

# Motivating Employee's Is An Affordable Necessity

Have you ever walked into a store and been greeted by a store employee chatting on the phone, who glances at you and nods their head in a motion that seems to represent a hello. Your entire transaction is void of any spoken words. No hello, or thank you and definitely no please come again. I suppose that you would be walking out of the establishment a less than satisfied customer, wondering why you went in, in the first place and contemplating whether or not you will ever return.

This situation is much more than a case of poor customer service. What you have encountered is an unhappy employee who is not motivated and completely disengaged. Research and consulting firm the Gallup Organization estimates that 70% of employees are "disengaged". In other words, they are no longer committed to the company. Such a situation could spell disaster for any business large or small.

Many of you might argue that you can not afford to keep your staff happy and that increasing wages is not an option and certainly not in the budget. The bad news is that you can't afford not to keep you staff members happy. The good news is you do not have to increase your employee's wages because money is not the only or best motivator. According to several studies, as long as we are paid competitively or close to competitively, the money issue is not the deciding factor in whether we remain at a job or on how enthusiastically or competently we do that job.

Now that we have established money is not the only means to motivate employees, the question becomes, how do we motivate them? Have you ever asked any of your staff members what they think is expected of them? You might be surprised at the answers you get. Many employees lack direction and truly do not know what is expected of them. Maybe it is time we give them a purpose that they can work towards. This may be as simple as telling your employees what your mission statement is and how their contribution to your company can help your business successfully achieve that mission.

Another good way to motivate your employees is to discover and develop their talents. More often then not, when we hire someone we focus on their weaknesses and try to fix the unfixable: A surefire way to destroy motivation. We should recognize achievement, praise success, and honor a job well done. This does not have to be in the form of monetary bonuses but a simple thank you can go along way. A company t-shirt, sending someone home early, or treating an employee to lunch might be less expensive and more effective ways that we can recognize employees who go above and beyond their job description.

Open communication is another means to motivating employees. If you communicate openly, and allow your staff to give their input on decision within your business you begin to foster a sense of ownership in the employee. You may ask an employee their opinion on someone you want to hire. You may even make them a part of the hiring process by inviting them to ask the prospective employee a few questions. You might ask their opinion on the new piece of equipment or software you are thinking of purchasing. The key is to communicate openly and ask for valuable input.

As an owner of a business each and everything you do is meant to ensure the success of the business and avoid failure. Why? Because it is yours and failure is not an option. Hence, when employees take ownership in something they begin to perceive any failure as their failure and any success as their success. Remember, we all want to be part of something that is a success, because success feels good, failure does not.

Feeling good is yet another fantastic motivator. Do not be afraid to spend some money on a staff party or get together. Recognize an employee's birthday. It may be as simple as buying a birthday card and a cake or if you are a retailer, have a sale in honor of that employee. What ever you do be sure to take the opportunity to celebrate and have fun.

There is no doubt that motivating employees can be a full time job. But happy employees, mean happy customers. Happy customers, mean more revenues. More revenues, mean happy you. Now that's a recipe for success.