



Employee Motivation, Recognition, and Rewards

Like many managers today, you sometimes wonder what it takes to keep your employees motivated and working to their fullest potential. What exactly is it that motivates us, gives us satisfaction, and keeps us looking forward to coming to work every day?

For many of us, satisfaction comes from working in an organization that we believe and trust in, being recognized and appreciated for our contributions, having opportunities to openly share our ideas, and the ability to grow professionally while advancing our careers.

A pay for performance environment ensures that salary and merit increases are administered commensurately with an employee's overall performance, which in itself provides incentive for employees to perform at a higher level. Unfortunately, this alone doesn't provide the "spark" that keeps employees motivated. Why?

The most likely explanation for this is because performance evaluations and salary adjustments typically happen on an annual basis, and the discussions taking place at that time between manager and employee often get lost in the daily shuffle.

It isn't difficult to keep employees motivated and on track with goals and objectives, but it does require open and frequent communication, beginning with the individual employee work plans. The goals and objectives outlined in these work plans should be measurable, attainable, and relevant to the employee's job function. Meet with the employee to discuss how their work plan complements their career development plan and fits in with your organization's business needs.

Even the best of employees can lose valuable forward momentum if goals are not revisited frequently. For this reason, it's more effective to group goals into periods of varying completion dates instead of

assigning a complete list to be completed "sometime" before next year's performance evaluation. Take time to meet with the employee periodically to review the status of their assigned goals. By grouping goals into shorter periods of time and reviewing their progress, the employee is able to stay focused on their immediate goals, and feel motivated by their accomplishments.

Additional benefit is gained when employee accomplishments are recognized and rewarded with positive reinforcement. If allowed by your organization's policies, this might include an increase in salary or a change in title or status. If something less formal is in order, a paid half-day off or a gift card to the employee's favorite store might be more appropriate.



Take the opportunity to announce major accomplishments throughout your organization by sharing in staff meetings or a company newsletter.

Have some fun – catch employees doing something right and recognize their efforts! For example, each employee in your department receives one entry into a monthly drawing for free lunch for two each time a favorable customer service survey is received on their behalf. When it's time to draw for the prize, take a few moments beforehand to read the customer comments received for everyone aloud to your team. Although only one employee is winning a free lunch, everyone feels that they've won simply for being recognized and appreciated.

If you would like more information on developing an employee recognition and reward program for your organization, please contact Double C Professional Consulting Services today!