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What is the most effective way to motivate
staff?

The success of today's businesses is directly dominated by the employees' engagement at the workplace. This concept was primarily explained by William Khan in 1990, and elaboration by other scholars such as Gallup (Harter *et al*, 2012). While there is not a universal definition, the most common explanation would be that it represents the presence of the employees while delivering their working duties and their willingness to contribute through their intellectual, social, and affective commitment, explaining the trust they have in their employer (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2017). The employee engagement can be stimulated by numerous, effective motivational techniques and principles.

In the 1920s and 1930s, through a series of experiments (First experiment: The illumination experiment, second: The relay assembly room, third: The interviewing programme, and forth: The bank wiring observation room) it was demonstrated that the productivity of an organisation was dictated by people rather than machines (a belief which was especially known in the pre- industrial revolution times), known as the Hawthorne studies (Zink, 2001). The Hawthorne studies suggest that the prosperity of an organisation, depends on the employees' motivation, which is beyond solely monetary or based only on the wages the employees get paid as a reward for their labour. The studies further elaborated the staff's motivation to be a result of feeling valued, taken care of by also understanding and answering to their needs at the working place. According to Mullins (2016), there are two types of motivators at work: intrinsic and extrinsic type. Mullins explained that the intrinsic type it is based on the manager's/ leader's behaviours and actions, involving the intangible rewards employees get at work such as feeling appreciated, valued, taken care of etc. According to Mullins the extrinsic type, is related to the tangible rewards employees get at work such as their wages, their working- contracts, being promoted, being given an incentive based on performance in a form of a bonuses etc. The so- called 'The content theories of motivation' provide an extensive preview to techniques individuals getting motivated by, during their performance at work (Mullins, 2016). The most universally studied theory is the Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, that has a purpose to identify and classify people's needs in a pyramid model, structuring and grouping them in different categories (Maslow, 2019). On the first level of Maslow's pyramid is grouped the psychological needs that dictate the individual's

existence (food, water, air, sun etc). On the second level, could be found the security needs (safety, protection etc). The third level is designated for the social, also named love- needs (affection, friendship, sense of belonging etc). The fourth level captures the recognition needs (esteem, power, social status, self- respect etc). The final, fifth level is fulfilled by the self-actualisation needs (to fully develop one`s potential). Maslow further suggested that for an individual or an employee to get motivated, most of those needs should be satisfied (Independent Institute for property and facility management education, 2000). Supplementary to these theories, it can be suggested that for staff to effectively get motivated, primarily it is essential for a clear two- way communication to be established among the leaders and team members (Murray, 2021). The clear- two- way communication would serve as a motivation tool to further allow the employees to feel recognised, by also recognising and welcoming their opinions and values (Emplify, 2011). The clear communication channels would then contribute towards providing the employees with a clarity about their duties, which would additionally foster an inspiring working environment (Latham, 2011). Finally, the clear-two-way communication would provide both sides with adequate and thoughtful feedback, making it clear for everyone of what the expectations from one another are and if they are met successfully (Dollins and Stemmler, 2021).

The inspiring working environment as another effective way of motivation, would offer the staff with autonomy and trust in bringing decisions on their own in relation to their tasks` delivery, creating a welcoming, healthy, and nourishing working environment (Grossman, 2019). This would benefit the leaders and help the organisation too, towards achieving its organisational and business goals (Pearce, 2007). This motivational way would effectively and successfully motivate the employees to contribute with their intellect, while simultaneously stimulating their proactiveness and the improvement of skills such as problem solving etc. that are essential for the success of the employees at their working place (Mullins, 2019). This way of motivation would then inspire another, also effective way of motivating the staff by offering them a psychological safety (Robertson and Cooper, 2015).

The psychological safety as another way of staff`s motivation is crucial to assist the employees to not feel stressed or pressured with their working contracts, uncertainty around allocated working hours and shifts (Filimonau and Corradini, 2020) while delivering their

duties, neither fearing the potential consequences of doing anything incorrectly unintentionally, which could then also sabotage their progress and contributions towards meeting their goals and objectives, also enhancing their engagement (Jimenez, 2022). As a result of this motivational way, the employees would then get provided with an assurance that their work is beneficial and mutual, inspiring them to feel accomplished (Cole and Kelly, 2020).

Making employees feel valued and involved as a motivation way (BMJ, 2009), would assist the employees to feel comfortable getting their work done, as well as assist them feeling capable of putting effort and energy into their work (Silverstein, 2009). Additionally, this would provide the employees with finding meaningfulness at work, making them feel trusted in, while effectively inspiring their full engagement and contribution towards achieving the business's goals (Harter, Schmidt, Killham and Agrawal 2012).

In conclusion, today employees do not get only motivated through tangible rewards such as wages, working contracts, bonuses, incentives etc. In fact, studies show that the staff most effectively get motivated through intangible rewards such as fostering a healthy, safe environment for the employees, based on a clear- two- way- communication, where employees would be provided with constant feedback of their work, psychological safety of feeling autonomy while delivering their duties, assuring them that their work is beneficial, making them feel trusted, valued and inspired to enlarge their engagement and intellectual contribution towards the business's objectives (Review *et al.* 2011).

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