DISCOVERING THE IMPORTANCE OF POSITIVE EMPLOYEE MORALE
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INTRODUCTION

Managing employees is a difficult task. Emotions run wild and employee morale can change for the better or for the worse very quickly. To avoid a high turnover rate, employee satisfaction is important. But how do you keep your employees happy without sacrificing your business model?

Here are some tips on how you can impact employee morale for the better, keep your employees engaged, recognize them for positive behavior and milestones, and coach them into becoming your dream team!
HOW MANAGERS CAN HELP EMPLOYEE MORALE SKYROCKET

Employee morale is a sensitive matter – it can easily be affected positively or negatively in a very short amount of time. As a manager, the vibe around the office becomes even more important as it can impact performance, attendance, and ultimately your company goals. Here are 9 powerful tips to help keep morale on the rise.

1. MAKE MORALE A PRIORITY

Historically, companies that experience high morale have employees who maintain a strong relationship with their managers. As a leader, make it a point to interact with your employees to get a read on what’s going on outside of the four walls of your office.

Make the rounds each morning, talk about the latest TV show, exchange friendly conversation and ask questions about them. Do this one small task each day and watch your employee morale start to climb!

2. FOCUS ON THE POSITIVE

It can be all too easy to focus on negativity, especially if you’re have an ‘off’ day – and we all have those. Keep in mind that negativity can absolutely lower morale and not just for a few hours or a day… the lasting effects can be felt for a week or more.

Instead of keying on what is going wrong, shift your focus to find the ‘silver lining’ when a negative situation arises. When you decide to keep a positive outlook, it has a trickle-down effect to the rest of your employees.

3. SET CLEAR GOALS

Communication is key – especially when providing clear instructions regarding what is expected of your employees. Be open and honest with your employees by providing as much detail as possible and discussing why goals are important; which leads to a higher level of trust and respect. This also helps employees who have questions come to you in confidence knowing you help guide them and steer them in the right direction.
4. OFFER ENCOURAGING FEEDBACK
It’s no secret that we all love to hear positive feedback about ourselves and other people. You can instantly boost morale by sharing positive comments your customers share about your employees. Team meetings are a great platform for this type of exercise as it allows you to shine the light on those that are going above and beyond. Hearing this type of feedback can provide incentives to others by giving them something to work towards.

5. SUPPORT COMPANY LEADERSHIP
Throughout the course of the day, you and other managers in your company may provide direction to employees to accomplish specific goals. To ensure everyone is on the same page, managers should always be aligned and support each other. Showing a united front will let employees know that you are all working towards the same common goal together.

6. ANALYZE BEHAVIORAL STYLES
As a manager, you have a lot on your ‘to-do’ list. Make sure to squeeze in some time with your employees to learn more about them – this includes their learning styles, work habits, motivations, strengths, aspirations, and weaknesses. Once you gain knowledge about each person, you can better assign tasks and responsibilities that capitalize on their personal and professional goals. Nothing says ‘morale booster’ quite like a manager who wants their employees to succeed.

7. REQUEST FEEDBACK
Nothing is worse than a manager who doesn’t ask for employee feedback. After all, your employees are your ‘boots on the ground’ who interact with customers regularly and are most affected by company changes.

By asking a few questions, you are showing them you care about their opinions and value their honest feedback. Try incorporating some of these questions into your next conversation:

“How do you think we are performing as a company?”
“What one thing would you change?”
“What is something we could do more of?”
8. FOLLOW THROUGH

Reliability is a trait that every employee looks for in their manager. You know the old saying, ‘actions speak louder than words’ – well, this couldn’t be any truer. As a manager, strive to follow through on anything you commit to.

If you make a promise to an employee or customer, make sure you don’t let that fall through the cracks. Sticking to your word will establish trust and your employees will view you as their advocate and someone who has their back.

9. PROVIDE LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

When an employee goes above and beyond their duties, they are letting you know they are ready to take on more responsibilities. Keep an eye out for these employees and make sure you offer them opportunities to lead teams, spearhead high-profile projects and make important decisions. Creating new positions, inviting star performers to high-profile meetings and offering promotions is a great way to motivate employees to always do their best work.
Building a Rewards Program

Rewards don’t need to be giant to have an impact. Extra time off, gift cards to local hot spots or office perks can get the job done. These mini-bonuses are especially helpful when you use them to build enthusiasm through frequent communication about reward plans.

Creating a straightforward strategy in which different achievements lead to specific rewards helps your workers understand which areas of their performance are most important to you. A few keys to consider here include:

**Make goals clearly measurable.** You should be able to easily demonstrate why different workers were rewarded.

**Be consistent.** The whole point is to show workers that they matter. Don’t undermine that goal by falling behind or skipping months.

**Get everybody involved.** Shake up your reward goals if the same people keep winning. You want all of your workers to have a shot at coming out on top so they’ll be motivated to strive for excellence.

**Offering some basic rewards is a nice way to keep workers engaged.** Going from rewards to recognition can take these efforts to another level.

Negative reinforcement, like punishing workers for leaving vehicles idling or wasting time getting to destinations, won’t solve performance problems. Rewarding and recognizing your top performers will help highlight best practices and foster a culture of excellence. With the right strategy, it can also create a sense of healthy competition that makes work more fun.

Think of it this way - a recent Gallup study found that approximately 50% of employees don’t know what’s expected from them at work. You can help overcome this problem through a rewards program that details best practices and encourages your workers push the standard for excellence further.
You can create an emotionally rewarding work environment. Small bonuses are fun. But recognizing your top performers gives them a sense of satisfaction in their work.

For example, if you track your top five drivers in terms of customer service ratings, you could give them each a gift card. This is a nice little bonus for workers, but the benefits end there. Alternately, you can get the whole company together on a Friday afternoon, call out the five workers, present their gift cards and put their names on a list that everybody can see for the month. Taking this step from reward to recognition delivers a few vital benefits:

- Highlighting best practices for the whole company to see.
- Creating opportunities for conversations between workers.
- Showing esteem for your employees.
- Building a culture that puts excellence in the spotlight.

Using Data for the Greater Good

Utilizing GPS vehicle tracking in order to help improve driver performance can generate exciting business improvements. Doing so hinges on getting your drivers on board. There may be concerns about privacy as workers worry that extra visibility will make their days more stressful. You can turn this perception on its head through a reward and recognition program.

Instead of telling workers that they will be punished if they idle for too long during a month, you can point out that they will get a prize if they manage to idle for a particularly short amount of time. This may seem like a small shift in mindset, but focusing on the positive gives you a chance to improve employee engagement while taking full advantage of performance metrics.
Institute an Employee of the Month Program

We’ve all seen the ballot boxes in the cafeteria labeled ‘Employee of the Month’ and each of us secretly hopes one of our coworkers votes for us. Instituting an employee of the month program will help employees bring their A-game to work each day in hopes to be recognized for a job well done.

Whether it is done by a points system or through simple nomination, people find satisfaction when they are recognized by their peers. The winner could receive a special privilege, such as a parking spot, and be celebrated by the entire company for their efforts.

Recognize Long-Term Employees

In some companies, turnover can be exceptionally high. One way to help prevent that is to recognize long-term employees on their anniversaries and thank them for their continued service to your business.

If an employee has been at a company for several years, it is probably because they are an integral part of the success of the business. Show these loyal employees how much you appreciate them so they continue to help your business run smoothly and grow.

Encourage Customer Recognition

Go ahead and reach out to your customers to give them the opportunity to nominate technicians, drivers or office staff who provide exceptional service. Including customers in employee recognition programs also allows your business to gather valuable customer feedback and learn about what customers value in a company. Recognizing employees is not only important on Employee Appreciation Day but all throughout the year.
High achievers are usually winners and like to be on winning teams. They expect the head coach (that’s you) to hold everyone to working towards the highest standards possible for your business.

How do you do this effectively? Here’s a few tips:

Setting expectations is crucial. Being clear in what you expect is the foundation of holding people accountable.

**Measure what you expect.** Find ways to measure all aspects of your workers’ goals. Data and real-time information can help you do this and using indisputable facts and data helps you remain objective and fair.

**Hold them accountable.** If your expectations are not being met through the measurement of these objectives, make sure you are discussing this and recommending actions to get those falling behind in line with expectations.

**Take action.** When team members continue to miss the mark, take more serious action so that they get back on board. It is tough to do, but ultimately the right thing for your business.

In addition, your high achievers will see that while they are being asked to measure up, so are the others on the team. This should lead to a boost in overall productivity and happier employees.