



# Employee Motivation is critical for Business Success

By, Mr Shea Heaver | Regional Director | U.S. & Canada

Employee Motivation is the inner desire to take action that usually stems from some form of self-interest. Motivating your Employees, on the other hand, involves getting them to do what you need them to do because they want to do it!

Motivation in the workplace translates into energy, energy into action and action into results. It is a critical element of employee morale and performance gains. Great leaders are also great motivators within the work environment. A well motivated workforce will exhibit greater employee engagement, enhanced teamwork and collaboration, productivity gains, reduced absenteeism and (ultimately) more profitability.

There typically needs to be some form of reward, incentive or benefit for the individual or team, otherwise they will not be motivated or driven to act over and above the mundane call of duty.

A good leader/manager will understand the needs of their team or individuals and will strive to provide what drives each towards excellence. Motivation can be delivered in numerous tangible and intangible forms such as:

- peer recognition
- financial incentives
- increased responsibility
- opportunity for promotion
- providing clear and attainable goals
- empowering staff to take (calculated) risks
- a simple thank you...yes, it can really make a huge impact



What may be surprising to many is that financial incentives usually rank pretty low as a means to motivate employees (remember, money buys a dog but it is love that makes it wag its tail). Many studies have indicated that stability, advancement opportunity, feeling valued, a happy workplace, organizational pride and a great relationship with their boss are highly appreciated by employees.

What is most important however is that each of us is individually driven and what motivates one may not have any impact on another. It is critical that leadership within an organization put in place a mechanism to let staff express what motivates them so that management and colleagues have the opportunity to help each employee attain maximum morale and enthusiasm.

## Employee Motivation Methods and Techniques

A financial reward, departmental lunch or additional days off are some frequently used ways to motivate staff but those are very generic and ho-hum. There are many zero or low-cost methods to achieve staff motivation by simply finding out what makes someone want to perform at their best.

### Personal Motivators

Take time to find out from each team member what motivates them. This doesn't necessarily have to be in 1 on 1 meetings but can be accomplished very successfully through team or departmental activities which also have the added bonus of facilitating openness among team members.

You may find that :

- Some employees like to work alone while others prefer to be given team-based assignments.
- Some may like to be given very clear objectives while others are motivated by being allowed to get creative with their work.
- In an open environment you should also be able to find out which team members are driven to advance their career and in what direction. You can then work with them on that and hopefully put that plan in place.

Using team activities (like those found in our online employee engagement program) you can really get a feel for how your team or department can become more enthusiastic and productive.

### Job pros and cons

It is also important to find out what aspects of the job each person finds most rewarding and which they dislike doing.

Where possible, try to help that person get more involved in elements of his or her job that interest them. When a job or activity aligns with a persons' ideas and values they will instinctively apply themselves with much more energy and enthusiasm.

On the other hand, while you may not be able to eliminate the 'dislikes' you can at least acknowledge that you understand where they are coming from and offer to help if possible. The simple fact that the employee is allowed to openly express what they do and do not like about their job will give them the feeling that they are more than just another resource on the job.

In addition, you may be pleasantly surprised to find that something someone doesn't like is actually a function another person does and hence an opportunity to please and motivate both.

### Words of wisdom

The way people communicate with each other can have a huge bearing and influence on how that person will act or react. Work with your team to find out what they would love to hear from both their supervisor and their colleagues.

In addition, try to establish the way people like to be communicated with in terms of directness, in private or in public, via spoken word or email, etc... You may say the same thing to different people but each of them takes from it what they want and reacts differently. A good leader is a very flexible communicator

A well timed and worded comment or discussion can really reach out to someone and motivate them in ways something tangible cannot.

## Conclusion

Use regular 1 on 1 meetings and team activities to really find out what motivates your staff individually and as a team. Do not fall into the trap of thinking that what motivates you must motivate others.

Try to follow through on at least some of the individual motivators and common team motivators. Everyone will understand that they can't have everything but they will appreciate the ongoing concern and commitment to making their job and workplace more satisfying.

By showing employees they are appreciated through some form of reward or recognition, their confidence will take a boost which will motivate them to make a big difference in the workplace.



Author : Shea Heaver  
shea@mccconnonint.com

Drawing on his years of experience in the global IT field, Shea has become a passionate promoter of combining a people-centric business culture with shrewd project management practices to improve organizational performance. Focus is made on helping organizations achieve higher levels of Employee Engagement, increased Job Satisfaction and better Workplace Relationships.

Having worked in the US, Canada, Europe, Asia and other global locations, Shea increasingly realized that individuals who feel valued while working within structured principles, lead to teams that are motivated, innovative and highly productive.

Shea is Regional Director U.S. & Canada for McConnon International Ltd.

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