

B-Efficient Newsletter - March 2019

“Motivating your employees for the long-term”

To achieve your objectives and implement your company's strategy, you rely on motivated employees.

But all too often you face high levels of absences, unexpected resignations and a lack of initiative and engagement from your employees.

Even with an attractive salary package...

What should you do?

Motivation, fulfilment and engagement?

These three terms are often used interchangeably, although they in fact refer to different concepts. The word motivation (motive + action) refers to what drives human behaviour. Motivation at work is the commitment to performing a task or achieving a goal. It manifests itself in the effort produced by the worker; their physical and mental energy. Motivation is individual and therefore differs from one employee to the next. Some will be motivated by pay, cars or colleagues; others by job description and job security.

Fulfilment is a feeling of well-being; the joy that comes from achieving what is expected, desired or anticipated. It is an affective, emotional reaction that stems from how an employee's expectations compare with real-life experience and results. It manifests itself in job satisfaction and well-being, or the opposite: malaise, absences, resignations, alcoholism and so on.

An employee can therefore be highly motivated in their engagement by prospects and promises. But if these expectations are not met during the course of their real life experiences at work, they will become increasingly demotivated.

For the employee, professional engagement is a moral contract they unconsciously enter into with their employer, through strong investment in their work and in the service of the company. It manifests itself in loyalty and reliability on the part of the employee.

An organisation that can rely on engaged employees has a definite competitive advantage. These employees will exceed expectations ; they will take pride in their work.

So, how do you get motivated, fulfilled and engaged workers?

What are sources of motivation and satisfaction?

The most common sources of motivation are:

- The work itself, the tasks it entails, the activity
- The pay
- The work-life balance
- Career development (and promotion) opportunities
- Relationships with supervisors
- Relationships with colleagues
- Sense of self-worth
- Sense of self-fulfilment
- Independence, autonomy at work (in their thoughts and actions)
- The targets set (are they achievable, accepted?)

- The organisation's rules and practices
- Job security
- And finally, the feeling of being kept informed

So what can you do?

First of all, it is important to identify the factors that motivate your employees. These can be different, depending on the needs and expectations of each employee. To find out, ask the following questions: what do you like best in your work? What motivates you? What energises you? How do you feel about your work and the company's development?

Several studies have shown that intrinsic motivation factors (relating to the task itself) are the real drivers of motivation. The main intrinsic motivation factors are :

- The employee's sense of accomplishment
- Recognition for and feedback on work done
- The tasks to be performed
- Autonomy in taking on responsibilities

Extrinsic (external to the task) motivation factors are also important, because if they are missing, they will become sources of employee dissatisfaction. But it is not by investing more in these extrinsic motivation factors that the employee will become more motivated.

These factors are also known as "hygiene factors". They must be "in check", that is, in line with the labour market and specifically with your sector.

- Pay
- Working conditions
- Relationships with colleagues
- Status

Motivation at work is a complex and evolving process with environmental, social and individual parameters.

The wealth of studies and theories on the subject illustrate the difficulty of understanding motivational factors.

Need leads to motivation, which in turn leads to involvement, resulting in satisfaction and engagement.

In conclusion:

"The right man, at the right place, at the right time".

- **TASK** - Make sure that your employees are posted in jobs for which they are motivated by the job description, first and foremost. Employees look for meaningful work. The role that will suit them is a role that is in tune with their expectations. Work should be a source of personal growth, rather than of suffering. Younger generations are increasingly seeking job satisfaction.
- **INVOLVEMENT** - Inform, ask, involve! Use the "Over To You_{xx1}" method to consult employees, and ask them for feedback on a regular basis. Give them enough autonomy in

their work to influence decision-making and results. An involved employee is an engaged employee. The best approach is to assume that your employees can be trusted.

- **RECOGNITION** - Give everyone the opportunity to learn and develop. Be generous with signals of recognition.
- Recognise efforts made and work done; congratulating and thanking will increase motivation at work. A THANK YOU costs nothing but pays big dividends!
- **SALARY** - And finally, ensure that you have a coherent, competitive, progressive, fair and motivating remuneration policy in place.

For more information or personalised advice, please contact us.

pdepaepe@b-efficient.be

Tel. : +32 (0)474 96 97 91

This article was written by Philippe Depaepe, Trainer and Partner at B-Efficient.

Sources : Le management humain [Managing humanly], Laurent Taskin – Philippe Depaepe - UCLouvain 2018, Théories de la motivation au travail [Theories on motivation at work], Salvatore Maugeri, Dunod 2013.