

Positively Motivate

There is nothing positive about being negative.

There is this notion among some that the way to get the most out of employees is to constantly place the bar of praise slightly out of their reach. The idea seems to be that everyone seeks validation and praise. If we reward our employees with these coveted words and deeds they may feel fulfilled enough to slack off. Instead, the warped thinking continues, the key to motivation is the hounding of employees, making sure they feel inadequate. The idea is that they will strive for validation by working harder.

We kid you not.

There is so much wrong with this way of thinking that we barely know where to begin. Beyond it being an appalling way to treat people, this is just bad business. This sort of treatment is bound to erode employee motivation to the point that rather than try harder to gain validation they lose all interest in the wellbeing of the company, to say nothing of the risk of self-fulfilling prophesy.

Motivation is indeed born of a desire to feel a sense of accomplishment, along with the accompanying validation. Maintaining motivation is a function of verifying the prospect of success. This is achieved through the attainment of minor victories and the praise generally associated with realization of objectives.

You need to motivate your employees by helping them succeed. Their success, after all, is yours as well.