

“Dare to be....15 tips to inspire and motivate”

The current economic climate requires leaders/directors to continuously be at their best and the extent to which managers/employees are engaged and willing to go the extra mile for the organisation is critical to success. With a flat economy there is the temptation to operate and manage by fear (“you’re lucky to have a job.... so just get on with it or I’ll find someone else”). As difficult as the situation may be, leaders have a great opportunity and responsibility to be inspiring and motivating. An inspired employee gives his or her all to their employer, and is constantly striving to be and do their best; to use their skills and talents to their full potential.

So what can be done to improve morale, increase job satisfaction, gain greater employee engagement and empowerment?

An interesting place to start is with an understanding of why people are often unhappy in their jobs. Patrick Lencioni focused on three universal causes as to why people do not enjoy their job:

- **Anonymity** - People who see themselves as invisible, generic or anonymous cannot love their jobs.
- **Irrelevance** - Everyone needs to know that their job matters - without seeing a connection between work and the satisfaction of another person or group of people, an employee will not find lasting fulfilment.
- **Immeasurement** - Employees need to gauge their progress and level of contribution for themselves as motivation will deteriorate if people see themselves as unable to control their fate.

So how do we address these? - Well obviously there is no magic wand but here are 15 principles for inspiring your employees that you can take action on today. Implement

one of these principles and make a difference. Implement all of them and change the culture you live and work in.

1. Firstly It Starts With YOU!

Do not expect others to be inspired or motivated if you're not! Be passionate about the mission and goals of your organisation. Work and act enthusiastically; take responsibility don't blame others for failings; "walk the talk"; persevere. Work with a coach if you recognise that you have difficulties in this area.

2. Share Your Mission, Values and Beliefs With Every Employee.

Make sure that everyone in your organisation is aware of the company's mission, purpose, and goals. Remind people of these at the beginning of meetings or internal presentations, Use posters to reinforce the messages that the company is committed to. Recognise that it is much more exciting to be sharing in an exciting mission with a strong sense of purpose than to just accomplishing an unrelated work task. A sense of contribution to the goals and success of a business makes any job feel more important.

3. Focus On The People You recruit.

Chose people who are naturally motivated - who have a sense of pride; who are willing to "go the extra mile"; who understand that "good enough" never is; who have an attention to detail; who asses their own work independently of others. Test for these attributes during the interview stages of recruitment.

4. Make Sure That You Give Accurate, Sincere, Generous And Fair Feedback.

Countless studies have proven that people are far better motivated by the use of positive feedback. Rather than focusing on employees' weaknesses, focus on their strengths, and praise them whenever praise is deserved. Recognition of work well done in the form of rewards also goes a long way to keeping employees motivated and giving their all. It can be a non-monetary reward like applauding an employee at a staff meeting for a noteworthy accomplishment or simply writing a thank-you note for an admirable effort. Rewards don't have

to break the bank; a personalised cake or gift certificate can be appreciated just as much as a big bonus. When mistakes do happen, public criticism will only result in an inhibition of motivation and growth. Instead, deal with the matter in private with constructive criticism. State your confidence in the person's ability to correct the situation and let them know they are valued.

5. Avoid Micro Management.

Although employees need to know when and how tasks need to be performed, they cannot work to their full potential when they are being overly micromanaged. This type of management creates an atmosphere of distrust, and eventually leads to workers giving less of themselves, becoming less effective; as a result, creativity and motivation are soon snuffed out. Giving employee's autonomy and trust, with accountability, is far more effective, and allows them to improve in efficiency, quality of work as well as enjoy a real sense of personal accomplishment on-the-job.

6. Give Employees Opportunity to Maximize Their Talents, Learning and Development.

Focus on the strengths and talents of each employee; on developing who they truly are. When someone gets to do what they do best every day, work satisfaction will surely follow. Training and career development opportunities should always be encouraged when possible. This contributes to an employee's sense of self-actualization and is extremely rewarding.

7. Set SMART Objectives.

Ensure that the objectives that you set are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed.

8. Create A Positive "Can Do" Environment.

One of best way to generate a "can do" attitude was to ask: "What if? Why not? If only? How about?' Give employees opportunities to explore, investigate and

experiment around new ideas and actively encourage such positive behaviours. Avoid an over restrictive/bureaucratic environment. Recognise that risk is a central requirement to growth and positive change. Allow input into decisions; introduce variety; explain the significance of a person's job. Staff in general always prefer to feel that they can be part of the solution rather than being measured as part of the problem.

9. Be Authentic.

Share with the people in your organization where you are weak. Verbally express just how much you need them. Let them know that you know your limitations.

10. Connect With Other's Dreams.

Try to uncover the dreams and ambitions of your key talent. Demonstrate that you are committed to helping them get to where they want to go. Be creative in aligning their tasks for today with their dreams for tomorrow.

11. See In Others the Abilities They May Not See in Themselves.

This principle works best by breaking it down into three steps, notice, name, and nurture. After you have noticed a talent or strength in a person, let them know you noticed it and be specific about what you noticed. Don't just say "I noticed you are a hard worker." Rather, "I notice you care very deeply about solving customer's complaints quickly." Look for ways to bring that talent out by providing opportunities and training to support that particular talent.

12. "Walk The Talk."

To motivate and inspire others it's important that you are seen to be credible and lead with moral authority. Make sure that you do what you say you're

going to do, follow-through and not just making empty promises.

13. Inspire With Great Stories And Quotes.

How many times have you been fascinated by a good story/quote? How many times have you pushed yourself harder after hearing the story of someone else's success, or changed your opinion after reading a convincing article in a magazine or newspaper? There's no doubt that stories and quotes can change the way we think, act, and feel. Leaders, especially, can use the power of a good quote to influence and motivate their teams to new heights. Stories can inspire everything from understanding to action. They can create legends that an entire workplace culture can build upon, and they have the power to break down barriers and turn a bad situation into a good one. Quotes and stories can capture our imaginations and make things real in a way that cold, hard facts can't. Use posters to provide a reminder of these learning's.

14. Help People To Live With A Purpose.

Remind them that what happens at work is only a portion of their life. As important as that portion is, it is not all that there is to life. Help people have a vision for their life first and for their job second. If work can be a conduit towards that vision for life then even better.

15. Encourage Employees' Opinions and Ideas.

Actively listen to your employees. Honestly evaluate what they have to say, without letting your ego get in the way, and you will probably learn something that benefits your business. Seek out the opinions and ideas of your workers with the goal of implementation; employees will feel truly valued as an integral part of shaping the success and future of your organisation. Suggestion boxes, meetings and group discussions are a few ways in which employees can

contribute their ideas, but they should be made to feel that their feedback is welcome at any time.

Focusing on raising the inspiration factor through developing people yields incredible value for stakeholders, customers, and employees alike. If you'd like to know more about how I can help you **"Dare to be...a motivator"** in an environment where there is no finger pointing and will reinforce your self-sufficiency and independence rather than challenge it, then contact me today for a **FREE taster session**.