

What motivates individuals who work in or support your organisation?

Everyone is motivated in different ways and it is usually presumed that money is a key motivator. But in our sector we know better than most that this is not the case; survey after survey tells us that money is ranked five or lower by most people. So what does motivate people, particularly at a time of recession such as we are now experiencing?

The following three things always score highly when people are asked what is most important to them;

- **Respect**
- **A sense of accomplishment**
- **Recognition**

Taking these into consideration, here are seven ways to keep your team motivated:

1. Involve people. Many team members want to be involved in the ongoing development and progress of their organisation. They often have great ideas that can make a significant difference and when they are involved, they buy-in faster and resist less. This means changes can be implemented more quickly and easily.

2. Communicate. Very few organisations can be accused of over-communicating. "No news is good news" is not always correct! Team members want regular updates on the progress of the organisation and their personal performance. Use email, telephone, 1-2-1 and group meetings to keep your team informed. Talk to your team members regularly, have lunch or coffee with them; let them know if the organisation is on track.

Tell people what challenges are currently being faced, they may well have helpful suggestions. It is also important that you give people feedback on their performance. If you have a concern with a specific person, tell them and give them the opportunity to correct their behaviour. One common criticism in many organisations is how many people do not receive feedback of any kind relating to their performance.

3. Celebrate individual and team performance. Catch people doing something right and focus on recognizing excellent performance.

On an individual basis you can provide positive reinforcement, give awards, and use a newsletter to highlight specific achievements. Send thank-you, birthday, and anniversary cards as well as congratulatory notes. Make personal phone calls, and send emails. Better yet, if you work in a large organisation, ensure a senior manager sends the email or makes the phone call.

To recognise team efforts, post performance charts on the wall or arrange an impromptu get-together. Treat them to lunch; post team pictures on your website if you have one; put up team pictures in the workplace; give people certificates, coffee mugs, etc; these are surprisingly motivating gestures. An element of fun lifts morale and increases productivity. Encourage each team member to bring in his/her

favourite dessert, and listen to the laughter begin. Ask them what needs to be done in order to improve morale. The more of these approaches you use in your motivation strategy, the more energised the team becomes. Try to recognise someone every day.

4. Set challenging goals. People hold themselves to very high standards and they like to achieve what is expected of them. If you set challenging goals your team will work hard to accomplish them, providing of course, they are realistic and achievable. It is amazing what people can accomplish when they are given the opportunity to perform. Communicate these goals and keep your team informed on the organisation's progress.

5. Give people the tools to succeed. No team will stay motivated if they do not have the necessary tools required to do their job. This includes equipment, internal support, marketing materials, training, etc. Simple and little things annoy people. Take this example; the owner of a bar refuses to give bar staff trays to carry drinks because it is an unnecessary expense. Bar staff very quickly become frustrated because they are making more trips to and from the bar.

6. Manage poor performance. Teams expect to be managed – particularly individuals who do not perform to team standards or contribute enough to the efforts of the team. Many managers, however, ignore poor performance because they are afraid of the potential conflict. Instead, they hope that the situation will resolve itself. It never does and this "blind" approach causes high turnover and contributes to low morale. While poor performance and conflict are seldom enjoyable to deal with, you have a responsibility to your team and your organisation to manage it. Here is the **B.E.S.T.** method of dealing with these situations:

Begin with the situation.	<i>"Pat, when we receive a delivery and you expect the others to put it away..."</i>
Express the result.	<i>"...it causes friction because everyone is expected to pitch in."</i>
State the desired change.	<i>"In the future I expect you to co-operate with the rest of the team to ensure that the delivery is stored quickly. This means I want you to stop whatever you are working on and help put away the stock."</i>
Tell them the consequence.	<i>"If you don't contribute to this task I may be forced to take additional action."</i>

7. Lead by example. If you want your team to treat each other with respect and dignity, you need to set the tone. If you expect them to be motivated and enthusiastic it is critical that you behave in this manner. As a manager or leader, your team looks to you for direction and guidance.

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world" Mahatma Gandhi