

MOTIVATE YOUR TEAM FOR SUCCESS

Motivating employees towards success is one essential ingredient in maintaining a vigorous, cost-effective, serviceable and productive business. One of the toughest challenges faced by business managers in today's difficult market is maintaining employee motivation over the long term.

Reward

One way to motivate your team is through rewards and incentives, given with the intention of acknowledging work that contributes to the realisation of the firm's goals. Whether that reward is a bonus, a promotion or a pay rise depends on the resources available to the business; but making an example of hard-working team members will motivate the rest of your team, as they will seek to achieve the same level of reward as their colleagues.

Success Has Many Fathers

People want to be a part of success. This is where internal communication comes in; by constantly reminding your team that they are part of a successful business, and that they are working on something worthwhile, managers can encourage their teams to feel that they are contributing to the success of the firm. The team's involvement could be further enhanced by asking them for their opinions on improving the business's vision, mission, goals, strategies etc.

Get to Know Your Team

Take note of what motivates your staff, both professionally and personally. Organise team building events such as after work drinks on a Friday in order to bring your team together. Your team will become more loyal and therefore more motivated if they think of the management in a friendly, caring light. Form a bond with your team and they will strive to deliver for you, as they will consider management as part of the team.



TOP TIPS FOR BUYING YOUR NEXT LAPTOP

Despite the plethora of tablets and mobile devices on the market, business professionals still depend on good old-fashioned laptops / notebooks as general workhorses. Here are a few things to consider when purchasing your next business laptop:

Size and Weight

Do you plan to take your laptop with you very often? If so, you need one that is convenient to carry. It may be better to choose something that is light in weight, with a screen size of 13 or 14 inches. Larger 17-inch screens can be cumbersome to transport, and a little too big for using on a train. If you require a larger screen in the office you can always plug the laptop into a separate monitor.

Operating System

The operating system is actually very important, but is often forgotten. It is good sense to try and match your laptop to your desktop computer, as your software will remain compatible and document transfer will be very straightforward.

Processor

It is unlikely that you will need the latest processor, as high-end processors are more suited to intense laptop activities such as gaming or video editing. If you are browsing the web, checking e-mail, using Skype and working on office documents, then a slower processor such as an Intel Core i5 is more than enough.

Ports

It's easy to be enticed by thin and affordable laptops, but they can have serious disadvantages, one of which is the lack of ports. Ports are necessary as they make your laptop even more functional or useful, allowing you to attach external devices such as printers, memory cards, monitors etc. Make sure you have at least 3-4 USB ports, WiFi capability and the ability to connect to a monitor to it in case you want to use it as a desktop machine.

Battery

If you tend to travel a lot, you will need a good battery life. Aim for something in the region of 4-6 hours when searching for your laptop. It can also be useful to have the ability to purchase a second battery, as this allows you to effectively double your work time while travelling.

MAKE THE MOST OF BLOGGING

Until relatively recently, blogging was often perceived as an online diary for individuals to share their opinions and personal experiences. However, a blog today can be a powerful marketing tool. Whether you want to create web traffic, grow your online community, build relationships with customers, position yourself or your company as an expert or 'soft-sell' your services, a blog offers a lot of possibilities.

So how do you make your blog successful? It's all about consistent, quality content. Here are a few tips:

Quality Content

Quality content is key. Do some research in order to ascertain which topics will resonate with your target audience. Focus on what people are talking about in the news and on social media sites in relation to your target market. Your content should aim to offer a perspective on issues facing your potential customers. If you can engage with them and show that you have an understanding of problems, challenges or opportunities in their industry, you will begin to generate a following. Finally, make sure that your content is readable by avoiding jargon.

Consistency

Like most marketing initiatives, frequency and consistency matter in blogging. When it comes to frequency, there are no fixed rules. How often you blog will depend on your type of business, target market, purpose, etc. Longer, researched posts for example will take more time to produce. Whatever frequency you determine is best for your business, do it consistently and reap the rewards. If your last post is over a month or two old, it may be time to consider outsourcing content production to an external provider.

Share

Share your blog posts on social media platforms relevant to your business, and encourage your social network to share it with their contacts too. Don't be afraid to ask for help in spreading the word – most social networks encourage this type of sharing.

Tailor Your Blog to Your Audience

Always stay true to your target audience. Make your blogs relevant by illustrating that you understand your industry and target market. If you understand what keeps your audience awake at night, you can add value by providing solutions to assist with the challenges they face.

GET MORE OUT OF YOUR MEETINGS

Meetings are a necessary evil. However, they are time consuming, resource intensive and can often prove to be inefficient if attendees are not prepared. Here are some top tips to help you to make the most of your meetings.

Create an Agenda

Agree an agenda for each meeting and circulate the agenda prior to the meeting. This sets the tone for your meeting and avoids situations where people get side tracked.

Punctuality

Timing is important. If people don't show up on time, start without them. They will learn by experience and they will avoid being late for the next meeting. Equally, stick to your timeline – if you say a meeting will be over by 4pm then make sure it is over on time as your colleagues will have other things which the need to attend to during their working day.

Be Prepared

Set a good example by being prepared for meetings. As others observe that you are prepared, they will tend to follow your example as it comes across as professional. Being prepared for meetings will also help you to win the respect of your colleagues as they may view people who turn up to meetings unprepared as "time wasters".

No Blackberries or Mobile Phones

At the start of each meeting ask colleagues to switch their phones to silent and avoid checking emails during the meeting. If you make a point of saying this, they will most likely avoid being distracted by their phones and will contribute more to the meeting as a result.

Facilitate

If you are chairing a meeting, aim to facilitate conversation between colleagues. Do not allow a small minority to dominate the meeting. Very often, knowledgeable people fail to contribute to a meeting as they are overwhelmed by more talkative colleagues.



Please contact a member of our team if you would like to discuss any of the issues raised.

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