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How to Empower Your Staff and Boost Motivation



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Motivated staff members are the key to the success of any business. One of my previous guests on the That Bad Review podcast, Cath Bellchambers, said it best: We spend so much of our time on our tools, facilities, software and vehicles, but we don't spend as much time on our people, and they're the biggest financial investment we make.

So just how do you keep your staff motivated, and how do you know?

Motivated or Not? Look for the Telltale Signs

The first thing you need to do is identify whether your team members are motivated or not. For many of you who manage staff now, this may be slapping you in the face with the obvious, but bear with me.

There are telltale signs:

- Inconsistent actions and they tend to blame others
- They don't take accountability for their work
- They watch the clock, arrive late or leave early, or perhaps take excessive sick leave
- They repeat mistakes
- They fudge checklists or accountability measure that you have in place
- They're not prepared to have conversations in front of management, and have trouble speaking to you about potential issues.

Let's get Motivated! Let's Communicate

You've determined that there is a problem of motivation, what now? For me, the initial answer is easy: Communicate. You need to talk to that person, and you need to have a way for them to give you feedback. Find out what they like about their job, and potentially what they don't like, and then you need to empower them.

Empower Your Staff to Run Your Business

If you've been in business any length of time you'll know that micromanaging your staff is a path to disaster – both for you and your staff. The secret to this is empowering them to run your business. So how do we empower them? Firstly, and perhaps most importantly, we need to make it clear what we expect of them. One way I've had success doing this is through implementing a set company core values.

Empowerment in Practice – Set Your Core Values

The best way I found to do this was through a process of interaction with my key staff members, supervisors and managers. I found a good place to start was simply by searching 'core values' in Google. I start with a hundred or so core values on a list and give a copy to each of these chosen staff members. Generally, I'll approach six to eight staff members to take part.

I then ask them to whittle it down to 10 each. Typically, I find there are three or four core values that overlap from each staff member. I use that as the basis for my company's team's core values. I then might add a couple of captain's picks of my own.

How To Get Your Core Values Message Across

Once chosen, I find an easy way of helping my team remember the values is by using the first letter of the words to spell out something. The acronym CHATED is our most recent. It stands for:

- Customer focused
- Honesty
- Accountability
- Teamwork
- Egalitarian
- Dependable

Keep Your Team's Core Values Top Of Mind

This acronym approach, not only makes it easier for me to remember – which is important if I'm trying to explain it to my team – but also for my staff. We then reinforce the message of the core values in our everyday activities. On every payslip, for example, we highlight one of the core values. We also have them beautifully framed above our office for all our staff and guests to see.

Empowerment Through Self-Policing

The beauty of all this is that my staff members know that if there is any doubt whatsoever in their decision-making process, and they can justify it with those core values, they are not going to get into trouble. Sometimes, you just need to be clear on interpretation.

Overall, this approach has empowered my staff to make decisions, to be accountable and self-police our values. Instead of issues becoming personal, they can point to the core values and it's very clear what's expected of them.

If that's piqued your interest, have a listen to the full episode here. Any questions or comments, get in touch below.

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