

# Motivating Your Team

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It's time to work on YOU. So sit back and listen to practical, actionable advice to accelerate your progress.

By the end of today's session, you will have learned about different motivation techniques and how to implement them to inspire your team to deliver outstanding results.

We will discuss:

- how you can pay people what they are worth
- how to create an enjoyable atmosphere for people to work in
- how to foster self-development and collaboration
- how to set clear and attainable goals, and
- how to deal with failures in the workplace.

You may know intuitively that paying staff a salary that reflects their value to the business is one of the ways to keep your team members motivated. And according to the Peterson Institute of International Economics, higher wages indeed can lead to several benefits for businesses.

Better pay motivates employees to work harder and be more productive. They also improve morale and have a positive compounding effect on the business and its output.

Higher wages can reduce the number of skilled staff who leave your business, reducing the costs of hiring and training new workers. Higher salaries also help attract more capable and productive employees to your organization.

A recent example is a surge in productivity at Gravity Payments after its CEO, Dan Price, announced that minimum pay for all employees would rise to \$70,000 a year.

Six months following the announcement, revenue was rising at twice the pre-increase rate. Profitability subsequently doubled at the firm. Customer retention increased from 91 to 95 percent, and just two workers left the organization. Within two weeks of the

first announcement, the firm received 4,500 resumes, and new client inquiries increased from 30 to 2,000 per month.

Of course, pay is just one of many factors influencing your team's motivation. Working in a pleasant environment helps people feel positive and motivated. Employees who like their work environment are less likely to take extended breaks or sick absences.

There are practical steps you can implement to achieve a motivating work environment.

97% of workers believe their workplace symbolizes how they are valued as an employee. A further 65% of workers claim they would consciously improve their performance if their offices were more comfortable.

So consider the decor and lighting. A bright atmosphere with light colors and appropriate, inspirational artwork or murals on the walls help give a positive feel to corporate workspaces. Quality ergonomic chairs, desks, and meeting facilities help make staff feel comfortable, valued, and motivated to perform well.

A rest area, separated and away from the workspace, can also be a good idea to allow staff to recharge during breaks and return refreshed and motivated to start work again. If you work with an open plan layout, consider how you can have other quieter and more private areas available at various times to different teams and individuals. According to an international poll of 10,000 workers conducted by Ipsos, 85 percent of employees are dissatisfied with their working environment and struggle to focus. Working quietly with a level of privacy was essential to 95 percent of respondents, yet just 41 percent thought it was possible in their current work environment.

Another important aspect of keeping your team motivated is providing self-development opportunities in the workplace. According to LinkedIn's 2019 Workforce Learning Report, 94 percent of employees say they would stay at a company longer if it simply invested in helping them learn. Another report by Gallup, titled *How Millennials Want to Work and Live*, finds that chances to learn and improve are essential to 59 percent of millennials when looking for a new job.

Professional activities like teaching or mentoring others, membership in a professional organization, and networking with other professionals are some examples of self-development that many workers enjoy.

According to the PWC workforce of the future report and its survey of 10,000 workers, 74% of the employees who took part are ready to learn new skills or re-train to remain employable in the future. Offering self-development is crucial to keep your team happy and motivated over the long term.

Another key to motivating your team is fostering collaboration between individuals and across the team.

Research finds that even the sense that we're working together with others increases our motivation to complete complex tasks. According to the studies, even when we're working alone, the impression that we're working along with others towards a shared goal significantly improves our drive.

Stanford psychologists Priyanka B. Carr and Gregory M. Walton concluded that even subtle suggestions of being part of a team dramatically increased people's motivation and enjoyment with challenging tasks. This led to greater perseverance and engagement and even higher performance levels.

A practical way you can encourage collaborative working is by taking on and embodying a positive team working attitude yourself, setting the standard for others to follow.

Regardless of how busy you are, set aside time each week or every two weeks to go around your workplace and interact with everyone. Check how each individual is doing and how things are with them. Take an interest in them as people. Show your gratitude for their efforts. Encourage employees to share ideas with you and their team members. Ensure they know the overall big picture goals of the company and how they as individuals are essential to those aspirations. Employees that feel valued and appreciated are more likely to stay with your company.

Look for methods to show everyone that their contribution is appreciated. Sometimes saying thank you is all that is required. Other times, you may choose to recognize exceptional accomplishments with tokens of gratitude such as gift cards or rewards. It will inspire employees to work hard and stay loyal to your business if they feel valued and appreciated.

Setting teams within the organization targets, offering team-based rewards for reaching or exceeding performance targets, making team meetings more inclusive, changing the office layout to put teams closer together, and running team-building activities can help build a better team collaboration effort. Also, consider that you may need to engage in conflict resolution and open communication between team members who have underlying issues between themselves and tend to avoid working together.

Rewarding staff and developing their skillset is critical. But it's also vital that you know how to deal with failures within individuals and teams to correct course and recover from mistakes in the business team that could diminish motivation. As Sharon Hadary, the founding and former executive director of the Center for Women's Business Research writes in the Wall Street Journal:

*People thrive in environments where they feel safe trying new approaches to get the job done, proposing revolutionary products, and seeking out nontraditional alliances. No longer do companies have the luxury of beta testing every product and process. Often you have*

*to just jump into the market and see what happens—making modifications along the way. There will be great successes and spectacular failures. The companies people want to work for recognize that failure most often is not about the individual's failure to perform but about being willing to take a chance, celebrate the successes, learn from the failures, and move forward.*

If you want to motivate your team to be creative and take chances that lead to innovation, avoid punishing them when these initiatives fail.

It's worth remembering that failure usually doesn't equate to a wasted effort because your team will learn as much from failures as successes. Another key reason not to punish mistakes is that it encourages honesty in your team. When employees are afraid of punishment, they are more likely to hide failure and let it evolve into a much bigger issue.

Finally, let's look at a couple of additional factors that are increasingly important for keeping teams motivated at work. Recent shifts have led to much more flexible working arrangements for many businesses, including hybrid arrangements with days in the office and days working from home. Employees often have responsibilities that sometimes conflict with traditional work hours, such as the school run or caring for an elderly relative. If feasible for your business, consider introducing a flexible work hours scheme to create a better work-life balance for staff. Nine in ten people working from home during COVID-19 restrictions wished to continue when the restrictions were lifted. The work landscape has changed. If you don't offer flexibility, prospective employees may see it as a major con, and existing employees may view it as a reason to leave.

To keep teams productive and motivated in this flexible work environment, you need to utilize technology that enables and encourages collaboration, communication, and teamwork. But it's equally important with teams more dispersed to put even more planning into social events. That way, people can meet in person with colleagues and feel more connected, positive, and motivated to be part of the team. So, we've covered a lot today, including pay, atmosphere, training, collaboration, setting clear and attainable goals, and adapting to the new normal at work.

This week, we encourage you to put some time aside to speak to your team members individually. If they want to share, find out what is happening with your people inside and outside of work. People remember managers who helped them when they needed it and feel extra motivated to work for those managers. See if there's anything you can do to make someone's life easier or reduce work-related anxiety. It'll be worth it.

That's all for today. Thanks for listening, and remember: keep building the best you.

## Further reading

- **[Article]** Raising Lower-Level Wages: When and Why It Makes Economic Sense, Peterson Institute for International Economics.
- **[Video]** 6 Ways to Motivate Your Team, Brian Tracy.
- **[Article]** Here's What Really Happened at That Company That Set a \$70,000 Minimum Wage, Paul Keegan
- **[Whitepaper]** Workforce of the future, PWC
- **[Video]** 3 ways to create a work culture that brings out the best in employees, Chris White | TEDxAtlanta
- **[Article]** Cues of working together fuel intrinsic motivation, Priyanka B.Carr, Gregory M.Walton
- **[Infographic]** Interior office design has an impact on motivation, innovation & creativity, Flexiform.
- **[Article]** Coronavirus: 'Nine in 10 would continue working from home', BBC News.