

Four Ways to Motivate Service Professionals- A Guide to Getting Wow Performance

by Mary Sandro

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The only thing harder than delivering excellent customer service consistently is motivating someone else to deliver excellent customer service consistently. Customers are more demanding than ever. Professionals are more difficult to hire and retain than ever. Splitting an atom might be easier than rallying an entire organization to Wow customers. Yet, some organizations succeed. Four motivation strategies can help your organization succeed too...one professional at a time.

Get Excited

Ironically, as managers the first professional to motivate is ourselves. If we lack motivation, employees will lack motivation. Motivation occurs from the inside out. If we want to motivate someone, we have to communicate to their inside. Emotions communicate on a deep level from inside to inside. This is why one bad apple spoils the bunch. It's also why one excited manager can mobilize a team to move mountains.

Dig deep. Feigning excitement is impossible because people's insides come equipped with an infallible phony-detection system that is always on and has an amazing range of reception. Are you genuinely excited about the work your team produces? Whether we manage rocket scientists or the custodial staff, we need to fall in love with our team's contribution. A rah-rah attitude at the staff meeting, ho-hum attitude everywhere else will quickly be discovered.

Hire Motivated Professionals

It's easier to hire motivated professionals than it is to motivate professionals. Experts assert, "Hire smart or manage tough." A COO of a healthcare organization I worked with declared, "We only hire people with "It". Where "It" is a pathological disease to want to serve people."

Do you believe that professionals exist who would revel in the kind of work your team produces? The answer is...they do exist. However, if we are not excited about the work our team produces, we will never attract and hire people who are excited to do it because like attracts like and birds of a feather flock together. Consider that Disney esteems cleanliness. They hire only street sweepers and house cleaners who delight in cleaning. Result: Disney parks and resorts are immaculate.

Measure

Are you keeping score? How long does it take, when two people are hitting tennis balls back and forth, for one of them to suggest playing a real game? What happens to the level of play as soon as the game begins? Is your department perpetually warming up, hitting balls around? Or are you playing for real?

Measure something, but make it relevant to your employees, your customers, and your bottom line. Measuring performance biases employees' energy like a highlighter biases the eye on a written page. Highlight too much and we overwhelm. Highlight the essential nuggets and we assure attention to the highest priorities.

Measurements motivate employees for different reasons. Some employees are very competitive and thrive on distinguishing their performance from others'. Some are very competitive and thrive on distinguishing their own future performance from their past. In other words, they compete with themselves. And some employees are not competitive at all. They are very dutiful and focus their energy on whatever is highlighted for them.

Institute Profit Sharing

Tie the measurement to a reward. An adage predicts, "What gets rewarded gets repeated." Robert Bosch- German Inventor, Industrialist (1861-1942) stated, "I don't pay good wages because I make a lot of money. I make a lot of money because I pay good wages." If you want to motivate employees even more, reward the results you reap from measuring.

Sales professionals receive commissions based on their measured results: sales and sometimes repeat business or renewals. What about everyone else? A manager of a printing company told me that he measures wasted paper. He sets a goal for "waste". If the production employees meet or exceed the goal by producing less waste, the company splits the profits with them. My auto service center informed me that their sales, service, and auto body departments administer customer satisfaction surveys to every customer. If, together, they hit or exceed a certain predetermined satisfaction rating, they all receive enhanced benefits and bonuses from corporate.

Rewards add precision to measurement inspired motivation. If we want salespeople to simply make sales, we emphasize the first sales commission. If we want salespeople to create relationships and long-term accounts, we emphasize the backend commission. By rewarding team measurements, we can influence internal customer service in addition to individual service efforts.

Summary

To motivate employees, be an exemplar. Being an exemplar will enable you to attract and hire highly motivated employees. Focus employees' energy through measurement and reward strategies. Then...listen for the "Wows" to start coming in.

About the Author

Mary Sandro helps companies and professionals achieve results through effective presentations exceptional customer service and innovative hiring techniques. She is available to speak on these topics. For more information visit <http://www.ProEdgeSkills.com> or call 800-731-0601.

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