How do businesses motivate employees?

Business leaders understand that part of making a company successful is ensuring their employees are motivated at work. A motivated workforce will want to work hard and therefore increase their productivity. They will also take pride in their work, thereby improving quality. Morale will be high and so staff will not want to take unnecessary days off or seek new employment. This means the expense of regular recruitment is kept to a minimum. But how do businesses motivate their employees?



One of the most obvious ways to motivate the workforce is by offering a fair wage. Staff need to feel that they are paid fairly, both in relation to their colleagues and in comparison to other companies in the same industry. Some bosses like to offer an annual pay rise or bonus, particularly when staff have gone over and above what they are paid to do. Other managers introduce performance-related pay, where the staff get a bonus if they meet a target. This is similar to a tactic often used in the ňňon how many items they sell. This is called commission. Some businesses also try to incentivise their employees by offering staff discounts or other perks, such as a company car or health insurance.

However, money isn't everything and employers use many non-financial methods to motivate staff. Daily working life can get dull so managers sometimes offer job rotation. Staff can switch between tasks to reduce monotony. Bosses can also delegate some of their decision-making to their employees, thereby empowering them and giving them a sense of involvement and control. Some forward-thinking businesses try to enrich their staff's daily life by giving them more interesting and challenging tasks. Ben Wallace, a marketing executive at Google, states, "It's really important as a company that we allow employees freedom to explore. Not only the work they do day to day but also the kind of ideas they think are really cool around that. 10% of our staff's time can be spent on really crazy stuff which maybe doesn't succeed, but which could also be the next huge thing." Managers are often trained in how to encourage their staff, drawing inspiration from motivational theories. Two well-used examples are the Taylorism and Maslow theories. The Taylorism theory argues that employees do not enjoy work and are only motivated by threats and pay.

Managers motivate staff by organising employees' work and paying by results. An example of this is piece rate pay, where payment is given per item produced. Maslow's theory suggests there are five 'levels of need' that explain why people work. Staff first want to meet their survival needs by earning a good wage. Safety needs such as job security then become important, followed by social, self-esteem and self-fulfillment needs. Moving staff up a Maslow level is considered motivational. Many business leaders and governments believe that these motivational factors ensure a happy and productive workforce. What do you think?

Read the text and find two examples for each of the following categories:

- benefits of having a motivated workforce for employers

- financial motivational techniques

- non-financial motivational techniques

- motivational theories

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Find the words in the text that have a similar meaning to the words below.

1 find a different job

2 cost of finding new staff

3 do more than expected

4 modern and innovative companies

5 pressure and fear

6 fulfil basic practical requirements for life

7 knowing your position at work is safe

8 a contented and hard-working group of employees motivational theories

Which of the motivational ideas from the text would work for you? Which ones wouldn't?

Imagine you are setting up your own company. Which motivational theory would you follow and what financial and non-financial incentives would you offer to your staff?

? DID YOU KNOW?

Many innovative companies around the world have been truly inspired when it comes to motivating their staff. However, according to Fortune Magazine, it's Google that is considered the best. They have been voted 'Best Company in the World to Work For' over five times. To motivate and inspire their 50,000 staff worldwide, they have unusual meeting rooms; free food and drink, nap rooms, where you can sleep at work, giant slides and climbing walls (see photo on page 1), and even a bowling alley in one of their offices!

Interestiing article here:

BOSS Magazine | Setting a New Standard for Employee Perks (thebossmagazine.com)

VOCABULARY FOCUS

annual [adj]: something that happens once a year
bonus [n]: extra, additional money
dull [adj]: boring
empower [v]: giving strength and control to sb
enrich [v]: improve, deepen
incentivise [v]: encourage with a reward for success
monotony [n]: boredom
morale [n]: the amount of enthusiasm a person/ people feel for a situation at a particular time
motivate [v]: inspire, encourage
perk [n]: additional advantage to having a salary
productivity [n]: output, the amount you produce
switch [v]: change
target [n]: level, something to aim for
tactic [n]: method

LIVEWORKSHEETS