

How good are your team motivation skills

As a team leader, have you ever stopped to assess the effectiveness of your own team motivational skills? Most managers want a team that is hard-working, focused and committed to organisational goals, but often need to give their own skills some fine-tuning to achieve this.

With some good motivational practices outlined below, you'll be on your way to establishing a positive work culture that will encourage your team to excel.

- **Provide challenging work.** The first important step in building a highly motivated team should be ensuring they have challenging work, and a full workload. Briefing in a variety of projects that stimulates and offers autonomy will be intrinsically motivating to your team members, and therefore make their everyday at work more satisfying and interesting. As many effective motivators will tell you, designing a work plan that meets the needs and desires of your employees is the key to impacting performance.
- **Set achievable goals.** Once you feel you are providing ongoing work that is challenging and interesting, the next step is to ensure your employees have clear and attainable goals that they can work towards. Create goals that are specific and targeted, and align personal and organisational goals. That way, your employees will follow one consistent direction and feel a sense of purpose and achievement.
- **Understand individual team members' motivations.** Motivation is very personal. What is motivating to one person might be viewed as a punishment to another. Some employees might be motivated by more time off, while others may thrive on a higher status and more recognition in the company. You can't expect to effectively motivate an individual without knowing them well, so learn about your employees by finding out what they do in their spare time. From there, it will be easier to know how to harness their strengths and therefore motivate them better.
- **Provide recognition and reward.** While it's positive to offer reward and recognition in the form of monetary remuneration, this should only make up one

component. Most people respond well to praise, a verbal or written thank you, additional job opportunities or responsibilities, and attention from their managers. As a motivating leader, tell or show your employees often, that you appreciate their contributions – and that doesn't include your yearly performance reviews!

- **Encourage collaboration and team spirit.** Ideally, your goal is to have a team that works cohesively and feeds off each other's strengths. This is when great work is done, and when employees feel proud. In turn, this leads to higher motivation. To maintain a mutual support and trust within your team, organise group activities both during and after work hours. It's another way to keep your employees inspired.

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