

# A WEEK IN *Learning*

## Why Are They Not Motivated?

John Silva, Learning & Development Leadership Program Manager

“I feel like I’m at my wit’s end! I’ve done all I can think of to motivate these people, and no matter what I do, nothing seems to work.” said the manager. “I even brought in donuts last Friday and I still have people calling out every day! How can I motivate people that are lazy and just don’t care?” This exact question is asked across different industries on a regular basis.

As a leader, I have often been frustrated with the teams I have led. I found myself feeling that they just were not motivated and I could not grasp why. I assumed the same factors that motivated me were also the same for others, but this was not true. When I finally realized what motivates me and what motivates others is *not* the same, things began to change for the better.

Professor Kenneth Kovach of George Mason University conducted one of the most widely published studies on the differing opinions of motivation between leaders and their teams. He surveyed 1000 employees and 100 of their leaders from different industries, and asked them to rank 10 factors of motivation. Of the 10, the leaders felt that their employees were motivated by:

1. *Good wages*
2. *Job security*
3. *Promotion*

The employees that took the survey provided a completely different view on what actually motivates them:

1. *Interesting work*
2. *Full appreciation of work done*
3. *Feeling of being in on things*

When we look at the definition of motivation, it states, “The reason, or reasons, one has for acting or behaving in a particular way”. That’s just it— we have to provide others with a MOTIVE to experience motivation. As a leader, what motive are you providing for your team to get motivated? While potlucks



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and donuts are nice, it takes much more to motivate others, and our teams deserve it! Let's look a little further at the employees top 3 factors:

### Interesting Work:

What are some ways we can make work interesting? Do our teams understand the reason behind the work that they do? Do they know how their work contributes to our company's vision of ending unemployment? Work is not as interesting unless our teams understand the purpose behind it.

### Full Appreciation of Work Done:

Take a moment, right now, to find the team member that quietly works behind the scenes and is always there for you and the team. Maybe they do not always get the recognition they deserve because you are so busy. Go and tell them that you appreciate their work and the difference they make for the team. Providing recognition to others can greatly affect their motivation, and they will be happy you took the time to extend the appreciation!

### The Feeling of Being "In" on Things:

How frustrating is it to not know what is going on at work or why a process has changed? We have all been there. Sometimes we lose track, or are not able to communicate effectively with our teams. Consider giving control over decisions, or processes, to members of your team with leadership potential. Do you remember when your leader did this for you? Wasn't it a good feeling?

Every person is unique, so a one-size-fits-all approach for motivating others will likely fall short. The three key areas discussed can provide some focus when we look to provide others with a MOTIVE to be motivated!

To help promote the top 3 factors of motivation presented earlier, here is a great tool for you to reference:

Interesting Work	Full Appreciation of Work Done	Feeling "In" On Things
Empower teammates to make decisions that leverage their expertise.	INVEST in your team member's growth through understanding their development goals and helping them take advantage of learning opportunities.	Ask for ideas on how to improve our processes and procedures.
Cross train teammates in other areas they have expressed an interest in.	Use our "You Earned It" platform to give specific feedback to include what their behavior resulted in.	Include the team during the decision making process, so they can share their ideas and input.
Communicate the big picture result we are trying to achieve, and allow your teammates to create solutions.	Tell your teammates that you appreciate them and describe to them why they mean so much to the team.	Explain the purpose behind changes. If you do not know, ask your supervisor - they owe it to you.

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