



# FIRING UP YOUR TEAM IS AS EASY AS 1-2-3

Simple, But Effective,  
Ways to Motivate  
Your Employees  
Today

LEAD CENTER  
HOSTED BY:



When it comes to motivating employees, some managers have no idea where to begin – especially if you're a small business owner just trying to keep up with the regular day-to-day tasks. There are probably many business owners out there who don't even realize how much power they have to motivate employees.

Whether you're running an ice cream shop or an accounting firm, one fact remains: people want to feel secure, valued and respected. Recognizing these common desires is a great starting point for motivation, according to College of the Canyons SBDC advisor Mike Lester.

Lester explains, "You don't need to spend money to motivate people. That's something a lot of business owners believe. What owners need to do is understand what employees value."

Behavioral economist Dan Ariely who was the author of the TED Talk: "What makes us feel good about our work?" echoes Lester's statement. Ariely explains that employees are motivated by more than money.

"When we think about labor, we usually think about motivation and payment as the same thing, but the reality is that we should probably add all kinds of things to it: meaning, creation, challenges, ownership, identity, pride, etc.," Ariely said in a recent TED article.

Lester adds to that list tangible motivators like paid time off, flexible work schedules and public acknowledgment.

"It's important to make your team feel valued. You don't want to play favorites, but you also want to reward a job well done. Managers have to assess each person's goals and talents individually and offer incentives that work for them," Lester points out.

So what can you do to get the best out of your team? Here are three popular ways you can start motivating employees immediately.

## 1. SHOW THEM THAT THEIR WORK IS VALUED

There's a reason "Employee of the Month" programs are so popular. They're A) free to implement and B) they acknowledge hard work in a public way. You can up the ante on this by offering the valued employee time off, a feature in the company newsletter, acknowledging their accomplishments at a company-wide meeting or event, donate to their favorite charity or something simple like giving him or her a week of casual dress days. Whatever you choose, this is a positive way to boost morale and show everyone that hard work is valued and rewarded.

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Special thanks to Michael Letson, business consultant at the SBDC hosted by College of the Canyons specializing in supply chain development and performance management.

## 2. LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Lester cites being an example to your staff as a crucial aspect of motivating them. “The boss absolutely has to be an example to everyone else. If the manager can do the jobs of the people under him, he’s going to get more respect and people will want to do their best,” Lester said. This might mean helping staff out when work gets busy or working side-by-side with employees to see how processes can be streamlined to run more efficiently.

## 3. BE OPEN AND POSITIVE

Establishing an open-door policy makes employees feel respected and part of the team, Lester says. By allowing employees to openly discuss ideas and ways to improve processes, managers are sending the message that they value their input, intellect and interest in the company. The opposite of this, Lester notes, is shutting employees out and managing them like a drill sergeant would. Implementing an open-door policy and encouraging your team to approach management with new ideas is something any manager can do. As simple as it sounds, small changes like this can yield big results.

After all, your average entrepreneur doesn’t have the budget to hire a team of expensive c-level employees with expertise in motivating employees. That job, most likely, is left to the business owner or a senior-level employee who may not have much experience managing.

The good news is motivating employees can be a relatively simple and inexpensive process that just requires a little bit of planning.

2015SHRM Employee Job Satisfaction and Engagement survey, only 69 percent of employees felt they were consistently putting all their effort into their work.

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