



# Employee Motivation, Recognition & Retention: Making Work Fun!

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# What Employees Want from Work

- Every person has different reasons for working.
- We all work because we obtain something we need from work.
- The “something” obtained from work impacts morale, motivation & quality of life for each of us.

# Key Principle of Employee Motivation

- Different people & different groups have different needs & desires.
  - Employees may be motivated by more than 1 thing.
  - It is up to you to determine what best motivates the people on your team.



# Do You Know What Motivates Your Staff?

Do you know the key motivating factors for your:

- Front-line staff (bus drivers, dispatchers, receptionist)?
- Support staff that make things come together behind the scenes (facility maintenance, vehicle maintenance, bookkeeper)?
- Supervisory staff?

# Personal Motivation

- Some people work for personal fulfillment.
- Others work for love of what they do.
- Many work to feel as if they are contributing to something larger than themselves.
- We all work for money.

# Money Is Not the Top Motivator

- Employees want to be valued for the work they do.
  - Compensation is important.
- Almost universally, in every field, surveys point out that personal recognition beats money in importance to employees.



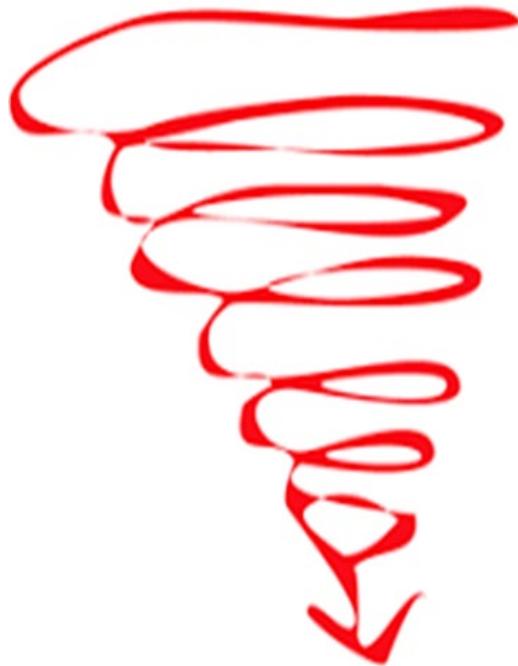
# What You Need to Know About Motivation

- What motivates staff is often different than what motivates supervisors.
- When workers were asked to rank a list of motivators from 1 to 10 in order of importance, workers rated **appreciation** as #1.
  - Supervisors ranked it 8th.

# Common Sense vs. Common Practice

- What gets rewarded gets repeated.
  - Getting what you reward is common sense, but unfortunately, not common practice.
- Limited appreciation leads to limited motivation.
  - Many employers/supervisors tend to be too busy or simply forget to notice & thank employees for good work.

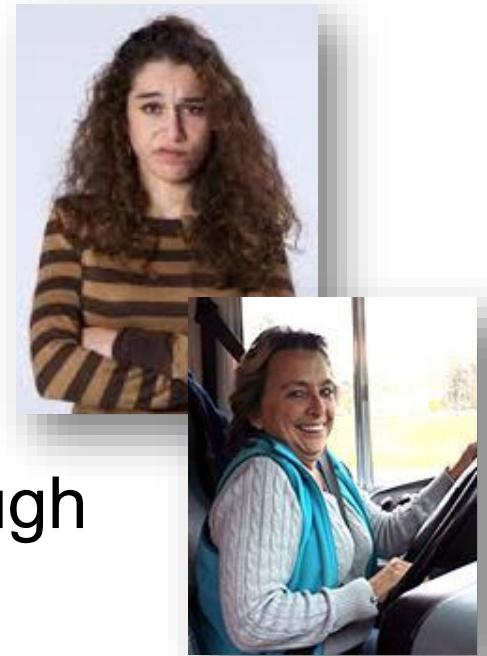
# Fixing the Problem Is More Difficult Than Avoiding the Problem



- Employers & supervisors tend not to focus on employee motivation until it's lost.
  - Often it is not until morale sinks or employees quit that managers pay attention to staff morale.

# Observe

- Do you manage by walking around?
- What do you see?
  - Do you see people excited about their job or are people going through the motions?
  - Are people more or less motivated now than they were 6 months ago (or last year)?



# Ways to Have Engaged, Energized Employees

**Spend time with employees while they do their jobs**

- Ask your employees how you can help make their jobs easier
- Work along side them
- Let them teach you something about what they do

# Engaged & Energized Employees, continued

At your staff meetings, hold a voluntary good news minute

- Set aside time so anyone who wants to can share good things that have happened in their personal &/or work lives since the last meeting.



# Engaged & Energized Employees, continued

## Make Work Fun!

### Celebrate everything you can

- Meeting a short -term (or a long-term) goals
- The end of a budget process
- Winning a grant
- Record number of 1-way rides
- Safety success
- Decade birthdays



# Engaged & Energized Employees, continued

## Surprise staff with spontaneous treats

- Hot chocolate for drivers before pull out on a cold day
- Donuts
- Pie & ice cream
- Popsicles/ice cream bars
- Chocolate chip cookies



# Engaged & Energized Employees, continued

## Praise frequently



- A pat on the back saying “Great job!”
- Sticky notes or short note of thanks
- Voice mail message
- An in-person thank you
- Pointing out to the employee that you noticed the staff person going “above & beyond”

# Engaged & Energized Employees, continued

**Hold informal “grapevine” sessions to control the flow of the rumor mill**



- Managers must be prepared to listen & to be completely truthful & open with staff.
  - Even when you can't share all the specifics, you can explain where & when details will be available.
- Don't tell “some” & not others

# Engaged & Energized Employees, continued

**Let staff know what they do is important**

- Help employees see how they fit into the big picture of the agency.



# Engaged & Energized Employees, continued

**Do unto others as you would have them do unto you**

- Igniting others: If you pay attention to your front -line staff, they will pay attention to & take care of the passengers.
- Daily greetings
- Show an interest in them beyond just the job



# Engaged & Energized Employees, continued



## Put employee brainpower to work

- Ask for their suggestions to solve problems
- Ask what problems exist
- Include them in decisions that affect their work
- Give them the authority that goes with their responsibility

# Engaged & Energized Employees, continued

## Work **for** your people

- Act quickly on their suggestions
- Clear the way so they can do their job
- Show them that you trust their judgment
- Let them know you “*have their back*”



# Myths About Motivation

**Myth: “I can motivate people.”**

- Employees must motivate themselves.
- You can set up an environment where employees feel appreciated & empowered.

# Myths about Motivation, continued

**Myth: A nice office, pay raises, job security, & good benefits motivate employees.**

- These things may keep people from leaving their jobs, but it doesn't mean that it makes them **motivated** employees.

# Myths about Motivation, continued

## Myth: Fear & intimidation are good motivators.

- FACT: Fear & intimidation **are** motivators.
  - They are not appropriate motivators for employees.
- A boss yelling at an employee may change the behavior (at least for a time), but it does not change the motivation behind the behavior.



# Myths about Motivation, continued



## Myth: “I know what will motivate my staff.”

- We already know that staff voted appreciation as #1, while supervisors often did not.
- You may be motivated by vacation time to get away from work, & so may some of your staff.
  - Others may not care about vacation as long as they have a flexible schedule.
- **Ask, listen, & observe**

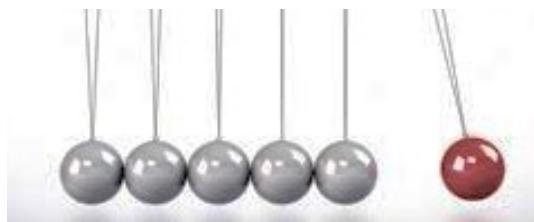
# Myths about Motivation, continued

## Myth: Increased job satisfaction means increased job performance.

- While it helps if an employee likes their job, research shows that increased job satisfaction does not necessarily mean better job performance.
- Job performance is based on meeting the requirements of the position, not just attitude.

# Attitudes Are Contagious

- If you hate your job, it seems like others do too.
- If you are stressed, you make others stressed too.
- Enthusiasm is contagious.
  - If you are excited about your job, it is much easier for your staff to be too.



# Supporting Employee Motivation

- Give employees the authority they need to carry out their jobs (usually means more fulfillment & motivation)
- Recognize motivated behavior when you see it and thank employees!



# Building Trust

Open up the communication for trust

- Get everyone in a meeting to participate... really participate!
- Ask specifically for their feedback
- No surface “yes” or “no” questions

# Building Trust, continued



Model honesty & openness

- You can't expect your team members to be honest with you if you are not open & honest with them.

*"It is not fair to ask others what you are unwilling to do yourself."*

*Eleanor Roosevelt*

# Employee Engagement

- Employees rarely quit companies.
  - They quit their managers/supervisors by leaving the company.
- Increasing positive managerial behavior & reducing negative behavior will go a long way in improving employee engagement.

# How To Be A Better Manager

- Don't send mixed messages
  - Employees need to know where you stand.
  - Keep your message simple, focused & prioritized
- Be honest
  - Don't say things you don't believe
  - Your staff has a well-tuned “BS” detector.

# How To Be A Better Manager, continued

- Be more concerned about others than yourself
  - Staff recognize “self -serving” behaviors in their managers/supervisors.
- Take responsibility for your actions
  - You are the boss & the buck stops with you.



# How To Be A Better Manager, continued

- Don't jump to conclusions
  - Check your facts first



Do what you say you are going to do.

There is no better way to communicate the message to your staff that you are accountable for your “promises”.

# How To Be A Better Manager, continued

- Publicly support your people
  - Let your staff see you are there to support them
  - Your disagreements or disappointments with your employees can be shared later & in private.

# How To Be A Better Manager, continued

- Recognize your team as a whole
  - Help them view themselves as a team
  - Take advantage of the power of “WE”
- Listen as much as you talk
  - The best managers are those who know how to ask rather than just how to tell.



# How To Be A Better Manager, continued

- Smile, laugh & have fun
  - Be genuine
  - Fake laughter & “programmed fun because you have to do it” is worse than doing nothing.
- When appropriate, laugh at yourself
  - It makes you human & approachable.



# Principles of Employee Retention

- Employees quit jobs because they can.
- Employees stay because of things they get uniquely from your organization or their position at your agency.
- Supervisors/employers build unique relationships that drive retention or turnover.

*Dick Finnegan, founder of the Retention Institute*

# Recognizing & Retaining Good Employees



Suggestions for  
Recognizing & Retaining  
Good Employees

*Jeff Cortes, No Nonsense Retention*

*Taken from [www.HRDailyAdvisory@nl.blnews.com](http://www.HRDailyAdvisory@nl.blnews.com)*

# Retaining Good Employees

## 10. Fire the slugs

- Hold employees accountable for their performance
- If they aren't doing their job, terminate them.
- Good performers will appreciate that you enforce agency policies.

# Retaining Good Employees, continued

## 9. Start at the top

- 70% of employees say that the worst thing about their job is their boss/supervisor.
- Get supervisory training for yourself & your managers to improve performance (leading to greater employee satisfaction)

# Retaining Good Employees, continued

## 8. Be visible

- Begin each day by walking around
  - Let people know you are there & that you care
- Meet passengers
- Talk with employees
- Visit with supervisors
- Greet vendors



# Retaining Good Employees, continued

## 7. Care

- If you don't genuinely care about your people, your organization will not succeed.
- People are loyal to those who care about them & care for them.



# Retaining Good Employees, continued

## 6. Be accessible

- Keep your office door open 80% of the time
- Encourage people to come & talk to you if they have a concern



# Retaining Good Employees, continued

## 5. Focus on employee assistance

- You may not be able to pay top wages, but you can provide things employees value
  - Flexibility
  - Autonomy
  - Support for common needs among staff
  - Training
  - Great work environment

# Retaining Good Employees, continued

## 4. Treat everyone with respect



- Set a standard (& set the example) that respectful behavior is expected & will be delivered at all times to all people with no exceptions
- Investigate & take immediate action regarding any non-respectful behavior incidents or actions

# Retaining Good Employees, continued

## 3. Express appreciation

- Recognize a job or effort that is well done, no matter how small
- Catch people doing good things
- Say thank you
- Treat your staff like customers
- Be generous in your praise, but always genuine

# Retaining Good Employees, continued

## 2. Don't assume

- Ask employees what they want from their work
- Help them achieve their goals



# Retaining Good Employees, continued

## Be specific about your expectations

- Be clear & specific about what you expect
- Expect the best
- Give staff the tools, support & time needed to get their jobs done

# Retaining Good Employees, continued

(continued)

- If your expectations have not been met, talk to your employee
  - Find out what is needed to get back on track (make them part of the solution)
- If many employees are not meeting your expectations, check your expectations

PEOPLE OFTEN SAY  
THAT MOTIVATION  
DOESN'T LAST. WELL,  
NEITHER DOES  
BATHING – THAT'S  
WHY WE RECOMMEND  
IT DAILY.

ZIG ZIGLAR

# Questions



# Thank You!

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