

# EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

## MAXIMIZING THE PRODUCTIVITY OF YOUR PEOPLE

The first rule of management is to surround yourself with high quality employees. Your employees are your greatest asset and no matter how efficient your technology and equipment may be, it is no match for the effectiveness and efficiency of your staff. The talent level of your personnel will have a major impact on how successful you are as a manager.

All organizations are concerned with what should be done to achieve sustained high levels of performance through people. This means giving close attention to how individuals can best be motivated through such means as incentives, rewards, leadership and, most importantly, the work they do and the organisation context within which they carry out that work. The aim is to develop motivation processes and a work environment that will help ensure that individuals deliver results in accordance with the expectations of management.

Many business managers, entrepreneurs, and CEOs are not aware of the effects that motivation can (and does) have on their business, and it is therefore important they learn and understand the factors that determine positive motivation in the workplace. Lee Lacocca said, "Motivation is everything. You can do the work of two people, but you can't be two people. Instead, you have to inspire the next guy down the line and get him to inspire his people."

Hear this; the size of your business is irrelevant: whether you are trying to get the best out of sixty of your staff or just one, everyone needs some form of motivation.

What is Motivation? Let us look at it from this angle: A motive is a reason for doing something. Motivation is concerned with the factors that influence people to behave or act in certain ways. Motivation is the force that makes us do things: this is a result of our individual needs being satisfied (or met) so that we have inspiration to complete the task.

These needs vary from person to person as everybody has their individual needs to motivate themselves. Depending on how motivated we are, it may further determine the effort we put into our work and therefore increase the standard of the output.

Motivation is something that is approached differently by different businesses and the responsibility of its integration lies with all immediate supervisors of staff. However, it is the business owner who must initiate motivation as a strategy to attain corporate goals.

Motivation can have an effect on the output of your business and concerns both quantity and quality. See it this way: your business relies heavily on the efficiency of your production staff to make sure that products are manufactured in numbers that meet demand for the week. If these employees lack the motivation to produce completed products to meet the demand, then you face a problem leading to disastrous consequences.

Motivational practices in the workplace are most likely to function effectively if they are based on proper understanding of what is involved—that is to say, managers should understand the employee dynamics. Employees have different needs, different work styles, and different personality types amongst them. Therefore, managers should not just motivate for motivating sake but should seek to understand each employee’s personality and motivate them accordingly. As Stephen Covey said, “Seek first to understand, and then to be understood.” Everyone is different, and employees work and learn in different ways.

Motivating other people is about getting them to move in the direction you want them to go in order to achieve a result. Motivating yourself is about setting the direction independently and then taking a course of action which will ensure that you get there. Motivation can be described as goal-directed behaviour. People are motivated when they expect that a course of action is likely to lead to the attainment of a goal and a valued reward—one that satisfies their needs.

As a peak performance expert, Ashley, wrote; “When we suggest factors (or needs) that determine the motivation of employees in the workplace, almost everyone would immediately think of a high salary. This answer is correct for the reason that some employees will be motivated by money, but mostly wrong for the reason that it does not satisfy others (to a lasting degree). This supports the statement that human motivation is a personal characteristic, and not a one fits all option.” Personally, I have come across people with heavy salary and yet demotivated in their jobs. John Clark said, “Motivation is basically having a clear distinction between getting employees to do something and getting employees to *want* to do something.”

Well-motivated employees are those with clearly defined goals who take action that they expect will achieve those goals. Such people may be self-motivated, and as long as this is, they are going in the right direction to achieve what they are there to achieve, then this is the best form of motivation. Most employees, however, need to be motivated to a greater or lesser degree. This is where the motivators like us are needed to fire up your employees to achieve peak performance in attaining high level productivity.

The organisation as a whole can provide the context within which high levels of motivation can be achieved by providing incentives and rewards, satisfying work, and opportunities for learning and growth. But managers still have a major part to play in using their motivating skills to get people to give of their best, and to make use of the motivational processes provided by the organisation. As Bob Nelson said, “An employee’s motivation is a direct result of the sum of interactions with his or her manager.” As a manager, you should motivate and encourage individual’s commitment to a group. The greater the loyalty of an employee toward the group, the greater is the motivation among the members to achieve the goals of the group, and the greater the probability that the group will achieve its goals and meet the organizational objectives.

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