

Top Ten Ways To Motivate Employees

It's all too easy to complain about an employee's perceived lack of performance on the job. Sometimes, performance can be dramatically improved just by paying a little attention to all your employees. Too often we end up taking good performers and the ones we "like" for granted and grumble about the ones that need to improve. Actually, you need to pay attention to everyone. It's part of "working ON the business, and not just IN it!"

Here's a list of my top ten ways to motivate people. Consciously try to say "hello" or "good morning" or "good night" or "good job" to everyone, every day. And, work these in too.

1. Personally thank employees for doing a good job - one on one, in writing, or both. Do it timely, often and sincerely.
2. Be willing to take the time to meet with and listen to employees - as much as they need or want.
3. Provide employees specific and frequent feedback about their performance. Support them in improving performance.
4. Recognize, reward and promote high performers; deal with low and marginal performers so that they improve or leave.
5. Provide information about how the company makes and loses money, upcoming products and services and strategies for competing. Explain each employee's role in the overall plan.
6. Involve employees in decisions, especially the decisions that affect them. Involvement equals commitment.
7. Give employees a chance to grow and learn new skills; encourage them to be their best. Show them how you can help them meet their goals while achieving the organization's goals. Create a partnership with each employee.
8. Provide employees with a sense of ownership in their work and their work environment. This ownership can be symbolic (for example, business cards for all employees, whether they need them to do their jobs or not.)
9. Strive to create a work environment that is open, trusting and fun. Encourage new ideas, suggestions and initiative. Learn from, rather than punish mistakes.
10. Celebrate successes - of the company, of the department, and of the individuals in it. Take time for team- and morale-building meetings and activities. Be creative and fresh.

There they are, and I know when you start to use them, the attitude in the whole agency will improve. Try it. You just might like the result.