



**PDHonline Course P142 (1 PDH)**

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# **Motivating Employees**

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**2020**

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# Motivating Employees

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## Course Content

Winning teams are comprised of individuals who are willing and able to be on a team and contribute their special talents toward a common goal. They possess the following characteristics:

- No one is on a pedestal, every job is important
- Even the superstars do better if they focus on teamwork
- Everyone participates and every player counts
- Every team player focuses on the goal
- If one person fails, the team fails (never let a teammate fail)
- Teams make average people great and great people humble
- On teams, people are empowered
- Individuals put their ego below the ego of the team; the team becomes the hero and credit goes to the team
- Success as a team gets individuals recognized.

### Ways to motivate employees

#### **1. Selecting the Right People for the Job**

Your ability to hire and/or select the right people on teams are important. You should hire as much for attitude as you do for aptitude. Take your time in hiring and have the courage to get rid of the difficult people in your organization who are toxic and unwilling to be on the team. Equally important to understand is that you generally have to play with the hand you're dealt with and values-training courses should be a compulsory training program for the employees who were with the organization when you arrived. With proper leadership and training, most people will change over time.

#### **2. Keep Jobs Challenging and Interesting**

Challenging work is the number one requirement for job satisfaction and close behind is interesting work. Nothing demotivates people faster than lack of a challenge.

#### **3. Communicate Your Expectations**

Another major reason for demotivation is, not knowing what's expected of you. People need clear goals and high standards in order to feel like the winners they were born to be. Demand excellence from yourself and from others and stop accepting mediocrity.

#### **4. Involve the Employee**

Pride of ownership is a most compelling motivator. Share the "big picture" as to why the employees are asked to do what they are doing and how their work benefits others and always invite employees to offer their opinion and become an active participant.

#### **5. Manage By Exception**

Wherever possible, stay clear of the tasks assigned, other than to continue to encourage

and coach the employee. Require mutually agreed upon objectives only, such as reporting on a scheduled basis.

### **6. Provide Sufficient Training**

The average company spends only 1 percent of its operating costs on training, which yields an average ROI of 30 to 1 in improved performance and profitability. Does that make sense to you? It doesn't make sense to me. Investing in training that meets the specific needs of each individual will always increase productivity and motivation.

### **7. Mentor Your Employees**

Individual attention by a senior staff member is a major motivator of peak performance, builds self-esteem, improves self-image of the employee and builds self-confidence - all antecedents to success. Mentoring requires a strong commitment and genuine caring.

### **8. Lead By Example**

Become the kind of leader all employees admire and respect, i.e. one who "walks the talk" and will listen to staff and follow up on what they promise.

### **9. Treat Employees Well**

Be considerate, kind, caring and courteous. Treat employees as if they were your friend, partner or client and they will respond in kind.

### **10. Continuously Practice the 3 R's of Management**

Regularly show your appreciation and recognize staff members for a job well done. Whatever method you use, take it to heart. It costs very little and pays huge dividends. There is nothing more important than making your staff members feel important and when you consistently look for the gold in them, you'll find it in yourself.

Motivating yourself and others isn't easy. You've got to work on it daily because motivation doesn't last. Brian Tracy, well known as a motivational speaker and trainer suggests that we motivate ourselves daily by using the following techniques:

- Dream big dreams
- Do what you love to do
- Focus on your unique talents and abilities
- Accept 100 percent responsibility
- Develop a clear sense of direction
- Never consider the possibility of failure
- Dedicate yourself to continuous improvement
- Develop a workaholic mentality
- Get around the right people
- Be teachable
- Be prepared to climb peak to peak
- Develop resilience and always bounce back
- Unlock your inborn creativity
- Be an unshakable optimist
- Dedicate yourself to serving
- Develop a reputation for speed and dependability
- Be impeccably honest
- Concentrate single-mindedly on one thing at a time
- Be decisive
- Be self-disciplined

- Back everything with persistence and determination

You are able to motivate others only by example. When you understand how powerful motivation is to getting things done and achieving top performance and one's potential, it is an awesome skill to have. All high achievers have positive attitudes and possess the skill of being able to motivate themselves and others.

### **Recognition**

Recognition is about feeling appreciated. It is knowing, that what you do is seen and noted, and preferably by the whole team as well as by you, the manager. In opposite terms, if people do something well and then feel it is ignored - they will not bother to do it so well next time (because "no one cares").

The feedback you give your team about their work is fundamental to their motivation. They should know what they do well (be positive), what needs improving (be constructive) and what is expected of them in the future (something to aim at). And while this is common sense, ask yourself how many on your team know these things, right now? Perhaps more importantly, for which of your team could you write these down now (try it)?

Your staff needs to know where they stand, and how they are performing against your (reasonable) expectations. You can achieve this through a structured review system, but such systems often become banal formalities with little or no communication. The best time to give feedback is when the event occurs. Since it can impact greatly, the feedback should be honest, simple, and always constructive. If in doubt, follow the simple formula of:

1. Highlight something good
2. Point out what needs improving
3. Suggest how to improve

You must always look for something positive to say, if only to offer some recognition of the effort, which has been put into the work. When talking about improvements, be specific: this is what is wrong, this is what I want/need, this is how you should work towards it. Never say anything as unhelpful or uninformative as "do better" or "shape up" - if you cannot be specific and say how, then keep quiet. While your team will soon realize that this is a formula, they will still enjoy the benefits of the information (and training). You must not stint in praising good work. If you do not acknowledge it, it may not be repeated simply because no one knew you approved.

### **Advancement**

There are two types of advancement: the long-term issues of promotion, salary rises, job prospects; and the short-term issues (which you control) of increased responsibility, the acquisition of new skills, broader experience. Your team members will be looking for the former, you have to provide the latter and convince them that these are necessary (and possibly sufficient) steps for the eventual advancement they seek. As a manager, you

must design the work assignment so that each member of the team feels: "I'm learning, I'm getting on".

### **Time management**

Time Management is about controlling the use of your most valuable (and undervalued) resource. Consider these two questions: what would happen if you spent company money with as few safeguards as you spend company time, when was the last time *you* scheduled a review of your time allocation?

The absence of Time Management is characterized by last minute rushes to meet deadlines, meetings which are either double booked or achieve nothing, days which seem somehow to slip unproductively by, crises which loom unexpected from nowhere. This sort of environment leads to inordinate stress and degradation of performance: it must be stopped.

Poor time management is often a symptom of over confidence: techniques, which used to work with small projects and workloads, are simply reused with large ones. But inefficiencies, which were insignificant in the small role, are ludicrous in the large. The demands, the problems and the payoffs for increased efficiency are all larger as your responsibility grows; you must learn to apply proper techniques or be bettered by those who do. Possibly, the reason Time Management is poorly practiced is that it so seldom forms a measured part of appraisal and performance review; what many fail to foresee, however, is how intimately it is connected to aspects, which do.

Time Management has many facets. Most managers recognize a few, but few recognize them all. There is the simple concept of keeping a well-ordered diary and the related idea of planned activity. But beyond these, it is a tool for the systematic ordering of your influence on events; it underpins many other managerial skills such as Effective Delegation and Project Planning.

Time Management is a set of tools which allow you to: eliminate waste, be prepared for meetings, refuse excessive workloads, monitor project progress, allocate resource (time) appropriate to a task's importance, ensure that long term projects are not neglected, plan each day efficiently, plan each week effectively.

Since Time Management is a management process just like any other, it must be planned, monitored and regularly reviewed. In the following sections, we will examine the basic methods and functions of Time Management. Since true understanding depends upon experience, you will be asked to take part by looking at aspects of your own work. If you do not have time to this right now - ask yourself: why not?

### **Delegation**

This is a very important facet of a manager's daily activities. Every job task that is not delegated needs to be accomplished by you. There is not enough time in the day to do everybody else's job, so in order to be more efficient you need to concentrate on delegation.

Delegation is defined as the assignment of duties to subordinates with the authority and accountability to enable these duties to be performed at a satisfactory level.

***From this definition the following are true.***

1. Authority is the right to act.
2. Responsibility is the obligation to carry out delegated authority.
3. Accountability establishes liability for the proper discharges of the duties delegated to the subordinate.

**How well do you delegate?**

The following are symptoms of managers who would benefit from more effective delegation. They are managers who:

1. Habitually take work home.
2. Work harder and longer than their subordinates.
3. Are consistently being asked to make decisions for subordinates that they could make for themselves.
4. Spend large amounts of time on details.
5. Seek to have close control over everything.

**The following steps can help a manager delegate responsibility.**

1. *Determine the duties that should be delegated.* In many cases, these will be routine tasks, which would develop skills of subordinates.
2. *Decide which subordinate.* In deciding, consider who would welcome and benefit from the challenge, and who has the potential ability.
3. *Explain the expected result.* Describe and agree upon the product expected at the completion of the task. This does not mean to detail the method for accomplishing the task.
4. *Give freedom to work out the details.* This step requires trust and a willingness to risk a mistake. Accept other problem solving methods as long as results are accomplished.
5. *Review the success of the completed task with the subordinate.* Review the results. Give job-related praise if successful, and share responsibility if failure occurs. Then discuss goals again.

**Causes of Unsuccessful Delegation:**

1. *No defined objectives or goals.* If subordinates do not understand the purpose and importance of the tasks or what constitutes effective performance of the task, they cannot achieve desired results.
2. *Unclear policies.* If an established method is the only acceptable means for implementation, the subordinate must clearly understand this constraint.
3. *Resistance to others' ideas.* If the subordinate's values, morals, or ethics are contrary to the assigned task, then it will probably not be effectively implemented. Check for acceptability when the task is assigned.

4. *Refusal to accept mistakes.* If a manager is not willing to risk a mistake, he will avoid delegation.
5. *Absence of fostering independence.* If a manager spends all his time checking on subordinates or limits the subordinate's freedom to choose the means for carrying out the delegated task, he cannot concentrate on controlling results.
6. *No control for authority and mistakes.* If subordinates are not informed about what they will be held accountable for and what organizational resources will be available for their use, they cannot perform.

### **Doing the work of others**

A major impact upon your work can be the tendency to help others with theirs. Now, in the spirit of an open and harmonious work environment it is obviously desirable that you should be willing to help out - but check your work log and decide how much time you spend on your own work and how much you spend on others'. For instance, if you spend a morning checking the grammar and spelling in the training material related to your last project, then that is waste. Publications should do the proofreading, that is their job, they are better at it than you; you should deal at the technical level.

The remaining problem is your manager. Consider what periods in your work log were used to perform tasks that your manager either repeated or simply negated by ignoring it or redefining the task, too late. Making your manager efficient is a very difficult task, but where it impinges upon your work and performance you must take the bull by the horns (or whatever) and confront the issue.

Managing your manager may seem a long way from Time Management but no one impacts upon your use of time more than your immediate superior. If a task is ill defined - seek clarification (is that a one page summary or a ten page report?). If seemingly random alterations are asked in your deliverables, ask for the reasons and next time clarify these and similar points at the beginning. If the manager is difficult, try writing a small specification for each task before beginning it and have it agreed. While you cannot tactfully hold your manager to this *contract* if he/she has a change of mind, it will at least cause him/her to consider the issues early on, before you waste your time on false assumptions.

### **Appointments**

The next stage of Time Management is to start taking control of your time. The first problem is appointments. Start with a simple appointments diary. In this book you will have (or at least should have) a complete list of all your known appointments for the foreseeable future. If you have omitted your regular ones (since you remember them anyway) add them now.

Your appointments constitute your interaction with other people; they are the agreed interface between your activities and those of others; they are determined by external obligation. They often fill the diary. Now, be ruthless and eliminate the unnecessary. There may be committees where you cannot productively contribute or where a subordinate might be (better) able to participate. There may be long lunches, which could be better run as short conference calls. There may be interviews, which last, three times

as long as necessary because they are scheduled for a whole hour. Eliminate the wastage starting today.

The next stage is to add to your diary lists of other, personal activity, which will enhance your use of the available time. The single most important type of activity is those, which will save you, time. And most importantly of all, always allocate time-to-time management: at least five minutes each and every day.

For each appointment left in the diary, consider what actions you might take to ensure that no time is wasted: plan to avoid work by being prepared. Thus, if you are going to a meeting where you will be asked to comment on some report, allocate time to read it so avoiding delays in the meeting and increasing your chances of making the right decision the first time. Consider what actions need to be done before and what actions must be done to follow-up. Even if the latter is unclear before the event, you must still allocate time to review the outcome and to plan the resulting action. Simply mark in your diary the block of time necessary to do this and, when the time comes, do it.

### **Scheduling Projects**

The most daunting external appointments are deadlines: often, the handover of deliverables. Do you leave the work too late? Is there commonly a final panic towards the end? Are the last few hectic hours often marred by errors? If so, use Time Management.

The basic idea is that your management of personal deadlines should be achieved with exactly the same techniques you would use in a large project:

Check the specification - are you sure that you agree on what is to be delivered break the task down into small sections so that you can estimate the time needed for each, and monitor progress schedule reviews of your progress (e.g. after each sub-task) so that you can respond quickly to difficulties.

Like most management ideas, this is common sense. If simple project planning and time management show that the task can not be done, then it will not be done - but by knowing at the start, you have a chance to do something about it.

### **Monitoring Staff**

Your Time Management also affects other people, particularly your subordinates. Planning projects means not only allocating your time but also the distribution of tasks; and this should be done in the same planned, monitored and reviewed manner as your own scheduling.

Any delegated task should be specified with an end date. As a Manager, you are responsible for ensuring that the tasks allocated to your subordinates are completed successfully. Thus you should ensure that each task is concluded with a deliverable (for instance, a memo to confirm completion) - you make an entry in your diary to check that this has arrived. Thus, if you agree the task for Tuesday, Wednesday should have an entry in your diary to check the deliverable. This simple device allows you to monitor progress and to initiate action as necessary.



### **Long term Objectives**

There are many long-term objectives, which the good Manager must achieve, particularly with regard to the development, support and motivation of his/her work-team. Long-term objectives have the problem of being important but not urgent; they do not have deadlines, they are distant and remote. For this reason, it is all too easy to ignore them in favor of the urgent and immediate. Clearly a balance must be struck.

The beauty of Time Management is that the balance can be decided objectively (without influence from immediate deadlines) and self-imposed through the use of the diary. Simply, a manager might decide that one hour a week should be devoted to personnel issues and would then allocate a regular block of time to that activity. Of course if the factory is on fire, or World War III is declared, the manager may have to re-allocate this time in a particular week - but barring such crises, this time should then become sacrosanct and always applied to the same, designated purpose.

Similarly, time may be allocated to staff development and training. So if one afternoon a month is deemed to be a suitable allocation, then simply designate the second Thursday (say) of each month and delegate the choice of speakers. The actual time spent in managing this sort of long-term objective is small, but without that deliberate planning it will not be achieved.

Once you have implemented Time Management, it is worth using some of that control to augment your own career. Some quiet weekend, you should sketch out your own long-term objectives and plan a route to them. As you would any long-term objective, allocate time to the necessary sub-tasks and monitor your progress. If you do not plan where you want to go, you are unlikely to get there.

Time Management is a systematic application of common sense strategies. It requires little effort, yet it promotes efficient work practices by highlighting wastage and it leads to effective use of time by focusing it on your chosen activities. Time Management does not solve your problems; it reveals them, and provides a structure to implement and monitor solutions. It enables you to take control of your own time - how you use it is then up to you.