



Supervisor NEWSLETTER

Employee Assistance Program
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Great Ways to Motivate Your Team

It's probably not in your job description, but one of your duties as a supervisor is to constantly find new ways to motivate your team. Sometimes, this requires a little bit of ingenuity, as well as a little bit of emotional intelligence. However, becoming a better facilitator—and in turn, a better motivator—will go a long way towards helping you be the most effective leader you can be.

Andrew DuBrin, Ph.D., a management professor at the Rochester Institute of Technology and author of “The Breakthrough Team Player,” has many great ideas on how to succeed at the unofficial role of ‘team motivator.’ “Rather than telling people what to do, effective leaders help bring out the best in their team members,” DuBrin says. “One way to succeed is to perfect your coaching style. As a coach, you can make on-the-spot suggestions and offer team members encouragement.”

If you're looking for ways to better motivate your team, consider the following suggestions, provided by DuBrin.

- **Help your team devise a mission statement.** Creating such a statement can help your team members feel like they're part of something bigger.
- **Be supportive.** Encourage your team as often as possible. Simply encouraging your staff can improve their performance, especially those who are struggling. If issues appear to be more complex, refer your employees to the EAP for further support.

- **Be a model of what you expect.** An effective leader spurs others to act appropriately by setting an example. For instance, cooperating with people from other departments will encourage team members to do the same.
- **Foster teamwork.** Promote the attitude that working together effectively leads to success for everyone. Refer to those in the group as ‘team members’ or ‘teammates’ instead of ‘subordinates’ or ‘employees.’ Make frequent use of the words ‘we’ and ‘us.’ For example: “We achieved the new sales goal.”
- **Bring team members together.** Schedule meetings, meals, and occasional parties during regular office hours (when possible) so you don't intrude on people's personal time. When you do get together, emphasize that yours is a winning team.
- **Frequently remind team members that their work is important.** Help them identify tasks they're particularly good at and promote them as key members of the group. Build the commitment and confidence of each team member. “For the group to develop a strong team spirit, individuals must feel a sense of mutual accountability,” DuBrin says. “Frequently reminding team members of what they're doing right is one way to build commitment and self-confidence.”
- **Emphasize group recognition.** Giving rewards for group accomplishments promotes team spirit by enabling team members to take pride in the entire team's contributions and progress. “Consider creating a display wall for postings of team activities, certificates of accomplishment and upcoming events,” says DuBrin.

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"If you have room in your budget, you might want to order T-shirts, athletic caps, mugs or key rings imprinted with your team name or logo."

- **Don't keep the best assignments for yourself.** Doing this dampens team spirit and hampers performance. "Look for opportunities that will allow other team members to perform at a high level," DuBrin says.
- **Welcome all input.** Team spirit increases when everyone contributes. DuBrin says, "It's especially important that the leader not allow one or two people on their team to do most of the work."

It's easy to let the team aspect of your job get lost in the daily grind of the job, but taking some time to recognize that it takes a village to run your office will go a long way in helping your team stay happy and involved in their day-to-day work.

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