

SIGMA Radius

360 Leadership Assessment



Leadership Series

Motivating Your
Team



GREAT LEADERS MOTIVATE

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Your talent determines what you can do. Your motivation determines how much you are willing to do. Your attitude determines how well you do it.

— Lou Holtz

Are you doing all you can to motivate your team to meet or exceed organizational goals?

Do you:

- Have positive interactions with employees?
- Know employees' goals, aspirations, and future plans?
- Match employee interests and goals with tasks that need to be accomplished?
- Allow employees the freedom to work in their own way?
- Provide employees with frequent feedback on their progress?
- Recognize employees who are successful?

Making a motivated workforce your priority will ensure your employees and your company achieve their full potential. The following will provide you with some simple and effective ways to energize your team.

Motivating Others

Motivating others is the ability to show enthusiasm and provide encouragement, recognition, constructive criticism, and coaching to direct reports. Leaders skilled in Motivating Others are personable and have positive relations with their direct reports. They display the tact and social skills required to give constructive feedback and provide direction.

Importance of this Characteristic

Leaders who are successful in motivating others can influence a host of behaviors in their employees. They can inspire employees to perform at their best, motivating them to work not just harder, but better. They encourage a friendly climate at work, where making mistakes are considered part of a learning process and employees are encouraged to take calculated risks in order to learn and grow. Employees who are motivated to work are happier and more satisfied

in their jobs. Employees who are satisfied are more productive and are less likely to leave their organization.

Development Tips

Develop positive relations: A good working relationship between leaders and their employees is an essential first step in the process of motivating employees. Leaders who are seen as personable, friendly, and supportive have employees who are happier, more satisfied, and more productive. Over time, leaders can learn what motivates each specific employee, and use these motivators to increase productivity.

Use goal-setting techniques: One of the most effective motivational tools is goal-setting. Difficult but attainable goals are effective tools to boost motivation and performance. Leaders can help employees set goals for themselves, based on their current skill set, the experience they'd like to gain, and the goals employees have for their own careers. When leaders can use goals to align an employee's personal interests with the organization's objectives, employee performance benefits both themselves and the organization.

Allow employees autonomy in their work: Dozens of research studies have shown that one of the best ways to motivate others is to provide them with autonomy. Having autonomy means an employee can choose how to complete their work. It shows trust in the employees' skills and abilities as a worker. It allows employees to try new strategies, manage their own time, and enjoy the process of their work. A leader should offer support and guidance, not micromanagement or restrictive instructions.

Provide feedback: This key step in motivating employees is often overlooked. Without regular, detailed feedback, individuals are unsure if they are meeting performance standards. To avoid confusion and wasted time, leaders should encourage employees to seek feedback, in addition to offering praise and constructive criticism. No project should be considered complete until the leader has briefed employees on their performance, reviewing what they did well, and where they can improve in the future.

Deliver rewards: When employees perform well, attain their goals, and complete projects, they should be rewarded. Although raises and bonuses have been traditionally used as rewards, leaders skilled in motivating others use a different set of tools: recognition, praise, and opportunities. Leaders should recognize the value in an employee's work, and respond in a way that acknowledges current accomplishments and encourages future success.

Implementation

The following steps can help you become better at motivating employees:

1. **Be friendly with employees.** Be willing to listen to employees and show interest in their lives. Leaders can acknowledge milestones in employees' lives. For those who prefer to keep personal and work life separate, ask employees about their goals and career aspirations. Discuss ways in which you can help them reach these goals.
2. **Have one-on-one meetings with employees.** Plan both their short-term and long-term goals. Effective goals should be SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-based. Check in frequently to assess their progress, offering support where needed. When a goal is complete, reassess the employee's wants and needs, and begin the process again with a new set of goals.
3. When goals are set, **allow employees the freedom to reach their goals in their own ways.** Leaders effective at motivating show a belief in the abilities of their employees, and avoid micromanagement. Providing autonomy is simple: make expectations clear, and allow employees the flexibility to meet these expectations as they see fit. Always listen and show interest in new ideas or work strategies.
4. **Be encouraging.** When employees perform well, praise them for their accomplishments. Write memos, highlighting employee success. Publicly acknowledge the hard work of employees. Some leaders plan events to recognize teams at the end of a project, or provide training to successful employees looking to further their careers. In forming positive relations, meeting and listening to employees, and assessing their progress, leaders should know what motivates each employee, and can tailor their rewards and recognition in a way the employees will appreciate most. Remember, you can be encouraging while providing critiques as well. Discuss how you can help your employees overcome their weaknesses, and offer support when employees are struggling.

Resources



[The Puzzle of Motivation with Dan Pink](#)



[5 Tips for Motivating Employees](#)



[7 Ways to Motivate Others](#)



Develop your ability to Motivate Your Team by taking advantage of SIGMA's [coaching services](#).

Contact SIGMA for coaching on developing your skills as a leader.

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