

# Positive reinforcement



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Positive Reinforcement Motivational skills are very important on a workplace. Highly motivated employees will work harder and be more productive than those employees without motivation. There are many ways to motivate employees and a good manager will develop several motivation skills to be effective. However, we are going to focus on Positive Reinforcement and how it can be use to motivate employees.

Words have power and they can be use as very powerful motivational tools. Recognition is a basic human need and positive reinforcement fulfills this need. For positive reinforcement to be effective we need to follow some simple rules. First, we need to deal with the bad and the good. In the same way that is not good to just point out what is wrong, it is not good to just point out what is right.

There has to be a well balance between the two. Second, do not over use it. Positive reinforcement will start to loose it meaning and benefits if it is done constantly for anything and everything.

Third, positive reinforcement should be done as soon as possible when the work is done and the results are positive. This way the employee relates one with the other. The self-esteem rises and the attitude toward the job will change. Forth, it should be genuine. Michael Rose, director of reward & recognition at Aon and author of Recognizing performance; non-cash rewards (CIPD, 2001), says: ??? The bottom line in terms of motivating people is that employees do need to understand that what they have done has had an impact and is appreciated.

If people receive positive reinforcement for what they have done, they are more likely to do it again.??? 2 John Mariotti in his article The Power of Praise makes reference to two books: The One Minute Manager (Morrow, 1982) by Kenneth Blanchard and Zapp! The lightning of Empowerment (Harmony Books, 1998) by Williams C. Byham and Jeff Cox. These books deliver a very clear and simple message: Praise in public and criticize in private. Criticize the outcome, not the person. Keep it brief, clear, to the point, then get on with your life.

? Maintain self-esteem.? Listen and respond with empathy.? Offer help without taking responsibility. 3There are several ways to reinforce positively. It can be a gesture, a word of encouragement, a Thank-you note, a pat on the back, a smile, and many mores.

The important thing here is for the employee to know that the work he/she has done is important and has made a difference, that a job well done is appreciated, and that he/she knows what was he/she did to deserve positive response. As managers we can setup a set of goals and a recognition system. ??? At BankBoston each manager was given an Employee Recognition Toolkit, containing a booklet of Simple & Creative Ways to Recognize and Praise, a selection of thank-you cards, three acknowledgment ribbons, suggested gifts and rewards, and a note from the CEO stating his wholehearted support. ??? 1Kevin M. Gross in his article Positive Reinforcement says: ??? Whatever recognition system you use, be sure to get everyone involved, track progress and share the results.

People take great pride in knowing that what they do makes a difference to the company. It also sends the message that goals are important and not forgotten. When people are caught in the act of doing something right, they feel good about themselves and are likely to do it again. Once everyone is focused on the behaviors that produce results, inefficiencies begin to fade away. The benefits of employee satisfaction, productivity, and customer loyalty invariably bolster the bottom line.

Ultimately, this translates into a sharp increase in shareholder value, the one true objective of every CEO.???

Articles Used: 1. POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT, By: Gross Kevin M., Executive Excellence, 87562308, Feb99, Vol. 16, Issue 22. VALUING THE POWER OF PRAISE AND REWARD, By: Lovewell, Debbie, Employee Benefits, Jul 2003, p 10, 2p3.

THE POWER OF PRAISE, By: Mariotti, John, Industry Week/IW, 11/03/97, Vol. 246 Issue 20, p15, 1p, 1c