

# Unleashing Motivation®\*

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Motivation is “the art of stimulating someone to action by creating a safe environment in which their motivation can be unleashed and through providing a reason/incentive for people to produce”. To create this environment, to unleash and harness motivation, involves initiating, sustaining, and directing a person's behavior or action.

The challenge to motivating people is not just creating an environment that allows them to unleash their motivation, but initiating behavior/action and sustaining it so you do not have to start at "square one" each time. You can accomplish this through the use of the seven principles below. The key element is directing (or channeling) their behavior into actions (results) for the good of the organization. Here are the **D. O. N. A. D. I. O.** Principles of motivation:

**Delegate Authority** not just responsibilities. Involve peoples in the decision making process, especially on issues that affect them. The days of the menial task volunteer are over. We all think we can do it better. Well, you probably can if you have 40 hours in a day, but you don't. So Delegate. Remember, people who are expected to achieve do so more than those who are not.

**Open Communications** - The more informed peoples are, the better they feel about themselves and the organization. Communication is a two-way street. We need to communicate information to our peoples, such as: what's expected of them (job description), the mission of our organization, etc. We also need to solicit information from them (how we can better meet their needs), ex. how the leadership is performing, their expectations from this organization, etc.

**Need for Participation**- Motivation increases with increased participation in activities and setting goals and objectives. Participation develops a sense of ownership and pride.

**Appreciation** - Everyone needs to feel appreciated. Too many leaders overemphasize this motivator. It's important, but it's not the only way to motivate (there are at least six others). Appreciation (recognition) works best when done individually and often. It produces high results but doesn't last very long. For those doing annual award programs, good job! However, you'll need to develop other ways to recognize peoples on a regular basis.

**Develop Teamwork**- People work better when they feel part of a team (or family). A team works together to support each other toward a common goal. Let your people know they are a part of your team and can count on you for support when they need it. When I was in high school, I was rather obese and decided to work out. To my surprise I had a difficult time staying motivated. I would see a group of guys (team) working out together and supporting each other. One day they asked me if I would like to join them. I said I didn't think I could keep up with them. They said it didn't matter how much I lifted, only that I did it consistently. Well, I joined them and to my amazement it was easier working out when others were there to help. I went on to not only lose 35 pounds but look and feel better. I use this example in my seminars to illustrate the importance of feeling part of a team. Remind your people they are a part of a team (family) and they can count on you for support when they need it.

**Interest** - Interest wears two hats, one--know their interests and two--show your interest. Taking an interest in your peoples is so important. The more you know about your peoples the better you will be able to motivate them. For example, knowing their needs and placing them in positions that meet these needs makes for a more motivated person.

Show your interest. If you are not concerned about the program or the peoples how can you expect them to be? We, as leaders, need to show a positive, enthusiastic outlook, even when things don't look so bright. Going around complaining how lousy things can make it get even worse. Why, because our peoples will believe it and begin to lose interest. Remember, nobody likes to back a loser.

**Occasional Competition** -The final principle is the use of occasional competition. This is a good way to motivate people to action. A word of caution; stay away from competing against other members in your organization. This can backfire. Instead, set up competitions against other organizations or to achieve specific goals, i.e., raise \$1,000 for new equipment by mid June. Remember, set goals that are specific, achievable and realistic. If the goals are not attainable they may act as a de-motivator.

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