



# Keep your people motivated from day to day

## The challenge

What is the difference between employees who simply “put in the time” to earn their pay and employees who perform exceptionally well? Very often, it’s a question of motivation. Indeed, motivation is a key driver that not only gives people the impetus to do their job, but also to go the extra mile. Yet, motivation should never be taken for granted. People may easily become demoralized by boredom, disappointment, anxiety or conflict. Managers should thus take care to stimulate motivation from day to day, in a number of different ways, above and beyond purely financial rewards.

## Key motivation drivers

To reinforce employee motivation, managers must act in three directions simultaneously:

| 1 PROVIDE IMPETUS  |  |
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| ARTICULATE CLEAR AND STIMULATING OBJECTIVES  | HELP PEOPLE EMBRACE THEIR OBJECTIVES   |
| <p>People have trouble feeling motivated when they don’t know what is expected of them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be <b>specific and concrete</b>, but don’t dictate the procedure to follow.<br/>E.g. Don’t ask someone to “<i>improve service quality</i>,” but rather, “<i>reduce customer queues</i>.”</li><li>• Articulate your expectations so that you can <b>measure the results</b>.<br/>E.g. Don’t ask someone to “<i>improve productivity</i>,” but rather “<i>improve production by x% with the same resources</i>.”</li><li>• Set <b>deadlines</b>.<br/>To be precise and credible, objectives must come with a deadline.</li><li>• Be <b>ambitious, but realistic</b>.<br/>Overcoming challenges is a source of pride. Ambitious objectives spur people to make efforts. At the same time, unattainable objectives are demoralizing. Objectives should therefore be ambitious, yet still feasible.</li></ul> | <p>Four drivers can help employees accept their objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Involve</b> them in defining their objectives.</li><li>• <b>Convince</b> them with rational arguments.</li><li>• Get them to <b>recognize your legitimacy</b> to define their objectives.</li><li>• Communicate your <b>enthusiasm</b>.</li></ul>   |
| 2 FOSTER SUCCESS   |  |
| PROVIDE SUPPORT  | CREATE A CLIMATE OF TRUST  |
| <p>Show your employees that you support them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure they have the <b>resources</b> they need to do their jobs.</li><li>• <b>Encourage</b> them; listen to their problems.</li><li>• Give them <b>advice</b> to help them do their jobs better.</li><li>• <b>Actively lend a helping hand</b> when necessary.</li></ul>  | <p>Frequent conflict, an exaggerated spirit of competition and the lack of cooperation can be demoralizing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be <b>transparent</b><br/>Clearly state individual objectives; speak openly about problems; ensure consistency between words and actions.</li><li>• Foster <b>team spirit</b><br/>Emphasize the common goal; encourage cooperation.</li><li>• Care about <b>people</b><br/>Encourage employees to get better acquainted with one another; show interest in their daily concerns and in them as people.</li></ul> |
| 3 PROVIDE RECOGNITION  |  |
| KNOW WHEN TO THANK PEOPLE  | PROVIDE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES  |
| <p>The emotional dimension is fundamental to motivation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be <b>sincere</b>. Don’t just thank people “superficially,” but provide tangible proof of your satisfaction by showing them how their work has added value.</li><li>• Be <b>thorough</b>. Don’t just talk about what is going well. Also point out what could be improved. This will make your thanks even more credible.</li><li>• <b>Regularly</b> show encouragement. Don’t wait until the end of a project, but offer supportive comments regularly.</li></ul>  | <p>Learning is a motivation driver.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Propose <b>training programs</b>.</li><li>• Involve people in <b>strategic thinking</b>.</li><li>• <b>Enhance</b> people’s jobs; offer to participate in cross-company projects.</li><li>• Free up time for people to work on <b>initiatives of their choosing</b>.</li><li>• <b>Rotate</b> responsibilities in your team.</li></ul>   |