

# "KNOW WHAT MOTIVATES YOUR EMPLOYEES"



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So much time effort and dollars are invested into hiring and training the right people. Once they are productive contributing members of the organization, however, it is easy to forget to monitor, and support those factors that attracted them to your company in the first place. These elements are very important for your employees' long-term job and career satisfaction.

Unfortunately, many companies learn too late that they did not attend to the needs of their employees. When employees decide to move on, it is usually because some elements of the job or the company no longer live up to providing what they need.

You can avoid losing good talent unnecessarily. Here are some career anchors – motivators, drivers, values – that managers must be aware of in order to keep their valuable employees. When these traits are very predominant in one's personality, the individuals must find a way to satisfy them.

**RECOGNITION / APPRECIATION:** Most people like to feel valued and appreciated, but it is a stronger need in some than in others. Taking the time to acknowledge efforts and results, and forgiving mistakes go a long way. More importantly, appreciation is something that a manager has at his or her disposal that doesn't require a line item in the annual budget.

**AUTONOMY:** It is important to be aware of those who need autonomy. One match that almost always fails is pairing an autonomous employee with a micro-manager. It just doesn't work. When hiring an individual, it is important to sort this out, and evaluate how much autonomy the person needs, and how much the job allows. Those fueled by independence and autonomy will want to know what needs to be done, be given the right resources, then given the freedom to get the job done.

**CHALLENGE:** Recognize those around you who crave challenges for sustenance. They will conquer the challenges and obstacles put in front of them, and look for more. These are generally the movers and shakers of an organization. If you cannot provide sufficient challenges, they will seek them out within the job they have. Ultimately, however, they will leave if their hunger for ongoing new challenges is not satisfied. When there is no place to move "up", a lateral position can sometimes be satisfying if it offers up a new set of challenges.

**CAUSE MOTIVATION:** This is a need that some people have to contribute to a cause that will make a difference in the company, the community or, in a larger sense, the world. People with a high drive for cause motivation need to feel they are making a difference with the work that they do each day. They will tend to gravitate toward non-profits, human resources, or service businesses where they can feel they are contributing at a higher level than just performing a job.

**CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION:** There are three kinds of employees that make any department or organization function: the creators, the implementers, and the maintainers. The creators and innovators have the vision to see solutions or new ways of doing business that may not have been done before. Because they are motivated by opportunities to put their creative ideas in action, they may be less interested in the implementation, and rarely interested in maintaining. If expected to do so, they almost always will want to move on rather than maintain a department or project once everything is in place.

**SELF-IMPROVEMENT:** There are certain individuals for whom continual growth and development is essential. They thrive on learning and being better at what they do. They will continually pursue education or ongoing personal and professional development and may seek out a mentor or coach from whom they can gain insight and wisdom.

**OPPORTUNITY FOR DECISION-MAKING:** Another career anchor is to have the responsibility and accountability for making decisions. While there are those who will avoid this in organizations, there are others who thrive on taking on the challenge of making the final decision. They will naturally gravitate toward leadership positions and will assert themselves to make things happen.

Everyone is a mix of many motivations. To keep valuable employees, it is imperative to assess what their career anchors are, and find ways to keep them motivated.