



How Showing a Little Appreciation Motivates Employees

Martin Haworth

There are whole loads of resources you can find on 'motivation'. Books, tapes, internet, etc. Yet it need not be so complicated...

Recently, I had the opportunity to show appreciation to someone. I was really surprised to hear back from her the following, "Are you being sarcastic?" It turned out that she had never been appreciated. No one had ever said a simple "Thank you" to her.

That's it...notice good work and say thank you.

When?

When can you apply this? Well, it's easy to apply it to everything you see good in people and their performance. But, if it's been something you haven't made a habit of in the past, you need to be a bit smarter than that, to avoid your people wondering what's going on - even worse, they might end up being rather suspicious of what's going on.

So in this case, try and pick out special efforts of each of your people at least once a week to start with. Be fair and consistent with everyone. When that embeds, try it twice a week. Be real though, saying thank-you and giving greater appreciation when it doesn't really mean anything, will end up with a response like I heard above.

Where?

Where can you use this simple encouragement? It's easy. Find the moment when you experience something good from your team members and share your appreciation in the moment if you can. It is so powerful to say it as it happens. And again, even if you forget at the time, don't give up on it, being able to say, "I meant to tell you earlier, but I missed the opportunity, thank you for the way you..." still works.

In fact this can be even more powerful - that you meant to say something, forgot, yet still found the time not to miss the opportunity show how much you really care. Strong relationship building stuff!

Back to the point - where? Anywhere that you notice.

Keep praise informal and frequent so that your people come to appreciate it when it's due (them appreciating you eh?). So not just in an office, but out in the workplace - in the moment.

Why?

Why bother? Well now, let's see. When was the last time someone thanked you for a great piece of work? When was the last time someone thanked you for your help today?

If you haven't been on the receiving end, then I'm sorry. But when you have been, it's a great warm feeling when you are recognized for the efforts you've made. Going home at the end of the day feeling that your contribution is valuable and valued is a very strong motivator.

Your people will feel much more inclined to come back the next day, to a job they do well and feel appreciated for.

So if you have had that experience - share it with your people and if you haven't, try it out on others and see the benefit it creates.

Being appreciated is one of the strongest motivators I know for people - give it a go - and there's no time like the present!

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