed Sykes is a professional speaker, author, and success coach in the areas of leadership, motivation, stress management, customer service, and team building. You can e-mail him at <mailto:esykes@thesykesgrp.com>, or call him at (757) 427-7032. Go to his web site, <http://www.thesykesgrp.com>, and signup for the newsletter, OnPoint, and receive the free ebook, "Empowerment and Stress Secrets for the Busy Professional."

## **Boost Employee Morale With An Employee Incentive Program**

**By Trevor Marshall**

Is there a lull in your office? Are your employees not satisfied anymore with the way that you are manning the place? Good managers know from their own observations that employee attitude affects their work and eventually the company's output.

When your employees have a happy and healthy attitude the company will be able to reap the many benefits of this through the constant flow of good business as well as higher profits. But what if the employees are actually not happy with the way management is handling the company? Is your company already headed towards a downward spiral? Maybe. But it is certainly never too late for the company to turn things around by implementing new rules and regulations that are employee friendly.

### 1. Not Overly Competative

It is essential that your incentive program will actually inspire and motivate them to work efficiently and

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not just be competitive with each other. Healthy competition among the company's employees is good but too much of it may also cause the company to disintegrate. A certain level of camaraderie is needed in order to have a harmonious working environment that is conducive to working efficiently and productively.

### 2. Clearly Define Your Goals

When it comes to creating the right kind of employee incentive program for the company, the management should be able to set some goals concerning the program. This way, the management will have a clear view of what they really want this employee incentive program to do, and gauge whether or not it actually worked. The company should still be very much hands-on with the whole employee incentive program to ensure that the outcome of the employee incentive program will be good.

- Goals must be reasonable! Don't expect the program to result in a major increase in profits, and don't expect the results to appear right away
- Provide ways for employees to provide highly creative ideas
- Encourage a good working environment. A clean, fresh environment will motivate employees
- Set up a review committee that is qualified to judge the results of the program. This is perhaps more important than the program itself
- Ensure that appropriate recognition must be given to employees who share the most noteworthy suggestions

It is best that when you are starting an employee incentive program that you set a strict set of rules that will be clear to each and every one of the company's employees starting with –

### 3. Let Employees Provide Suggestions Easily

- Who is eligible to join the employee incentive program?
- When it comes to an eligible suggestion, what should employees take at heart?
- Any suggestion no matter how farfetched should be allowed (as long as they are not vulgar or offensive)

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