What to do—and avoid—when motivating workers

A smart manager knows what motivates employees, as well as what doesn’t. No single strategy will work for everyone, but you’ll get results with these basic do’s and don’ts:

Do:

• **Free your employees.** Give your workforce as much control as possible over how, when, and where to work. This shows your trust in their judgment and lets them manage their own time efficiently.

• **Help them succeed.** Give employees the push they need in order to do superior work. Provide challenges and opportunities for development, not the same routine work day after day.

• **Give a sense of connection.** Strive to create a culture of teamwork where employees help each other and feel a genuine bond with each other no matter what they do for the organization.

• **Design your workplace for results.** No one wants to toil in a basement or use equipment that’s decades old. Set up offices, cubicles, and other workspaces that are efficient and comfortable, with plenty of light and the right amount of privacy, as well as meeting rooms that allow groups to work together effectively.

  • Set motivational goals. Give employees something to shoot for. Work together on goals that excite them and let them use their best skills.

Don’t:

• **Force employees into the wrong job.** Use the recruiting process to determine what employees do best. Then put them in jobs where they can succeed. Trying to force them into functions where they can’t perform well rarely leads to productivity and satisfaction.

• **Micro-manage.** Keep track of your employees’ work, but don’t intrude. If you demand constant progress reports, watch them all the time, or constantly interrupt with questions or “suggestions,” they’ll stop trying hard to do anything on their own.

Source: [www.managebetter.biz](http://www.managebetter.biz)

Stop making these 15 body language mistakes

Whether you’re applying for a job, asking for a raise or meeting a new client, being mindful of our body language can influence others’ perceptions of us, as well as outcomes. Here are 15 body language blunders to watch for:

- Leaning back: You come off as lazy or arrogant.
- Leaning: This can seem aggressive. Aim for a neutral posture.
- Breaking eye contact too soon: Doing so can make you seem untrustworthy or overly nervous. Hold eye contact a hair longer—especially during a handshake.
- Nodding too much: You look like a bobble-head doll. Even if you agree with what’s being said, nod once, and then try to remain still.
- Chopping or pointing with your hands: This feels aggressive.
- Crossing your arms: Doing so makes you look defensive, especially when you’re answering questions. Keep your arms at your sides.
- Fidgeting: Fidgeting instantly telegraphs how nervous you are. Avoid it at all costs.
- Holding your hands behind your back or firmly in your pockets: Doing so can look rigid and stiff. Aim for a natural, hands-at-your-sides posture.
- Looking up or around: This is a natural cue that someone is lying or not being himself. Try to hold steady eye contact.
- Staring: Staring can appear aggressive. There’s a fine line between holding someone’s gaze and staring him down.
- Failing to smile: If you never smile, you can make people uncomfortable and wonder if you really want to be there. Flash a genuine smile, especially when you meet someone for the first time.
- Stepping back when you ask for a decision: This move conveys fear or uncertainty. Stand your ground, or even take a slight step forward with conviction.


Making coaching remotely easier

Coaching isn’t easy, but it’s especially difficult when you’re coaching a remote employee. When people share an office, they have more context with which to interpret each other’s actions. Without that, it’s harder to help someone understand how her successes and failures fit into the larger whole. In addition, coaching requires trust, which is harder to build over phone calls and video conferences. To make coaching a remote employee easier:

• **Have an honest discussion about the relationship’s challenges.** Acknowledging the problem gets you both on the same page and helps to set expectations.

• **Use structure to compensate for context.** Set a schedule for regular meetings, and spend time discussing the employee’s coworkers, office politics, and life outside work.

• **If possible, find a trusted adviser in the employee’s location.** Having a local sounding board will help you make more relevant recommendations.

Keeping mission short and to the point

Keep your mission statement short and to the point, writes Eric Lanke, CEO of the National Fluid Power Association. Lanke cites his Association’s mission statement before it was revised that read “to strengthen the fluid power industry by promoting fluid power technology and fostering an innovative environment for the fluid power industry.” He said that the word “by” is a dead giveaway that you’ve left the realm of the mission and you’ve strayed into the territory of vision or objective. Any time you start talking about how you are going to accomplish your mission, you’re not talking about your mission any more. You’re still talking about something important—something that clearly belongs on your strategy agenda—but putting these elements into your mission risks obscuring the vital purpose of your organization. They finalized their Association’s mission “to strengthen the fluid power industry.”

Source: http://ericlanke.blogspot.com/2015/06/a-mission-is-short-and-to-point.html

Welcoming complaints

When a client calls and start complaining, thank him or her. Thanking a member for a complaint creates a feeling that you and the member are now in partnership against a common enemy. If you don’t empathize, the member is going to link you with the problem and then the member will have two enemies. You want to create a triangle, that’s composed of you and the member against the problem, not you and the problem against the member. It’s also great to say things like “Thank you for giving us an opportunity to improve”, and “It’s so helpful to know about things like this”, we only have the power to fix them if we know about them.

Source: 199 IDEAS, Member Service and Engagement, American Society of Association Executives

Before you present to others, try talking to yourself

The best public speakers practice regularly and are well-versed in their subject areas, writes Siddhartha Sharma. One way to develop your skills: Get a mirror and spend time each day speaking to your reflection. “Public speaking is a learnable skill and anybody can master this skill if they decide to,” Sharma writes.

Source: SmartBrief on Leadership

Leaders’ three kind of works

If you’re a boss you have to lead and manage and supervise too. They’re three different kinds of work: (i) Leadership work is about setting the direction and demonstrating the values. You must do your leadership work all day every day. Set the example because people are paying attention. Communicate the mission and other key messages. (ii) Management work is about groups and processes and priorities. You’ll hold meetings and schedule activities and make sure the administrative laundry gets done, (iii) Supervision work is the people part of the job. It’s all about helping team members do a good job today and a better job tomorrow.

http://www.threeestarleadership.com/

Spreading messages with three contacts

You want employees, customers, and managers to be able to reach you, but giving out a lengthy list of phone numbers and email addresses can get confusing for everyone. People won’t know which method is the most reliable, and you’ll waste time checking every single one to be sure you haven’t missed an important message. Here’s one simple approach: Give out just three access points. Provide one workplace phone or cell number, an email address, and a workplace mailing address (if mail service is dependable). These limits make it easier for you to check and retrieve whatever message gets your way and also easier for people to keep track of you.

http://www.managebetter.biz/

Leaders become great, not because of their power, but because of their ability to empower others.

―John Maxwell

Spelling out your vision in terms all your employees will grasp

Having trouble getting the entire team to understand your vision? Maybe it’s because some people see the forest while others make out only the trees. In other words, some people are naturally “big picture” people. Things make sense to them only when they’re presented as a whole. Other people, however, are more detail-oriented. They need to understand how the pieces fit together. To help everyone get a clear grasp of your vision, explain it both ways—as a process and as an outcome.

Source: http://www.managebetter.biz/

Looking for your next big idea

Successful companies know the importance of being always on the lookout for big ideas even as they struggle to face the challenges of day to day operations. “Too often the leaders are not demanding enough and settle for projects that can achieve at most a modest impact,” writes Bob Herbold, http://bobherbold.com. That’s not the idea here. The intent always should be to find the big idea that truly can make a significant difference, Herbold adds.

Source: http://bobherbold.com/

Don’t...stop making these...

☞ Steepling your fingers or holding your palms up: Both of these gestures look like begging positions and convey weakness.

☞ Standing with hands on hips: This is an aggressive posture, like an animal puffing itself up to look bigger.

☞ Checking your phone or watch: You’re signaling that you want to be somewhere else. Plus, it’s just bad manners.

So, what should you do? Whether you’re sitting or standing, aim for good posture in a neutral position. Stand with your arms at your sides, and sit with them at your sides or in your lap. Naturally hold eye contact, smile and be yourself.


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