



# Back to the Basics: 3 Simple Tips to Keep Your Employees Motivated

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According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, American companies spend \$300 billion every year on stress-related work issues like reduced productivity, absenteeism, health insurance costs, direct medical expenses and employee turnover.

With everyone doing more with less, how do you keep employees motivated?

**Try these tips:**

1. **Communicate Often and Frequently.** There's nothing like the grapevine to usurp the best plans. Remember to keep everyone in the loop on project updates. People want to feel part of the solution – so don't be shy when asking for help to solve a project glitch.

Additionally, engage employees' help to generate ideas for improving the business by adding an employee feedback process. Each week, review the feedback and implement plans to address their ideas. When business owners create an environment where employees are part of a solution, there is higher buy in.

One manufacturing company avoided having to layoff manufacturing employees by asking employees for their ideas on how the company could generate business. One employee's idea resulted in the company creating a new revenue stream and entering a new market. This approach prevented the company from having to layoff employees from their jobs. The people closest to the product or service can often help develop creative solutions; and, in this case, a new revenue stream.

2. **Celebrate the Small Things.** Too often considerable energy is spent on how badly the company is performing. Employees hear nothing but negative news creating an even more stressful work environment. Even in down times, there are small things to celebrate, such as the company anniversary or birthdays. Give employees something to celebrate and verbalize one thing to be thankful for each day. Over time, you'll start to notice how employees hold each other accountable for using this thought-shifter helping to change the focus on what you do want to celebrate rather than focusing on the negative circumstances.
3. **Focus on the Top 3 Things Each Day.** Focus is interrupted by the latest email chain and keeps employees reading off-strategy news. One business owner received complaints from his staff on how they were interrupted by too much office chit chat. To help communicate to others about their focus and avoid unnecessary interruptions, each day everyone outlined the three things they were working on and posted it on their doors or office areas. Of course, they were careful not to breach anything of a confidential nature. As you approached an office or work area, it reminded everyone of your priorities. This simple reminder increased productivity and employee satisfaction by allowing people to feel accomplished and

focused for the day. It also curbed unnecessary social chit-chat and allowed people to think twice before interrupting someone.

These simple techniques allow employees to be part of the solution, celebrate the small stuff, and manage their time. In the end, everyone benefits from a healthy, forward-focused work environment.

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