
BPIR Management Brief : Issue 7 - Motivating Staff

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Welcome to the seventh issue of the BPIR.com Management Brief that provides short, easily digestible research summaries based on specific topics or tools. Summaries include comments from experts, case examples, and survey analyses. Read and absorb, then pass on to your staff/colleagues to do the same.

Motivating Staff - definition

An employer's desire to provide the impetus for employees to do their job as efficiently and effectively as possible and to commit to the achievement of the organisations goals and objectives.

The stage

Motivation is the degree of personal and professional satisfaction that an employee enjoys in his/her life. This is an issue of vital concern to businesses since it is well established that a motivated workforce will achieve much better results than an unmotivated one. Employee motivation and commitment is one of the major contributions that employees can make to the organisation as it helps to ensure that maximum effort is employed in work activities and work outputs are to the benefit of the organisation.

The techniques used to motivate staff are many and varied. The goal of using motivation techniques is usually to increase productivity but a highly motivated workforce also often equates to other improvements such as reduced absenteeism and turnover, increased innovation, employee satisfaction, and an enhanced corporate image. These can then translate into higher quality products or services, increased customer satisfaction, and enhanced financial performance. Motivation of staff, not surprisingly, is a fundamentally important dimension of successful management.

Expert Opinion

Many researchers and authors have defined the concept of motivation. It has been defined as:

- The psychological process that gives behavior purpose and direction (Kreitner, 1995);
- A predisposition to behave in a purposive manner to achieve specific, unmet needs (Buford, Bedeian, & Lindner, 1995);
- An internal drive to satisfy an unsatisfied need (Higgins, 1994); and
- The will to achieve (Bedeian, 1993).

For this Management Brief, motivation is defined as the inner force that drives individuals to accomplish personal and organisational goals.

The job of a manager in the workplace is to get things done through others. A committed and motivated workforce is critical to maximising an organisation's full potential. Highly motivated employees frequently seek to work beyond the bounds of their specific work roles and functions in order to not only improve themselves, but also to achieve the objectives of the organisation. Motivated employees can be considered vital to organisational survival in our rapidly changing workplaces and work world - they help organisations survive because they are more productive.

Individuals responsible for managing staff have a variety of key responsibilities. Included in these is the ability to inspire and motivate their staff, encourage these people to strive for excellence, to promote productivity, and to ensure the continuation of work outputs even during difficult times. Motivating others can be a very challenging task.

To be effective in this task, managers need to understand what motivates employees within the context of the roles they perform. Of all the functions a manager is responsible for, motivating employees can be the most complex. David Frederick (2001), a senior lecturer at London Guildhall University's Department of Management and Professional Development notes "Motivation is a topic that generates a lot of debate.... Irrespective of the business sector, motivation will always be an issue to be addressed by management ". He further states "...it is essential for managers to understand the concept of motivation. An understanding of motivation may contribute to a more co-operative working environment and an increase in employee productivity".

Frederick writes that motivation is a personal phenomenon, not a homogenous commodity held by all individuals, and that everyone has different motivators driving their action.

Although there are many theories of motivation, three of the most commonly known ones, related to workplace motivation are those by Abraham Maslow, Frederick Herzberg, and Douglas McGregor.

1. Abraham Maslow (1908-1970) - 'Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs':

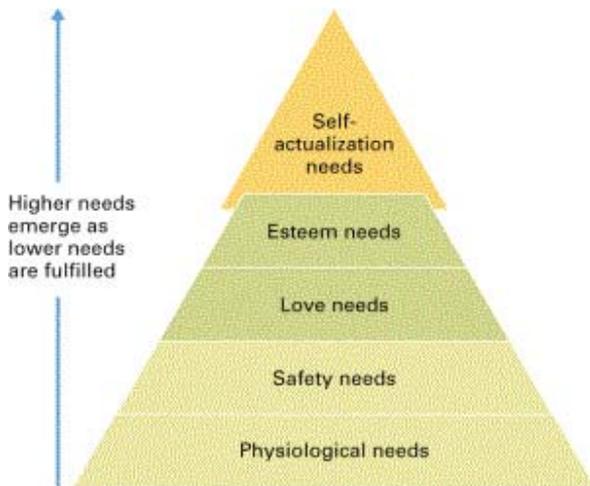
In the first half of this century, sociologist Abraham Maslow proposed that all humans have universal needs, and those needs could be categorised and predicted. Regarded as the first person to develop a theory of motivation, Maslow sees motivation in terms of 5 differing levels of human needs with those at lower levels needing to be met prior to those at higher levels. This model of motivation has gained a lot of attention, but not complete acceptance. This theory may be applicable to modern management as follows:

- I. Physiological needs - these are the needs of personal survival and include the needs we have for food, oxygen, water, to be active, to rest, to sleep, to avoid pain, to have accommodation and shelter etc. Work can provide individuals with the ability to earn an income in order to pay for these basic needs of survival.
- II. Safety and security needs - When the physiological needs are largely taken care of, this second layer of needs comes into play. Individuals become increasingly interested in finding safe circumstances, stability, and protection. There might develop a need for structure, for order and limits, and ways of preventing or reducing fears and anxieties. Such needs manifest themselves in the form of our urges to have a home in a safe neighbourhood, job security, reliable transport, savings in a bank account, a good retirement plan, health insurance, or anything that contributes to the orderliness and predictability of life. Again, work provides individuals with the ability to earn to acquire such things. In addition a feeling of safety may be gained from the security that employment may bring.
- III. Love and belonging needs - When physiological and safety needs are predominantly met an individual begins to seek affiliation with others. This includes the need for friends, a marriage partner, children, affectionate relationships and a sense of community. The meeting of these needs is expressed in our desires to marry, have a family, and be a part of a community or group. It is also a part of what we look for in a career - work can provide opportunities for individuals to gain a sense of belonging and identity through their involvement in organisations, work teams and groups.
- IV. Self-esteem needs - When the three preceding groups of needs are met individuals begin to look to meeting needs for self-esteem such as the need for the respect of others, status, fame, recognition, attention, appreciation, dignity, confidence, competence, achievement, mastery, independence, and freedom. Esteem needs are often satisfied by recognition from peers and mentors, such as employers. This may include a raise in pay, a bonus, a certificate of completion or a degree from an educational institution. It may also include many other rewards for effort, but such feelings must be confirmed by recognition of those efforts. The work that an individual carries out, the type of organisation they work for and

even their job title may provide personal status or self-respect.

- V. **Self-actualisation needs** -These are needs that involve the desire to fulfill our potential and to 'be all that we can be'. These needs involve becoming the most complete, 'fullest' person that you can be. An individual may achieve this higher level need from the fulfilment of his/her career goals or ambitions, or from seeing completion of work tasks that are important to him/her.

Maslows Hierarchy of Needs is expressed graphically as:



Source: Data for diagram drawn from A. H. Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," *Psychological Review*, 50 (July 1943): 370-396.

2. Frederick Herzberg - Two Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg developed another popular theory of motivation called the Two-factor Theory (or Motivator-Hygiene Theory) to explain the motivations of workers. Herzberg and his associates began their research into motivation during the 1950's, examining the models and assumptions of Maslow and others, and in 1959 he published a book entitled 'The Motivation to Work'.

The basic hypotheses of this theory are that there are two types of motivators, one type which results in satisfaction with the job, and the other which merely prevents dissatisfaction. The two types are quite separate and distinct from one another. Factors that result in job satisfaction are termed 'motivators' and those that simply prevent dissatisfaction are termed 'hygienes'.

A/ The factors that lead to job satisfaction (the motivators - sometimes called motivational factors) are:

- Advancement and promotions;
- Recognition;
- Interesting work
- Responsibility;
- A sense of achievement

A way to recognize motivational factors is by considering that they are factors where "it's no big deal if they are not there but it's a big deal if they are".

B/ The factors which may prevent dissatisfaction (the hygienes - sometimes called maintenance factors) are:

- Pay levels;
- Fringe benefits;
- Job security;
- Working conditions
- Company policy and administration
- Supervision
- Interpersonal relations
- Money
- Status

A way to recognise hygiene factors is by considering whether they are factors whereby "it's no big deal if they are there, but it's a big deal if they are not".

Motivators are those things that allow for psychological growth and development on the job. They are closely related to Maslow's concept of 'self-actualisation', involving a challenge, an opportunity to extend oneself to the fullest, to taste the pleasure of accomplishment, and to be recognised as having done something worthwhile.

Hygienes, if applied effectively, can at best prevent dissatisfaction and if applied poorly, they can result in negative feelings about the job. Hygienes are simply factors that describe the 'conditions of work' rather than the work itself. Herzberg's point is that if you want to motivate people, you have to be concerned with the 'job itself' and not simply with the surroundings. As such, he contends that we should focus our attention on the individuals in jobs, not on the things that we surround them with. He maintains that we tend to think that growth and development will occur if we provide good working conditions, status, security, and administration, whereas in fact what stimulates growth (and motivation to grow and develop) are opportunities for achievement, recognition, responsibility and advancement. He felt that a key method for achieving these was 'job enrichment' and 'vertical job loading' whereby jobs are redesigned to make them more interesting and employees are given increased authority and challenge within their jobs (together with more feedback).

3 Douglas McGregor - Theory X and Y

In 1960 McGregor published his book 'The Human Side of Enterprise' which discussed his theories on behaviour of individuals at work. He formulated two models that are still taught, discussed, and debated today - Theory X and Theory Y. McGregor's assumptions underpinned why he felt managers took the approaches they did towards employees.

A manager holding Theory X assumptions would be inclined to believe that that:

- People inherently dislike work;
- People must be coerced or controlled to do work to achieve objectives;
- People prefer to be directed

Managers holding this view of work and their employees would most likely use rewards, promises, incentives, close

supervision, rules and regulations, perhaps even threats and sanctions in order to control workers.

A manager holding Theory Y assumptions would be inclined to believe that:

- People view work as being as natural as play and rest;
- People will exercise self-direction and control towards achieving objectives they are committed to;
- People learn to accept and seek responsibility;
- Imagination, creativity, and ingenuity can be used to solve work problems and these abilities are widely distributed in the work force;
- In modern organisations, the intellectual potential of the average person are only partially utilised.

Managers holding this view of work and their employees would most likely demonstrate trust in their employees, use explanations and joint problem-solving methods, give staff room to interpret and implement organisational objectives for themselves, act as a facilitator, provide opportunities for growth and job enrichment, allow staff to use their creative abilities and remove restrictions to doing a good job.

Research data:

In one of the most elaborate studies conducted on employee motivation, the Minneapolis Gas Company sought to determine what their potential employees desired most from a job. This twenty-year in-depth study (carried out from 1945-1965) involved 31,000 men and 13,000 women. Contrary to common belief the number one motivator of both men and woman was job security, with advancement rating 2nd, type of work 3rd and company (proud to work for) rating 4th. Factors such a money, benefits and working conditions were given a low rating by both men and women.

The purpose of research conducted by James Lindner (1998) Research and Extension Associate at The Ohio State University Piketon Research and Extension Center was to describe the importance of certain factors in motivating employees at the Piketon Research and Extension Center and Enterprise Center. Specifically, the study sought to determine the ranked importance of ten motivating factors. The final ranked order of these factors was:

1. Interesting work;
2. Good wages;
3. Full appreciation of work done.
4. Job security;
5. Good working conditions;
6. Promotions and growth in the organization;
7. Feelings of being in on things; and
8. Personal loyalty to employees;
9. Tactful discipline; and
10. Sympathetic help with personal problems;

Two further studies cited by Lindner returned the following results:

A study of industrial employees conducted by Kovach (1987) yielded the following ranked order of motivational factors (a) interesting work, (b) full appreciation of work done and (c) a feeling of being in on things.

The second study, also on employees and conducted by Harpaz (1990) found the following rankings of motivational factors - (a) interesting work, (b) good wages and (c) job security.

The final conclusions that Lindner draws from his own and others' research is that "The discrepancies in these research findings supports the idea that what motivates employees differs given the context in which the employee works. What is clear, however, is that employees rank interesting work as the most important motivational factor".

A study of employee attitudes undertaken by the Gallup Organisation with more than 100,00 employees in 12 industries using 12 statements, shows employees who have a positive attitude toward their work are 50% more likely to achieve customer loyalty and 44% more likely to produce above-average profitability. Companies whose support of the 12 statements ranked in the top 25% averaged 24% higher profitability, 29% higher revenues and 10% lower employee turnover. The statements included:

1. I know what is expected of me at work;
2. At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day;
3. In the past seven days I have received recognition or praise for doing good work;
4. My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person; and
5. There is someone at work who encourages my development.

A study by John Throop (cited in IOMA's Pay for Performance Report 1998) conducted using computer programmers, asked participants to identify the top 10 factors that provided the highest degree of motivation in their jobs. The programmers' top three were:

1. Full appreciation for work done;
2. Feeling that they were in on things; and
3. Sympathetic help with personnel problems.

When asked what the top motivators would be, the managers of these programmers predicted rather different priorities with the three top ranking items being:

1. Wages;
2. Working conditions; and
3. Fair discipline.

The report also revealed research conducted by Greg Smith (2002), President of Chart Your Course International, into the main causes of employee dissatisfaction at work. The factors that de-motivated staff were:

Lack of appreciation	33%
Too much paperwork	27%
Problems with supervisors	23%
Poor pay and benefits	22%
Lack of training	20%
Lack of opportunity	20%
Fairness	18%
Problems with coworkers	16%
Commute	15%
Boring job	9%

The factors that workers thought were the most effective actions a firm could take to improve retention were:

Train managers better	32%
Listen more	28%
Try something new	24%
Pay more	23%
Select managers better	22%
Set the example	22%
Hire better people	18%
Improve benefits	13%

How to make motivating staff one of your company's more effective practices:

Regardless of which theory of employee motivation is followed, the outcomes of research conclude that interesting work, appreciation, pay, good working conditions, and job security are important factors in helping to motivate. Phil Kerslake (2002), General Manager of DTZ New Zealand found in his 2001 surveys of Australasian employee attitudes that "...most people were shown to have ambitions and be prepared to put some job and income security at risk if there is the opportunity to nourish their self-esteem and achieve a degree of self-fulfilment"

To ensure that strategies used to enhance motivation within your organisation obtain the most effective results they should be based on:

- An analysis of the factors that individual staff members believe are motivators for them;
- The performance objectives of the individual;
- The strategic goals of the organisation; and
- The values and culture of the organisation.

Lindner highlights the importance of considering individual staff in his comment - "The key to motivating (centres) employees is to know what motivates them and designing a motivation program based on those needs...employees must be willing to let managers know what motivates them, and managers must be willing to design reward systems that motivate employees".

Jim Clemmer (2004), a writer and motivational speaker states "When confronting morale problems, managers will often succumb to the Victim's virus and blame the declining work ethic, attitudes of entitlement, softening values, the welfare state, or any number of societal factors. But these factors - which are mostly about doing the least work for the most money - are more imagined than real". He further states "Studies show that people's real needs are much less mercenary than most managers believe. People want to take pride in their work, belong to a winning team and be part of an organisation they can believe in. In fact, the morale crisis so prevalent in organisations today is primarily the result of disappointment in these needs not being met".

Paul Falcone (2002), Director of Employment and Development at Paramount Pictures in Hollywood writes that "As a supervisor, it always will be your toughest job to turn around people who have lost the motivation to make a positive contribution to the team. But contrary to popular perception, your job as a manager is not to motivate your staff. Motivation is internal. Instead, you are responsible

for creating an environment in which people can motivate themselves. And this can be done without relying on merit increases, incentives and bonuses". He suggests that managers need to focus on the top non-monetary motivating factors of (a) open communication, (b) recognition, (c) career developments plans, and (d) the ability to make a difference at work.

There are some key actions that managers and leaders can take to assist in making a difference in the motivation levels of their employees. These include:

Lead by example - be passionate and energetic

If business leaders wish to have motivated, passionate and energetic staff, Max Messmer (2002) CEO of Robert Half International Inc and author of 'Motivating Employees for Dummies' highlights the importance of being motivated, passionate and energetic as a leader yourself, and about your organisation, your staff, and the work that they do. As such, leaders should demonstrate the attitudes, values, actions, and mindsets that they wish staff to develop and demonstrate. Andrew Richter (2003), Vice President of Compensation at American TV company NBC and Board Member of WorldatWork highlights the importance of leadership and motivation at work - "Exit interviews and other studies confirm that better people managers retain talent and get better results than those less skilled in this field. Better people managers create job satisfaction and more challenging work. They are also the front line providing recognition and rewarding creativity. In fact, they play a central role in most of the elements of the work experience". Patti Holmes (2002), President of Holmes Training and Development also highlights the importance of a leader's attitude and the effects of this on those around them "The attitude you bring to life and to your work will be reflected in the performance of those who work for you...Your attitude affects your effectiveness" and because leaders are a role model for their employees they can take their cues for how to behave and act in the workplace from those that manage them.

Show trust and respect

An environment where it is safe to take risks and staff are trusted to try new things can be inspiring and motivate employees to try out new ideas and improvement initiatives. Discussion should occur where new ideas are tried but fall short of expectations so that lessons can be learned and applied to future ideas. Messmer highlights creating a 'safe-to-risk environment' and comments "Allow employees to take prudent risks in their work. By demonstrating trust in your staff you'll inspire them to develop creative solutions to problems". He also writes "Make sure they keep you informed, but don't micromanage their efforts" and "When mistakes are made, focus on what can be learned from the process instead of placing blame".

Act as an advocate

Where communication with other departments, external organisations or suppliers, and customers is required, leaders should act as an advocate for their employees and be a visible champion for them.

Provide competitive and realistic salaries

In his article 'Six Dangerous Myths About Pay' Jeffrey Pfeffer (1998) warns "Much of the conventional wisdom and public discussion about pay today is misleading,

incorrect, or sometimes both. The result is that business people end up adopting wrongheaded notions about how to pay people and why". Discussing his 6th myth - People work primarily for money - he writes "People do work for money-but they work even more for meaning in their lives. In fact, they work to have fun."

Messmer notes that "Under-paying staff sends the message that your firm doesn't value their work". In fact, Richter identifies that "Companies who regularly conduct exit interviews for those who voluntarily resign invariably find that dissatisfaction with immediate management and career development opportunities available elsewhere usually dwarf pay as a reason for leaving".

However, writers for Accel-Team.com's website note that although money is not a prime motivator "...this should not be regarded as a signal to reward employees poorly or unfairly". In fact, according to Herzberg's theory of motivation, pay and benefits are considered a hygiene factor. Where these factors are applied effectively, they can at best prevent dissatisfaction and if applied poorly, they can result in negative feelings about the job.

Employee pay strategies should be in line with current industry standards, should be robust and simple to operate, explain, and control, be able to accommodate specific employment needs (e.g. expert or difficult to fill positions) and be related to performance (e.g. individual and teams).

Reward achievements

Messmer states "Keep in mind that a simple 'thank you' still goes a long way with employees. Your employees will be more motivated to work hard if they know you recognise and appreciate their contributions". Rewards do not need to be costly to have an impact, but if valued and appreciated by staff they can have a significant impact on motivation. In a survey conducted by Messmer, employees ranked a personal 'thank you' as the most sought after form of recognition, followed by a handwritten note of appreciation from the boss.

Rewards may be individually and/or team-based and can include such things as movie tickets, thank you cards, parking spaces, award ceremonies, mention of achievements in company newsletters and meetings, holidays, cash bonuses, and the like. Smith also recognises that rewards do not need to cost a lot of money in order to motivate. He does suggest that "To be successful, a motivator needs to energize employees...The best way to do this is through an activity that is enjoyable or that rewards employees..." .

Job enlargement and enrichment

Lindner suggests "Options for job enlargement, job enrichment, promotions...should be considered". Job enlargement can provide opportunities to make work more interesting by increasing the number and variety of activities performed, and job enrichment can also make work more interesting and provide opportunities for increased pay and responsibility. Secondments, mentoring and standing-in for colleagues on leave are suggested methods. Enlarging and enriching jobs can add variety in the way the job is done, the tools that are used, the place where the work is carried out, and the people with whom the employee meets.

Redesign jobs

Redesigning jobs to expand opportunities for self-control, self-direction, challenge, increased responsibility, and learning can have an impact on motivation and are methods suggested by Herzberg's theory. Input should be sought from employees on the ways in which their jobs could be streamlined, extended, or modified in order to add challenge, interest, and control.

Provide the resources and support

The resources and support required by staff to complete their jobs to the level required by the organisation should be provided. Restrictions that are preventing people from doing the best job possible should be removed. This may include modification of work-spaces, the use of mentoring and coaching, additional funding.

Plan for advancement opportunities and support mentoring;

Employee motivation can be enhanced by providing opportunities for challenge and advancement within the organisation.

Mentoring can have positive motivational spin-offs for both the mentor and the staff member being mentored. Mentors can benefit from sharing their knowledge and expertise and this added responsibility can add to their feelings of being recognised as well as providing job enrichment opportunities. For those being mentored, working with an experienced staff member can add challenge, provide job enlargement, enrichment, and feedback opportunities,

Provide professional development opportunities;

Professional development opportunities such as mentoring, attendance at training programmes, and on-the-job training can be a key motivator for many individuals. These activities enable staff to achieve work-related and professional goals, work towards (or achieve) advancement in the organisation, enlarge or enrich their work roles and functions, achieve greater responsibility and trust, gain recognition, and add more interest to their work.

In relation to training, Falcone suggests that employers view employees as resume builders who will stay and prove their worth as long as they are on the fast track. He indicates that a key to keeping staff is to prevent them from looking elsewhere by providing the chance to reach their career goals within their own organisation - "People are much more inclined to feel like they're making a positive contribution if they're in a learning curve"

Promote and provide two-way feedback

Feedback on performance is important to ensure individuals know their strengths and opportunities for improvement. Use of the organisation's formal performance appraisal system should be encouraged to ensure regular and specific feedback is given. However, this should be supplemented by periodic informal discussions and as opportunities arise e.g. at the end of a project.

Encourage the use of humour and creativity

Messmer notes "Incorporating humour into the workplace can alleviate stress and create a more positive environment for everyone". Strategies to enhance humour include having a daily cartoon sent to all staff via e-mail, encouraging laughter, finding fun in events that did not turn out as planned or expected etc..

Address stress and burnout

Stress can have both a positive and a negative effect on employee motivation. Certain levels of stress can enhance work outputs, but above an individual's threshold it can lead to a decrease in both quality and quantity of work. To enhance motivation, employers should consider setting work goals and targets with employees - these should stretch their abilities and be jointly set and agreed. Where necessary use temporary help during crisis or high workload periods, and make it easy for staff to voice the fact that they are stressed.

Implement work/life balance initiatives

Work/life practices are those that help employees juggle their responsibilities at work with those outside of work. It is now widely accepted that external pre-occupations can cause stress, absenteeism, resignations, altered work performance, and reduced motivation. Working from home, part time working, child care facilities, flexible working schedules and the like can have a positive impact on employee motivation and reduce the impact of external, non-work issues.

Note; Further information on these and related areas can be found in previous issues of the BPIR Management Brief, and in particular:

- *Issue 1 - Work/Life Balance*
- *Issue 4 - Succession Planning*
- *Issue 5 - Managing Innovation*
- *Issue 6 - On-the-job Training*

Measure and Evaluate Your Motivation Strategies

Data for measurement of employee commitment and motivation is not easily quantifiable and tends to be qualitative in nature. However, it is possible to collate and translate qualitative information into quantitative measures. Using employee surveys and questioning techniques during appraisal meetings can be of assistance in establishing how aligned individual objectives are to that of the organisation and how motivated and committed employees say they are.

As with all measurement systems and sub-systems, one focusing upon staff motivation should be designed to manage and measure staff motivation and be aligned with the culture, mission, and strategy of the organisation. Here are a few ideas on how motivation and or its indicators can be measured, however, many other measures relating to employee satisfaction can be used as motivation is so closely linked to satisfaction:

Employee commitment and motivation e.g. % of employees that are committed to the organisation's goals and objectives or, % of employees who are considered to be 'highly motivated'

Explanation : This measure can be an indicator of

employee satisfaction levels, as employees are not likely to be motivated or committed unless they are satisfied. By its nature the measurement of employee commitment and motivation has to be based on qualitative assessment. Their measurement should be based on employee satisfaction questionnaires and through the personal appraisal process.

Employee involvement - Planning e.g. frequency of consultation of non-managerial employees for planning, or % of employees that are involved in planning process

Explanation : This measure provides an indication of the importance placed upon the opinions of the workforce. It can also be used as an input in the calculation of employee satisfaction, stakeholder focus, and leadership effectiveness. Involving employees in the planning process helps to effectively sell the ideas to the workforce, improving both commitment and awareness, two essential factors in the achievement of an aligned workforce.

Employee - Bradford Factor ie $D(S \times S)$, where D is the total days absence over a set period and S is the number of spells of absence over the same period

Explanation : A measure of employee absence that has more use than straightforward measures like days lost or hours lost. By including the frequency of absence this measure focuses on the short-term high frequency absences that can affect the morale or attitude to attendance of the rest of the immediate workforce. This is also a powerful indicator of satisfaction.

Employee - Recognition e.g. % of employees recognised or % of employees recognised by formal recognition systems, or, % of employees recognised by informal recognition systems or, No. of recognition events held per period.

Explanation : This measure assesses how effective recognition systems are at recognising outstanding effort and achievements. The measure could be tailored to assess the effectiveness of formal recognition systems (such as award ceremonies and bonus schemes) or informal systems (such as a verbal thank you or the giving of gifts and rewards outside any formal recognition system).

Employee alignment e.g. % of employees that are given personal objectives that align with organisational goals.

Explanation : A measure that provides an indication of the level of alignment of the workforce to achieve organisational goals.

Employee development e.g. % of employees who, given the opportunity, enrol or use training and development programmes/facilities.

Explanation : A measure that can provide an indication of the willingness and/or interest of the workforce towards improving/adding skills needed to perform work roles better

Employee Targets met e.g. % of targets met (personal, group/team, project)

Explanation : A measure that can provide an indication of the overall success of motivation strategies.

Example cases:

Learn valuable lessons from these organisations:

First Tennessee National Corporation



- Work-life programmes can bring positive organisational results

A key aspect of productive and satisfied employees is workplace flexibility. First Tennessee National Corporation started taking family issues seriously, and made them top priority. They reshaped the rules they had forced employees to live under, added many family-friendly new benefits, and sent managers through three and one-half days of training. Employees stayed twice as long—and the bank kept seven percent more of its customers. In addition, changes in employee benefits helped contribute a 55 percent profit gain over two years.

Herga Electric



- Internal communications strategy in a small manufacturer

Herga Electric pride itself on having open networks and consultation with employees on organisational issues. The only locked filing cabinets in the plant are those containing personnel files and that is only due to legal reasons. In addition to monthly team briefings that involve all employees, there is a constant flow of informal communication within the organisation in both upward and downward directions. Employee involvement is encouraged through discussion groups. A discussion forum is convened twice a year and involves debate on 'anything and everything'. Participation is voluntary, and the HR department tries to ensure that all employees have the opportunity to take part at some point and everyone is invited to make suggestions for the agenda. The group discusses the 'hot issues' and delivers feedback to the workforce. Groups such as the Herga Improvement Teams (HITs) and the Herga Opportunities for Performance Improvement (HOPI) are concerned with improvements in the organisation. New ideas put forward by employees are judged on merit rather than usefulness, and a tax-free financial award is made available for successful proposals. The internal communications strategy creates increased levels of commitment and motivation in the workforce, and the organisation currently has a 95% retention rate compared to an industry average of around 60%.

Swale Borough council



- Psychological contract in a local authority

Since 1999, Swale Borough Council has continued to implement new initiatives that benefit employees and the organization through the use of a psychological contract. Communication is an important part of building a successful relationship and this is supported at the top with the Chief Executive's 'open door' policy. Managers are actively encouraged to communicate with, and recognise the contribution of, their staff, and a supportive, open management style helps foster a relaxed culture. Employee development is also very important with a variety of training courses being offered. In addition, non-financial recognition such as praise and appreciation of employees' contribution are encouraged and emphasis is put on offering flexible benefits and flexible working opportunities to help employees to achieve a healthy work/life balance. By providing these employee benefits, the organisation hopes to see improved business performance through boosted moral, motivation, and loyalty.

Summary

Motivating staff is a fundamentally important dimension of successful management and a vital aspect of a leaders role. Significant organisational outcomes can be obtained by having staff that are motivated. These include:

- Increased productivity in the workplace;
- Reduced absenteeism and turnover;
- Increased innovation and creativity;
- Increased employee and customer satisfaction;
- An enhanced company profile;
- Higher quality products or services;
- Improved financial performance.

Abraham Maslow, Frederick Herzberg and Douglas McGregor have developed theories of motivation and how motivation can affect and influence employees. Significant research into motivation and the workplace has also been conducted. The research highlights some important aspects for leaders - employees want interesting work where they are given responsibility, autonomy, challenges and the opportunity to learn. Good working conditions, job security, and pay are important, appreciation should be shown and regular feedback should be given on an employee's performance.

To assist in applying the theories and research outcomes in practice, leaders and managers should:

- Lead by example and be passionate and energetic about their organisation, their work, and their employees;
- Show trust and respect to their staff;
- Act as an advocate;
- Provide competitive and realistic salaries;
- Reward achievements;

- Provide opportunities for job enlargement and enrichment;
- Redesign jobs to expand opportunities for self-control, self-direction, challenge, and responsibility;
- Provide the resources and support necessary for employees to complete work to the levels required by the organisation;
- Plan for advancement opportunities for employees and support mentoring;
- Provide professional development opportunities;
- Promote and provide two-way feedback;
- Encourage humour and creativity in the workplace;
- Address stress and burnout;
- Implement work/life balance initiatives.

Note:

Techniques and case studies mentioned or summarised in this article can be found in more detail via the BPIR.com along with the full text of most of the articles and reports in the reference list below.

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