Bringing trust and motivation into the workplace

- The role of employee motivation and trust in the workplace
- A simple model that employers can use to drive employee motivation
- Understanding the impact work-life integration & benefit packages have on your staff
What do our workplaces look like now?

Today’s workers are better educated and fill more skilled jobs than before. The workplace is more diverse, with a strong representation of women as well as disabled people. It is also ageing and increasingly foreign born.

Employees are setting out greater expectations of their employers, wanting more than just a pay cheque. This has led many employers to assess their work culture, environment and reward strategies to ensure that they are engaging with employees effectively and ultimately improving the bottom line whilst retaining key staff.

We live in an ever changing and developing society. Over the last 30 years we have seen significant changes in workforce demographics and also the working environment itself.

Our understanding of the link between employee engagement and productivity has grown, leading to an increased focus on culture, environment and reward for many employers.

This resource reveals a simple model to demonstrate how you can maximise employee motivation through your company culture, work environment and benefits package, to lead to higher levels of engagement and performance.
Understanding employee motivation

Motivation is an important element to consider when working out the underlying factors behind employee behaviour. There are intrinsic (internal) and extrinsic (external) motivations.

Intrinsic motivation is driven by the internal wants or needs of an employee, such as a need for security or autonomy. Extrinsic motivation is the performance of an action or task in order to obtain an outcome or reward.

Extrinsic factors such as work-life integration, workload, flexible working and employee benefit packages can trigger cultural changes and influence wellbeing which can lead to sustainable high performance.

Employers can work to influence both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations to provide effective work environments and increase employee wellbeing, which plays a strong role in overall engagement.

Many studies have shown that there are strong links between trust and wellbeing, with wellbeing being a key predictor for optimal performance.

A positive working environment where employees can be challenged, thrive and grow can reap business benefits beyond the purely financial. Conversely absenteeism and presenteeism, a prolific issue for many businesses, are strongly associated with poor wellbeing.

Why is trust important?

As humans we are driven to achieve our primary goal to maximise reward (survive) and minimise pain (threat). Therefore a culture that taps into our natural survival instincts will provide positive motivation and ultimately success. One that doesn’t will function less optimally, and will also be at risk of failing to meet its business objectives.

Trust is a psychological state; it equates to neurological safety in relation to others’ intentions and one’s environment. Those that have trust in their co-workers and the organisation they work for are likely to have higher job satisfaction.

There are a number of intrinsic drivers of trust that can be leveraged to improve organisational performance. A global study by Stephen Covey showed that high-trust organisations return three times the total return to shareholders than organisations with low trust.

What’s the business issue?

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Explore 8 simple zero-cost actions (page 8) to increase internal motivation. Then take a look at how you can maximise external motivation too (page 14).
Driving trust and motivation
- a simple model

The Jacobs model, devised by employee engagement expert Susanne Jacobs, identifies eight drivers of trust which, combined with a number of environmental factors, can have a significant impact on employees’ wellbeing.

Managers and business leaders can use this model to help them drive trust and employee motivation within their teams and across the wider business. The model identifies that there are 8 basic motivational drivers, all linked to trust, which have an evolutionary and survival advantage. When translated into the workplace and coupled with emotional intelligence, they can be used to increase wellbeing, build engagement and improve performance.

An environment of trust and safety leads to top line performance – engagement, energy release, boosted wellbeing, and performance that is optimal and sustainable.

Without these drivers, reactions work against workplace objectives and can hinder learning and reduce performance. If these 8 motivational drivers remain absent from the workplace, the result is an individual health risk and a risk to the company’s financial and organisational reputation.

The Eight intrinsic drivers

1. Belong and connect
   - If people feel excluded in the workplace they feel threatened and it can affect their health and wellbeing. It’s important to make sure individuals feel connected to their team.

2. Voice & recognition
   - Staff should be encouraged to put their views and ideas across in the workplace so they feel that their contributions are recognised and appreciated.

3. Significance & position
   - Employees are continually assessing their role within their organisation and what contribution they are making. If they do not feel valued, they can feel threatened, which will negatively impact their performance.

4. Fairness
   - It is critical for an organisation to treat its employees fairly and consistently. If employees feel they are being treated unfairly it can cause high stress levels and low productivity.

5. Learn & challenge
   - Staff need to be continually learning so they can adapt to the ever-changing modern work environment. Research has shown that employees who feel challenged are more productive.

6. Security & Certainty
   - If employees aren’t secure in their position then they can feel threatened, which has a negative effect on their performance and productivity levels.

7. Choice & autonomy
   - Giving employees a degree of control and the ability to make their own choices can help them balance their work and home lives more effectively, helping to improve their performance.

8. Purpose
   - If staff have a clear sense of purpose and are aware of exactly what their contribution to an organisation is, they are more likely to be engaged and productive.

Want to know how to maximise these drivers in your business?
Turn to the next page.
How can we maximise these 8 drivers and embed them in the workplace

**Belong and connect**
- With increased remote and home working, businesses must strengthen and build connections with employees to ensure that they remove feelings of isolation
- Managers must establish and build emotional connections across the team. Regular team building and rapport building activities can help to develop this

**Significance and position**
- The impact of individual significance and position should be taken into consideration within performance and talent management strategies
- Managers need to understand the importance of making team members feel a valued and purposeful part of the team. Consider including practical advice on how to do this as part of any management training programmes you run

**Learn and challenge**
- Accessible and relevant challenges should be incorporated into performance management and development plans
- Employees are more likely to move on from jobs that they feel no longer challenge them or give them the opportunity to learn, but you should also provide them with a safe environment to learn within

**Security and certainty**
- Clear and consistent communication and behaviours are crucial to delivering this driver in the workplace. This driver can be used most effectively through times of change to speed up a behavioural shift for successful outcomes. Ensuring your benefits package positively impacts this driver can help to fulfil your employees’ need to feel safe and secure
- It is very easy to give out conflicting messages to employees and one of the most important aspects of security and certainty is the correlation between what we say and what we do

**Voice and recognition**
- Create a supportive environment where teams and employees feel comfortable to put forward their ideas and question openly without fear
- Senior leaders must be able to demonstrate openness to feedback and all levels of the organisation should be given opportunities to ‘have their say’

**Fairness**
- First and foremost employers should be conscious of treating their employees in a consistent way, avoiding potential litigation
- Train your managers to recognise and deal effectively with perceptions of unfairness during team discussions or one to one interactions

**Choice and autonomy**
- Provide flexibility to employees for when and how they work
- A basic level of training can be given to managers to highlight the pitfalls of micro-managing and teach them how to lead high performing flexible teams
- Employees should be provided with the trust to be more autonomous and this sometimes requires the business to look at its organisational culture

**Purpose**
- If an employee does not have a clear line of sight between their performance outputs and the organisational purpose, this driver will be absent
- Employers should ensure that they develop and consistently communicate a clear ‘higher’ purpose that, through employee feedback, is shown to inspire and build emotional connection
Using simple extrinsic motivations to engage your employee

Flexible working

Flexible working can have a positive effect on engagement scores for companies. Those working flexibly report higher levels of wellbeing (Office for National Statistics).

Often flexible working is incorrectly thought of as being something that is predominantly a parent’s requirement or something to be taken up by mothers who are not as committed to work. However, a recent study (Working Families, 2012) showed that those working flexibly see work as important within their lives as those who do not work flexibly.

The study also showed that those who do not work flexibly report lower agreement scores and are less positive about the management and leadership in organisations.

Work flexibility can be used as an effective tool to support wellbeing. Most importantly “it is an approach to work, an attitude that brings responsibility and accountability for the employee to deliver with choice over where, when and how they work within an environment that trusts them to do so” (Working Families, 2012)

Benefits strategy

A well rounded benefits package helps to attract, retain and engage your workforce. When employees believe they have two-way communication about their needs and benefits, they feel valued. It can also appeal to the intrinsic motivational drivers that employees have around certainty and security.

Workload and work-life integration

It’s not only the volume of work but the way in which it is structured that is important. We can multi-task but we can only work on one cognitive task at any one time.

The constant interruptions that employees receive on a daily basis can have a negative effect on wellbeing. It can also have a negative effect on an employee’s fatigue levels and can make individuals too tired to do the things they would like after work and impact their ability to work productively.

It will come as no surprise to know that workload is strongly correlated with work-life integration and work-life integration is strongly correlated with wellbeing.

The inability to switch off outside the workplace is also a concern, leading to increased stress levels and less engagement. It’s an increasingly technologically connected world where 79% of us now use our smartphone for reading email, a higher percentage than those who use it for making calls. With work emails being easily received at home and outside of work, it is easy to see how employees easily integrate their home and work lives, lacking the ability to “switch off”.

The working environment should be supportive of work-life integration and workload management and can be used strategically by organisations.
How to develop greater extrinsic motivation

Whilst full flexibility might not suit every company there are always aspects that you can build into your business, such as:

Core hours
Having a set of core working hours but allowing employees to have flexibility over their start and finish time.

Condensed working week
This allows employees to work the same number of hours but on fewer days that, for example, may entitle them to work 4 days a week or finish at lunchtime on a Friday.

Ad-hoc agreed working from home
If you have the technology in place, allowing employees to work from home can offer flexibility that supports employees’ wellbeing.

Consider taking proactive steps to support work-life integration and workload management. Here are a few ideas that other companies have tried.

Support workshops
Providing employees with “workload management” or “dealing with stress” workshops, for example, helps employees understand how they can help themselves.

No email day
Some companies or teams commit to banning internal email one day or more a week. This encourages employees to communicate but also consider the need for the email in the first place.

Email management
Encouraging employees to turn off email notifications and have set times within the day that they check their mailboxes stops employees being distracted to start other tasks whilst midway through another.

Email consolidation
Have you ever looked at the number of company or team emails your employees receive? Perhaps you could consider consolidating a number of them into a “weekly roundup” to cut down on the number of communications your staff receive on a daily basis.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)
EAPs can offer employees access to a number of valuable support tools and services, from childcare and eldercare matching services to stress management tips and counselling.

The rewards and benefits you offer your employees should be more than just a recruitment tool. You can use these to connect with your employees’ extrinsic motivational drivers.

Well-rounded benefits package
Build a benefits package that protects and motivates your workforce, whilst fulfilling your duty of care as an employer. This doesn’t have to mean breaking the bank; instead you should make sure that your balanced benefits package works for both the business and the employee.
A benefits package for the modern day

Getting real value from your benefits

Many benefits, such as Income Protection, Pensions, Private Medical Insurance and Life Cover can provide an important safety net for employees and employers when things aren’t going well.

When budgets for pay rises are low and economic uncertainty means employees value security even more, demonstrating you value your employees through your benefits offering is a cost-effective way of enhancing performance.

Don’t forget to look at the added extras that come with the core products available. Services, such as Employee Assistance Programmes, can help to proactively address workplace issues before they arise, saving you money and supporting employee wellbeing.

Communicating your benefits

Communicating your benefits package effectively is also an important item to consider. If you provide a well-rounded package but fail to regularly tell your employees about what is on offer, you will miss out on the positive motivations that a good benefits package can bring.

Recent research by Cass Business School shows that the ‘communications chasm’ between what employers offer and what employees think they are entitled to is driving up sickness absence rates and staff turnover. This costs a typical business with 1,000 employees £470,000 more than a business with similar benefits that has good communications practices in place.

There’s a mistaken belief that if employees are aware of benefits – such as Private Medical Insurance or Income Protection – they are likely to take more time off sick. Cass’ research disproves this theory, showing that communicating about a wide range of employee benefits actually builds employee engagement and a more loyal workforce that takes less time off sick.

Providing a complete benefits package can tap into employee motivation and it doesn’t have to be a costly affair. Making time to review benefits to ensure they support your business strategy and fit your budget should be a regular feature in your business planning calendar.
Hay Group and Intelligence Unit, 300 European Executives, 2011
2 “Driving Performance and Retention Through Employee Engagement”, Corporate Leadership Council, 2004
3 Bright Horizons,1000 Employees, 2011
5 “Mental health at work. Developing the business case”, The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health, 2007
6 “Speed of Trust”, S. Covey, 2006