



The dangers of not motivating your people

Company executives like to think they want to achieve a motivated staff complement, but often this is wishful thinking. The reality is that motivation is generally considered a feature, not a benefit – it's the steak, but not the sizzle! – and so oftentimes it's an optional extra. It would be 'nice' if staff were motivated, but meanwhile, we pay them, don't we? And anyway, there's real work to do, so let's get on with that.

In a very real sense motivation is crucial to profits

To understand this link we need to work backwards and see all the other links in the chain, since it's a tall order to go from motivated staff to, equals more profits in one leap. So let's start with the profits we so earnestly desire: what causes an organisation to make profits? We can talk about selling, we can talk about numbers, but ultimately profits are caused by people being productive! That's right, whether that be productive in negotiating deals, in driving down costs, in producing quality products, or even in the back office being super-efficient and on-track – it's about productivity.

So if the P of profit comes from the P of productivity, what causes people to be productive? The answer to that is the P of performance: as teams and as individuals, we all need to perform. And what drives performance, individually and team-wise? Three core factors: direction (the right strategy), skills (and knowledge), and – yes, you've guessed it – motivation (the energy, the fuel in the engine). Without the energy there can be no performance no matter how skilled an individual is, or what the strategy dictates.



Complete your FREE Motivational Map, right now

How important is a motivated workforce to your business and to your strategy? What are you doing, then, to ensure that your staff are motivated? To understand this more fully we need a tool that opens up motivation, and that tool has now arrived – it's called Motivational Maps and all readers of Eventful Times are invited to complete one (it takes 15 minutes online) and have an eye-opening experience.

"If you would like to do a complimentary Motivational Map courtesy of Eventful Times, all you do is email james@motivationalmaps.com quoting Eventful Times and requesting your personal Map".



What's your problem with motivation and the 4 Ps?

It's really clear when we think about it: we want Profits which come from Productivity which comes from Performance, and the Performance comes from People who are given the right direction to follow and equipped with the skills and knowledge they need, and crucially they are motivated. But there's the problem, isn't it? What is motivation? How do we describe it? And more importantly still, how do we measure, monitor and maximise it?

For most organisations motivation is simply the kind of thing some top-notch speaker does to their staff at some conference, and unfortunately while this can be good, it often isn't embedded in the culture of the company. Two weeks later the effect has fully dissipated; there is no long term ROI.

The root problem is really that there is no common language of motivation, and no metric either, so that we can 'see' what motivates somebody, so that we can 'know' how motivated they currently are. Bear in mind, motivation is a sub-conscious aspect of the human psyche – we tend not to think about our motivators, but feel and experience them. So this is really opaque, and not obvious for a manager to know about themselves, never mind their staff.

What are Motivational Maps?

To know yourself you have to understand more than the underlying motivators of your personality – the 'basic' four motivators of control, recognition, belonging and mastery. This is because motivation derives not only from personality, but from other

Daniel Pink's marvellous book, 'Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us' (2009) does provide a great model based on the latest research on the nine motivators that drive us, but unfortunately he does not provide an alternative language to the academic jargon, and further he provides no diagnostic instrument by which to measure motivation, either in an individual, a team or the whole organisation.

Motivational Maps was published online (2006) three years before Pink's book and the two models are extremely similar; but the Maps provide a language of motivation – easy words that sum-up the essence of the motivators – and equally importantly, they provide a series of metrics that takes the guessing out of motivation.

elements of the human psyche, namely the self-concept and our expectations or beliefs. There are nine fundamental motivators, and we have all of them in our self, but three predominate;



The 10 Symptoms of Poor Motivation

Score each question out of 10 and then add up the total. (10 means this applies very much; 1 means this is not an issue)

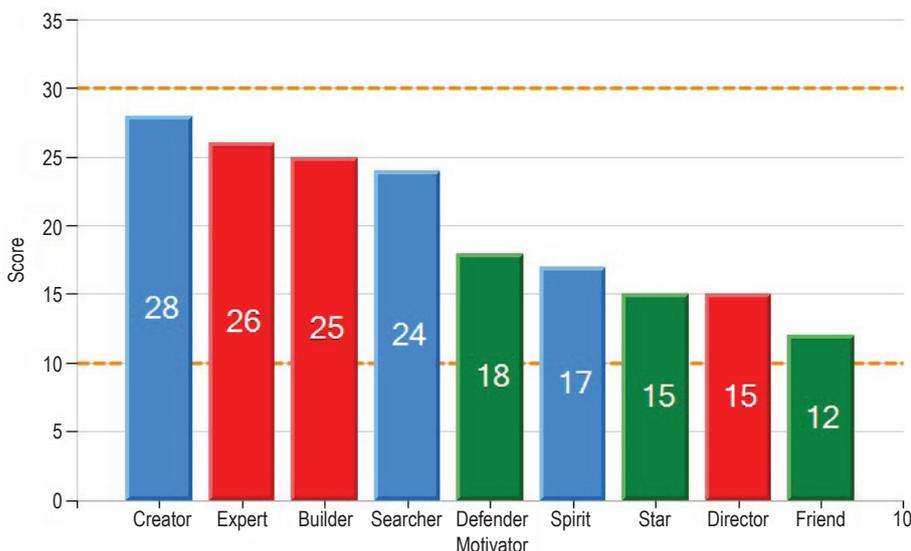
1. Staff turnover is going up and over the average for your sector?
2. Absence and non-attendance rates are going up?
3. Recruitment costs are going up?
4. Training costs are going up just to stay still?
5. 'Firefighting' is going up – we seem less and less on top of things?
6. Outsourcing costs are going up to cover what was once done by staff?

Add to this the following things that are going down:

7. Productivity of staff is going down?
8. Less customers/clients are using your business?
9. Your reputation is also going down?
10. More and more major projects/contracts fail?

A score of less than 35 would mean that you are likely to have a highly motivated workforce; a score of 36 to 60 would mean they are motivated; a score of 61-80 would mean that staff are de-motivated; and above 80 would mean you are in serious trouble!

Motivator Scores



working out which three is what understanding our motivators is about, for when we know this, we can feed the motivators, and so find satisfaction.

Motivational Maps is a self perception inventory – like the Belbin Inventory. It works by getting you to allocate points between two statements according to how much you prefer them. However, the number of points is fixed, and furthermore, since there are an odd number (five in fact) and no half points are allowed, you are 'forced' to prefer one statement over another.

The nine motivators are: Meaning (or making a difference), called The Searcher; Autonomy (or freedom), called The Spirit; innovation, called The Creator; mastery, called The Expert; money, called The Builder; power, called The Director; recognition, called The Star; belonging, called The Friend; and security, called The Defender.

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Why Motivation is Largely Ignored

Motivation is fully one third of the performance mix: if we want to know how to perform better, we need to review our strategy, our knowledge/skill set, and – yes – our motivational levels. In fact motivation is virtually synonymous with our energy levels as we approach any task or activity. Then, if that is the case, why is it so, relatively speaking, ignored by management? Organizations spend a fortune on strategy and marketing; and another mint on training; and the general assumption is – well, if training is going on, then the motivation will take care of itself.

This of course is a dangerous and false assumption. Management likes to manage, and motivation unfortunately does not make that process easy. Why?

There are four basic pillars – or quadrants - that uphold a business, or the functioning of any organization. They are: the finance, the marketing and sales, the operations, and finally the people. If we review each one of them in turn we find the core reason why motivation is best avoided – and perhaps will go away. Think about it: the finance is about the balance sheet, the profit and loss, and cash flow – and other financial information which

all comes down to a spread sheet and a One-Zero situation: either we have it, or we don't. The same is true of marketing and sales: we spend X, get Y leads, convert Z prospects into sales. One-Zero. And again: the operations – product or service – the factory produces Q widgets, or our charge rate is P per hour, or whatever.

The point I am getting at is: Finance, Marketing and Sales, Operations are all measurable and therefore certain. Managers like certainty, like dealing with certainty – how comforting to see the spreadsheet with the numbers on – so good to be able to manipulate them, work on them, and finally master them.

How unlike the fourth quadrant: the people. We try to put systems in place, we try to be objective about performance, but despite our best efforts people, and their motivation, remains ambiguous. We hate ambiguity, so like an ostrich we bury our head and pretend everything is being taken care of. In other words most managers are psychologically pre-disposed to avoid dealing with the motivation issue. This, as we know, is a pity – and a huge waste.



Your Primary Motivation:

The Creator

- Innovative
- Solution-orientated
- Cutting-edge



Your Second Motivation:

The Expert

- Insightful
- Learning-orientated
- Knowledgeable



Your Third Motivation:

The Builder

- Commercial
- Goal-orientated
- Competitive

Seven Questions to Stimulate Motivation

The issue of motivating staff will not go away; in fact, with the rise of technology and the increasing levels of distance and impersonality, the how-to-manage-them question gets larger and larger. In such a context Motivational Maps are essential since they do supply on-line so much of the information that an effective manager or leader needs. But in the absence of the Maps, what should managers do? Here are 7 questions to get you thinking about next steps.

First, think about the quality of your leadership. How good is it? What you do speaks much louder than what you say! At its simplest level, do you walk the talk, or are you an armchair critic locked away in 'important' meetings the 'plebs' can never understand? If you want to improve your leadership skills, get feedback – quality feedback from those who experience your leadership, from those working alongside you, and from those who lead you. What do they say – what points of improvement are there for you to pursue?

Second, have you set achievable targets? You know the formula: SMART, but do you use it? We have seen hundreds of businesses and are always

staggered by the sheer number of managers who do not seem to understand what a Specific, Measurable, Agreed, Relevant and Time-trackable target is. So much target-setting is wishful thinking.

Third, does training figure strongly in your company? As they say in the USA, want to earn more? Then learn more! One cannot stress enough the importance of on-going learning, development and training. Even if your organisation does not invest in you, you are well advised, as Brian Tracey recommends, to spend at least 3% of your income on yourself – you will reap the rewards, as every organisation who invests wisely in their employees does.

Fourth, are you stimulating people by varying their tasks, by involving them, and by improving the environment

in which they work – in which they operate on your behalf? One fundamental need of human being is for variety, and too much 'sameness' stifles creativity and also leads to more errors as a result of boredom. Furthermore, improving the environment says something about how much you value and respect them – and about your real values too. Are you really people-centric or is that just mission mish-mash?

Fifth, do you give people ample recognition for their contributions?



Especially their creative contributions – the points of innovation are particularly where recognition is required if you are to have a thriving company. One only has to think of certain IT companies and their celebration of individuals' creativity to begin to realise what is possible. The sad truth is: so often someone's bright idea becomes their manager's, and this is so de-motivating. Staff treated in this way tend not to innovate again; they tend to just do their job instead.

Sixth, do you allow real responsibility without constantly interfering? Another way of putting this is: stop micro-managing staff, most hate it! Micro-management always disempowers staff. Naturally, if staff ask for help, give it freely. But the avoidance of micro-management involves the following steps: set clear objectives for members of staff – tell them WHAT you expect them to achieve, but – unless they ask – do not show them HOW to do it. You may feel important, they won't.



Finally, seventh, is there a realistic career path for your people? What systems are in place to help people develop? There is a strange, unspoken belief that somehow people working in a company are there forever – as if it were a marriage! In today's world, especially, what could be further from the truth? People move on, people want careers, and unless your organization is geared to provide optimum satisfactions, then it is highly likely staff will move on sooner rather than later. Bizarrely, providing them with good career support is likely to slow down their exit strategy, because it is an optimum satisfaction to know that one is going 'somewhere' – which is what realistic career paths articulate.

Give yourself a score out of ten – ten meaning this is done excellently well by your organization and one meaning this is a mess – for each of the seven motivational ideas. How do you rate? Which one area is your lowest score? That is where you need to get to work – one piece at a time. And if you do, you will find motivation of staff starts increasing, and so will performance – and performance gains lead to productivity gains, and these lead to ... more profit! Go for it.

Coming up in next month's edition....

- **Incentive Travel**
(Motivation to perform)
- **Fam Trips**
(Or as we like to call them, Business Development Trips)
- **The ABC of Incentive ROI**
(It's as easy as 1, 2, 3)
- **Venue in Vogue**
(Spotlight on a venue and a rate not to be missed)



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- communications and web based video conferencing
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- sales incentive and recognition programmes
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