

Communication

Bulletin *for Managers & Supervisors* TM

A fast-read source of information to help managers communicate better within and between departments, twice a month.

May 17, 2021



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6 types of employees – and how to motivate each to more success

This guide cracks the code on what employees want

Ask employees what motivates them, and you'll likely get some blank stares, a few smart aleck remarks and several shoulder shrugs.

Most people can't easily identify what makes them love – or hate – their work. Most don't know what's truly behind their desire to do better and achieve more.

But everyone's got something.

"Most people haven't given it much thought," says Liz Uram, author of *Communicate Like a Boss: Every Day Leadership Skills That Produce Real Results*. "Instead, [leaders need to] act like an investigator and look for clues to identify the motivational factors of each individual."

Fortunately, you don't need to be Sherlock Holmes to do this. Uram reveals the clues on which of the top motivators work for each employee, plus tips on how to motivate them.

Achievers

Who: These people are usually looking to outdo themselves. They're OK with friendly competition, but their biggest competitor is internal.

Clues: They're self-starters and concerned about productivity. They set personal and professional goals – and love checking off each that's achieved.

How: Regularly give them key performance

Please see Motivate ... on Page 2.

Sharpen Your Judgment

Social media posts lead to firing, lawsuit

"Everyone deserves an opinion," said Manager Ellen Roberts during the one-on-one meeting in her office. "But an opinion that sounds like a violent threat is a different story."

"My social media account. My opinion," said employee Lisa Scavo. "It's not your business."

"Actually, it is," said Ellen. "We have a social media policy here that applies to everyone."

"If it does, why aren't Tim and Rhonda in here?" Lisa said. "I saw they posted opinions about the protests."

"I saw those as well," Ellen said. "And they didn't suggest violence, particularly 'steamrolling the crowd,' like you did."

"I don't see what this has to do with work," Lisa

said, "other than you supporting them and their opinions, and chastising me for mine."

"This feels like you're discriminating against me because I'm white, and I support the views of those like me," Lisa continued.

Support safe workplace

"What I support is a workplace where people feel safe," Ellen said. "And your pro-violence posts don't make people feel that way. I need you to clean out your desk and leave."

Lisa didn't go quietly. She sued, claiming discrimination was the reason behind her firing.

The company fought the suit. Did it win?

This regular feature sharpens your thinking and helps keep both you and your firm out of trouble. It describes a real legal conflict and lets you judge the outcome.

Make your decision, then please turn to Page 4 for the court's ruling.

The Purpose of Communication Bulletin for Managers & Supervisors

Communication Bulletin for Managers & Supervisors provides relevant and actionable business ideas to help managers and supervisors improve communication and increase effectiveness.

The Bulletin helps improve communication within and between departments, a major goal for most businesses seeking better performance.

All in a fast-read format, twice a month.

Motivate ...

(continued from Page 1)

measures. Encourage them to set bigger goals. Recognize and congratulate their progress and achievements.

Approvers

Who: These employees like acknowledgment and appreciation.

Clues: They talk a lot about their accomplishments, even giving you a list of what they've done. They aren't bragging. They want to hear, "Thanks."

How: Give sincere, specific and timely appreciation for the efforts they point out and those you notice.

Influencers

Who: These employees often don't need a formal leadership role to enjoy influencing others. They're driven by respect from the boss and peers.

Clues: They're often willing to speak for the group and are considered the "go-to" for answers and reassurance.

How: Ask them for opinions and feedback on matters that affect your group, making it clear you know "the team respects your thoughts."

Belongers

Who: These employees are motivated by a sense of belonging to a group.

Clues: They often come up with ideas to get the gang together – happy hours, potlucks and such. They're involved in other social groups, family events and friend activities outside of work, too.

How: Ask Belongers to be part of projects that need unique and creative perspective. Get them involved in organizing events and celebrations that make your workplace special.

Growers

Who: These employees want to rise above the status-quo. They have their hearts and minds on career growth.

Clues: They'll ask you about career development – as early as the job interview! They're always willing to take on extra responsibility.

How: Invite them to take on bigger responsibilities and more complex tasks when they're ready. Regularly talk about and create a career path.

Safety-netters

Who: These employees have a big need for job or financial security.

Clues: They might obsessively worry about performance and change. They aren't necessarily needy, but they seek reassurance more often than others.

How: Answer their questions. Communicate change early and remind them of their skills and capabilities.

Source: LizUram.com

COMMUNICATION BRIEFS

1 huge communication mistake to always avoid

Here's a communication mistake every leader wants to avoid: the pre-apology. It might sound like:

- I'm usually wrong, but ...
- This is probably a bad idea ...
- In my feeble mind ...
- I'm terrible at math, but ...

By apologizing for your thoughts and ideas, you undermine your authority and credibility.

Source: tinyurl.com/mistakes500

Beware the pandemic posture! Fix it now

We've slumped over screens more than ever – and now many people have Pandemic Posture. It includes neck, shoulder and lower back pain and less mobility. To alleviate it:

- Hold a door frame, each arm at a 90-degree angle (as if positioned to do a standing push up). Slowly step forward to get a shoulder and chest stretch for 30 seconds.
- Stand up and do a shoulder roll at least three times daily. Roll them forward and backward as far as you can. Lift them upward and downward as far as possible several times.

Source: Spry Living.

5 questions to avoid analysis paralysis

Failing to make a decision can be worse than making no decision at all. Leaders don't want analysis paralysis to stop progress.

Instead, when you're faced with a tough decision and need to get over the hump, Alli Polin, a leadership coach, suggests you ask:

- What happens if I do nothing?
- Which option gives me the most positive energy?
- Are any of my choices undoable?
- How do I feel if I take a choice off the table – relieved or stressed?
- Can I make it happen?

Source: tinyurl.com/decisions500

TECH CORNER

3 apps that will help you network from anywhere

Professional networking isn't what it used to be.

Eighteen months ago, we could connect with colleagues in the hall, meet new people at local events or learn from experts at conferences.

Now, we have to rely more on technology to make professional connections.

Beyond LinkedIn

There's more than LinkedIn out there to do it.

Here are three apps that can help:

- **Upstream Earlybirds** allows you to join communities that meet your interests, give and get help, and attend events to meet others.
- **Clubhouse** is an invitation only app and allows people around the world to come together to talk, listen and learn from each other in real time.
- **Lunchclub** traditionally matched users by interests and goals before the pandemic. Last year, it added Cafes – virtual meetups and meetings – to help connect users to more people within their industry and beyond.

Source: tinyurl.com/apps500

Real Problems, Real Solutions

Our subscribers come from a broad range of organizations, large and small. In this regular networking feature, three of them share their successes in improving workplace communication.

1 Exec-to-new-employee experience builds loyalty

The higher up you are in the company, the less likely you are to interact with new and entry-level employees.

That's a shame because new employees often have valuable insight for executives. And they need to know executives care about them.

That's why I made a point to connect with new employees.

Look for ways to improve

Every 35 days, I have lunch with a group of new employees. I ask them if there's anything in our organization that could be improved based on their

experiences prior to working with us. I also lay out the expectations we have for their future with us.

Less formally, I try to get to know them personally, too, learning about their interests.

I want to let new employees know their CEO cares about them and their success at our company.

And it's worked. We learn a lot about each other in those early meetings that helps us create a strong working relationship. We have high employee loyalty to prove it.

(Jeff Cates, CEO, Achievers, Toronto)

2 How we broke down silos, built up unity

Like many companies, I could see ours had a lot of silos. People worked toward departmental and personal goals. They also tended to interact primarily with just colleagues in their department.

If we helped them see the big picture better, they might communicate more and break down the silos.

Eyes and minds open now

So we met to give every group a holistic view of the company. Then we created a companywide goal.

Departments and people would have to share more information to reach the common goal.

Leaders set up interdepartmental meetings to regularly share information and move toward the goal.

The shared view and goal – something we continue to do in our operations – helped open eyes to the big picture and minds to more knowledge sharing.

(Derek Robinson, CEO, Top Notch Dezigns, Melville, NY, shared this success with the SmartBrief Young Entrepreneur Council)

3 I hated layoffs, but this approach worked

Our company faced a huge setback early in my career. I had to make tough and fast decisions to ensure we'd get ahead.

The absolute worst challenge was having to lay off 30% of the staff.

To be fair, I put the exceptionally creative, great working collaborators on the "keep" list. From there, and with the absence of any obvious poor performers, I had to let go of the less-amazing performers. Then I added anyone who was gifted and high-performing, but who complained a lot, to the layoff list. I also added people who might have worked hard but showed uneven judgment.

Negative turns positive

It was tough to let anyone go. But in a few weeks, I saw the remaining employees flourish. Having let go those who could have a negative effect on the workplace, I had created a more positive energy where employees thrived.

(Reed Hastings, CEO, Netflix, shared this success on the Freakonomics Radio Book Club)



YOUR LEGAL COACH

■ Employees work in public: Can we demand vaccine?

Question: Some of our employees interact with the public quite a bit. Can we require them to get the COVID-19 vaccination?

Answer: It's tricky because there are potential legal issues on both ends, say attorneys Jill O'Toole, Daniel Schwartz and Sarah Niemiroski of Shipman & Goodwin LLP.

On one side, unvaccinated employees put customers at risk, and open you to some claims – such as civil assault, negligent supervision, and intentional or negligent infliction of emotional distress. None of those have been put to the test in court, though.

On the other side, if an employee refuses the vaccine for disability or religious reasons, you could face discrimination suits.

The best bet: Strongly encourage employees to get the vaccine. Make it easy, giving them time and resources to do it.

Source: tinyurl.com/vaccine500

LIGHTER SIDE

■ Probably can't get past these cover letters

Some job candidates might "wow" you with their skills and knowledge. That is, if you can get past poor cover letters.

Some of the worst seen by executives at Coburg Bank:

- "Why should you employ me? I bring doughnuts on Fridays."
- "Please disregard the attached resume; it's totally outdated."
- "Please don't misconstrue my 14 jobs as 'job-hopping.' I have never quit a job."
- "I'm not going to waste your time by lying. I have no skills, yet."
- "Dear Sir/Modem."
- "For the sake of my sanity, please hire me!"

COMMUNICATION NEWS

Why workplace rituals are more important

If your workplace rituals fell by the wayside this past year, now's the time to reinitiate them.

Or start some new rituals. They're critical for engagement and satisfaction.

That's based on Harvard research about couples. Those that had rituals – such as a date night or weekend walks – were more satisfied, invested and committed than couples who didn't have rituals.

From relationships to work

The researchers took their finding over to the business world and found, yes, rituals help employees and teams.

Career advancement could be problem in remote work culture

People who want to get ahead in their careers are increasingly concerned about this: *Out of sight, out of mind.*

Almost 40% of employees have gone out of their way to get noticed while working from home – and women were twice as likely as men to do it, a Joblist survey found.

Strategy to get ahead

A third of employees had a “visibility strategy” to make sure they don't fall behind professionally while they worked remotely.

Groups with rituals perform better and are more committed to each other and their work.

Researchers said rituals should be:

- **Fun.** Most rituals were fun. Task-oriented rituals, such as grocery shopping, included a reward (cooking together). So try to create rituals at work that are fun.
- **Fulfilling.** Make food and drink part of rituals. In nearly two-thirds of couples' rituals, they bought a good or service – and it was often a meal or drink. Your people can bond while breaking bread, pizza, doughnuts, beers, etc.

Source: tinyurl.com/rituals500

Even if you aren't concerned about getting ahead anytime soon, a “visibility strategy” can help when it's time. A few tactics:

- Keep tabs on key projects and regularly update your boss on actions and progress.
- Offer to help colleagues with work to build credibility and genuinely pitch in for the greater good.
- Pay attention to details. Let nothing fall between the cracks.
- Publicly thank others for their help.

Source: tinyurl.com/noticed500

Sharpen Your Judgment – The Decision

(continued from Page 1)

Yes, the company won when an appeals court threw out the case.

The employee's attorney claimed she was the victim of discrimination. The employee, who was white, and two colleagues, who were Black, posted their reactions to local protests in social media. She was the only one fired under the company's social media policy. So it had to be discrimination based on her ethnicity.

The company's attorney argued she was fired because her posts violated their social media policy. She encouraged violence. Meanwhile, her colleagues expressed opinions but didn't suggest violence in any form.

The court said the posts weren't comparable.

Lisa's were egregious. An established social media policy made it clear employees could be terminated for those kinds of posts.

'Broad discretion' might not be enough

The company in this case had a loose social media policy – it didn't specify standard violations or punishments. But every employee had to adhere to the policy's same “broad discretion.”

That was enough in this case, but you might want to work with HR to build a more specific policy to avoid lawsuits.

(Based on *Ellis v. Bank of New York Mellon Corp.* Dramatized for effect.)

Quotes

There are years that ask questions and years that answer.

– Zora Neale Hurston

The rules, like streets, can only take you to known places.

– Ocean Vuong

Worry is like a rocking chair. It will give you something to do, but it won't get you anywhere.

– Vance Havner

EDITOR
MICHELE MCGOVERN
mmcgovern@pbp.com

MANAGING EDITOR:
RENEE COCCHI
rcocchi@pbp.com

PRODUCTION EDITOR:
P.J. FRONZEO

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR:
CURT BROWN

Subscriptions: 800-220-5000

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