



Operation Uplift™ Team Charter

*A Comprehensive Initiative to
Appreciate, Nurture and Support
our Caregiver Heroes.*

Morale Best Practices

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Morale Quick Hits

Candy Bouquets

Hand out \$1.00 Tootsie Roll Pop bouquets to staff and call them “candy bouquets”.

Spirit Buttons

Buttons made with spirit button maker example: Environmental Services (top circle of button) Hospital Name (middle of button) I save lives (bottom circle of button) very cheap to make or have made.

CEO Meetings

CEO hosts interactive Zoom meetings every Friday – all shifts.

Breakfast

Free continental breakfast on Mondays.

Food Trucks

Each week a different food truck is brought on campus for lunch, and staff have the opportunity to eat and social distance. Perhaps even pay for their lunch.

Ice Cream Social

Facility hosts an ice cream social, by appointment, for all departments, all shifts.

Family Videos

Collect videos of family members of staff sending messages of love and play repeatedly in the cafeteria area so all may view when convenient.

Positivity Notes

Challenge each department member to write a note of positivity or appreciation to a member of another department.

Cheers for Peers

Any staff member can appreciate another staff member at the end of a meeting.

My "L.I.S.T." (*List Of An Individual's Special Things*)

IDEA: Ask your direct reports to complete this "L.I.S.T." of little things that mean a lot to them. Show appreciation based on things that matter. Use these questions to pepper your conversations with staff members.

From: _____ Date: _____

To help me get to know you better, please provide me with a list of your favorite things. Thank you!

| Wife/Husband/Kids | Hobbies | Favorite Foods/Snacks Restaurants | Sports |
|-------------------|---------|--------------------------------------|--------|
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More interests:

What do you do just for the fun of it?

What brings you joy in your work?

What's something you learned in the past week?

How do you feel at the start of the work week? At the end of the work week?

What makes you proud of working as part of our hospital?

If you could change one thing about our organization's collective behavior, what would it be?

What gets in the way of your doing your job?

How could we communicate our management decisions more effectively?

(To be Kept in Team Members Recognition File)

Source: CLS Library

We've Got Values

Staff submits recommendations for those who had demonstrated the values of the Hospital. The Service Excellence Council, or perhaps a Patient Experience Team can vet the nominations and decide on a winner in each category of value.

Similar to “America’s Got Talent”, this project can help boost morale and contribute to retention by recognizing those who demonstrate the values of the hospital. It is an opportunity to showcase contributions by staff as well as an opportunity for staff to recognize their peers. It puts the focus on values as well as recognition for demonstrating the values. It can be launched as a competition. If the staff like it, it can be ongoing. The winners get their picture, along with a description of what they did displayed for others to see.

Source: Lynn Sullivan

FROG Forward

Thank healthcare heroes with kudos cards where one or two words of what they did well are noted; keep a box in central locations. We call it "FROGing" as people Forever Recognize Others' Greatness™ ANYONE (patients, staff, leaders) can FROG anyone.

My friend going through cancer asked me for kudos cards and she FROGed every nurse, PSW, educator, ESA and even the contracted cafeteria staff! She said nothing was better for her recovery than constantly being on the lookout for reasons to FROG people!

PS - it was the easiest way we turned "dysfunctional" healthcare teams around by teaching them how to FROG in the first minute of daily huddles, wrapping up a team meeting, before a training started, etc.

Thank You Habit

Using the SendOutCards app, upload contacts of staff into the app (either making the address the hospital or if you want to send to their homes can put home addresses in through a CSV file upload) start and keep a thank you & milestone card habit. Never forget to send a thank you card to a staff member on their birthday or work anniversary (or randomly to celebrate a team or individual on a project milestone, safety award, or just an "I'm thinking about you, etc.).

I sent an "I'm thinking about you" card to healthcare leaders on my list with a personalized note that they are the unsung of all the unsung heroes, and so many replies "you don't know how much I needed to hear that today."

PS - staff will be shocked you "remembered" their birthday, but actually the system alerts you to it coming up!

Source: Sarah McVanel, www.greatnessmagnified.com. Register [here](#) for a free trial card or at info@greatnessmagnified.com

Tell Your Story

This is (typically) a weekly exercise that provides for positivity in a meeting, employee recognition, and a little motivation. It is an exercise that creates “patient service awareness” and is the number one tool our clients are using to help build and/or sustain a culture focused on service and experience.

At the beginning of the week, each employee is given an index card and an assignment to write down an example of when they created a great experience for a patient, a family member and even a colleague (internal customer). It could be a life-saving moment, a heartfelt moment, a helpful moment... anything that is positive. It could even be as simple as calling someone back quickly. We call this positive example a Moment of Magic[®]. The description should be short – maybe two or three sentences – and fit on the index card. This should take the employee just a couple of minutes to do.

The first few times employees do this exercise, some may struggle to find their “moment.” Then, they start to realize they are creating Moments of Magic[®] all the time. They just don’t know it. Then they start to recognize when they are doing it.

In a weekly huddle the manager asks members of the team to share their Moment of Magic[®] for the week. Everyone gets to share their examples. The stories should be short, but clear enough to showcase the “moment.” Team members applaud each other on their accomplishments. This is what I refer to as “Telling the Story.” Everyone can learn or recognize the many opportunities they have to create a positive experience while doing their jobs. It’s an exercise that helps build morale and gives everyone something to smile about. When everyone is aware of the positive experiences they create, they become more intentional about creating them.

Source: Shep Hyken: www.Hyken.com – shep@hyken.com – 314-692-2200

Healing Hearts

What's Required:

- Anonymous nomination slips
- A box that is easily accessible to collect nominations

How It Works:

Everyone on the team provides clarity around an idea or a value that helps remind them of why they do what they do. For example, in healthcare this could be centred around caring for each other, caring for patients, examples of compassion, etc...

Team members are encouraged to nominate their fellow team members when they notice an act happening on the job. They write the story about it with the name of the person.

At the end of the month, a leader or person in charge, removes all of the nominations, shares the stories with the rest of the team in impactful ways, and recognizes the top nomination.

Give One Take One

What 's Required:

- Sticky notes and markers
- A wall or white space to house the sticky notes

How It Works:

A wall or white space is designated as the “give one take one” wall. Sticky notes and markers are kept close by. When someone is having a great day, they are encouraged to “give one” to the wall. Write an anonymous note of encouragement, love, or kindness and leave it there for when someone needs it.

Then, when someone is having a hard day, they are encouraged to “take one” from the wall - read through the sticky notes and find an anonymous message that resonates with them and keep it with them for the rest of the day. They keep it in their pocket or on their clipboard so they can look at it often to help get through their challenging day.

Source: David Irvine & Ally Stone. For further information, questions, or more projects, contact Ally Stone: ally@irvinestone.com or David Irvine: david@davidirvine.com. www.irvinestone.com

10 Ways to Boost Employee Morale in the Workplace: Actionable Tips

We have recently seen how important employee morale is to the workplace. During COVID-19 and with the emergence of remote work, many companies faced tough decisions and tried to lift their employees' spirits amidst times of uncertainty.

Why? Because low employee morale reflects in decreased productivity, disengaged employees and more. Overall, it has a negative effect on the workplace and, consequently, on the business results.

In this article, we will show you what are the benefits of high employee morale, how to detect low employee morale and how to boost it.

What Is Employee Morale?

Not to be confused with moral or morality, employee morale can be described as employees' capacity to keep their faith in their organization and its goals. It is especially prominent in the face of hardship, like many employers have seen during COVID-19 crisis and now that they are back to work after it.

However, low employee morale can be present during “regular” times, and it is detectable in employees' behavior. Employees that complain about company's policies, work facilities management or something else related to the workplace are usually the ones with low morale.

In that sense, extremely low morale is easy to detect and it will probably go hand-in-hand with high turnover and decreased productivity. More commonly, employee morale is neither at its highest nor at its lowest. However, boosting employee morale is always a good idea as it has very apparent benefits for your company and your workforce.

How to Boost Your Employees' Morale

If you want to boost your employees' morale, you must be aware that it is not a one-time event. As low employee morale takes time to form, so does elevating it. In that sense, it is best to apply numerous strategies for optimizing your overall workplace culture in order to give your employees the experience they want and deserve.

Note that in order for all these strategies to work, some basic conditions need to be met. If your employees do not receive fair wages or if their work environment is improper, it is not likely that any of these strategies will work. Your baseline of decent working conditions should be solid if you want to build up on it.

1. Recognize your employees

Employee recognition has numerous benefits for the workplace. The main logic behind it is simple – people like to be reassured that they are doing a good job and be appreciated for it. Nobody works in a vacuum, and both peer-to-peer and top-down recognition have significant power to boost your employee morale.

In fact, 58% of employees say that their leaders could engage them better by recognizing them. Therefore, try appreciating your employees' work simply by thanking them. Even better, propose to set up an employee recognition program in your company and see your employees become vibrant and productive.

*10 Ways to Boost Employee Morale in the Workplace: Actionable Tips (cont'd)***2. Give regular feedback**

Your employees get demotivated and their morale drops if they do not know if their performance is good. Continuous employee feedback has numerous benefits, and companies that apply regular feedback policies enjoy the presence of constant improvement culture.

In other words, by taking interest in your employees' work and giving them your honest feedback lets them know that you want them to advance. In such supportive environment, employee morale peaks.

3. Organize team building

Many HR Professionals believe that teams that play together, work better together. There are numerous examples of companies that continuously organize out-of-this world team building activities. Obviously, there is a reason for that.

Team building activities in a form of games and friendly competition push your employees to work together in order to win or solve problems. Also, the relaxed team building atmosphere creates a sense of community. Overall, fun and games lift peoples' spirits and effectively boost your employees' morale. Try organizing team building events they will love remembering.

4. Facilitate wellbeing

In some cases, wellbeing is crucial for your employees' morale. For example, during COVID-19 crisis, employees were worried, stressed and uncertain about their future. That's why many organizations go an extra mile to boost their employees' morale.

Employee wellbeing initiatives like mental health workshops or friendly competition in fitness goals among teams will create a sense of belonging in your employees. Furthermore, your employees will appreciate your organization's interest in their wellbeing and the proposal of such initiatives.

5. Remote work

Many employees want to have a remote working option. Allowing remote work is becoming the most desired work perk out there – and employers should follow. Research shows that employees who work remotely at least one day a month are 24% more likely to be happy and productive.

This is because by working remotely, employees can achieve better work-life balance. Of course, there are other numerous benefits of remote work. All of those advantages show that employees are happier and more satisfied when they have remote work option, which helps to improve employee morale.

6. Give opportunities for growth

When your employees' do not see themselves advancing their careers in your company, they might feel stuck and less motivated to work. Consequently, they will not believe in an organization that does not help its employees grow with it.

Therefore, promote from within! Your employee morale and motivation for work will be at its highest if people know they are at the company that will recognize their effort and promote them.

*10 Ways to Boost Employee Morale in the Workplace: Actionable Tips (cont'd)***7. Set clear goals**

One of the major obstacles to high employee morale is not knowing in which direction employees should go, what their goals are and how do they fit into company's vision. In a sense, you have to contextualize your employees' work and give it purpose.

If they are orienting their work towards goals, employees work to meet them and derive a sense of pride and happiness in fulfilling their goals. Furthermore, setting goals gives them criteria to self-evaluate their own work and makes their evaluation sessions with managers more productive.

8. Communicate company's values and vision

Without seeing a bigger picture, employees will feel like their actions are directionless and lose their faith in your company. Therefore, when setting your employees' goals, you need to tie them to organizational ones. Your employees need to know how exactly they contribute to your company.

Furthermore, you can communicate your company's values and vision to employees on a regular basis. This helps your employees align their values to organizational ones and, consequently, keep their belief in your company's mission.

9. Include leadership in your communication strategy

Including leadership in your communication strategy is one of the simplest, yet most effective ways to boost your employees' morale. Employees seek senior leaders to guide them in times of crisis and provide strategies for improving their situation.

An email, video or virtual talk with your company's leaders could do wonders for your employees. A majority of 81% of employees believe that CEOs who engage on social media are better equipped to lead companies, and 84% think that CEOs can build better relationship with employees by having social media presence.

10. Show empathy

The recent COVID-19 outbreak has taught us all about the value of empathy. In companies worldwide, leaders understood their employees' worries and gave them emotional support. By showing their human, empathetic side, they gained loyal employees who know their leaders stick with them through hard times.

Therefore, ask your employees what they need from you and how you can support them. Besides, regularly checking your employees' pulse allows you to detect your employee morale levels and react if needed.

In that sense, showing your employees that you do not only care for their performance, but also for their wellbeing and happiness, is a great way to raise your employees' morale. Your employees want to belong to a community more than to a company.

Source: semoscloud.com. Written by Sara Ana Cemazar

11 Ways to Boost Employee Morale

1. **Be Transparent.** Don't attempt to hide problems or avoid conversations when morale is low. You have to remain transparent to boost staff morale. Your employees will respect honesty while you work together to fix any issues. Inform them about company updates, new protocols, customer feedback, and more.
2. **Communicate Often.** Going off the last tip to boost employee morale, be sure to communicate! Share positive company announcements, like a new product in development or a glowing customer review. Your employees are human beings too and you need to treat them that way too. Communicate and loop them into a conversation that can directly affect them. Additionally, you should check in with your employees on a frequent basis, ask them:
 - How are you feeling about your job/manager/co-workers?
 - Are you facing any challenges? How can I help?
 - Are you happy at work? How can I help?

You have to provide open, regular communication about issues and achievements that are important to your employees. As far as boosting staff morale goes, this one is huge.

3. **Use the Right Tools.** With all of the information we've outlined so far, it can seem a little daunting to make employee morale a priority at your company. However, studies prove that a positive work culture leads to more productivity than those that aren't.
 - **Employee Recognition & Acknowledgement:** celebrate new hires, personal milestones like anniversaries, create an employee spotlight, and allow employees to nominate their peers for awards.
 - **Share Employee Success:** send updates on business milestones like bringing new customers, a new location, smashing the goal or KPI set, etc. And also celebrate success stories from customers with letters, pictures, videos, a story, and more.
 - **Put Employees Front & Center:** make decisions based on in-organizational surveys, launch a suggestion box to gain feedback and insights, and introduce an open-door policy so employees can directly approach HR or senior management.
 - **Wellness & Benefits:** provide all necessary information under one roof that employees can access whenever they need and allow your team to register for company events right from their mobile phone.
 - **Non-Serious Communication:** use nice GIFs for interactive content, allow people to like and comment to be part of the discussion but in a structured safe organizational environment, and start funny polls like who's your favorite superhero?
 - **A Personal Touch:** from senior leadership all the way down, you can share videos from the CEO to every last employee. This is an easy way for front line employees to approach senior management in a structured and control environment.

11 Ways to Boost Employee Morale (cont'd)

- 4. Give Employee Recognition.** Focus on the good! When employees feel truly appreciated, they have more self-worth and become more productive employees. How Full Is Your Bucket proves that employees who receive regular, positive recognition will experience:

- Higher productivity
- Better engagement levels
- More loyalty to the company
- Higher morale
- Better customer satisfaction

Employee recognition is a no-brainer when it comes to creative and easy ways to boost employee morale. In fact, Gallup found that “Workplace recognition motivates, provides a sense of accomplishment and makes employees feel valued for their work. Recognition not only boosts individual employee engagement, but it also has been found to increase productivity and loyalty to the company, leading to higher retention.”

At the end of the day: employee recognition is low cost and high impact.

- 5. Get Employee Feedback.** Getting employee feedback is a great way to boost employee morale. When you show employees that you’re listening, they will feel heard and are far more likely to be motivated. But it isn’t enough just to collect feedback, you need to act on it as well. Even if you don’t implement each piece of feedback, be sure to thank your employees for sending in their thoughts and suggestions.

To further support the importance of employee feedback, studies have found that

- 87% of employees report they want job development but only 1/3 receive feedback they need
- Gallup estimates that disengaged employees cost companies in the United States \$450-550 billion every year in lost productivity
- Gallup also found that employees who aren’t receiving feedback are 40% more likely to be disengaged
- 78% of employees said receiving recognition motivated them to do their jobs
- And going off the last point, motivation pays off because companies with more skilled workers experience two times revenue growth and profit margins.

All of the above proves that implementing and fostering a culture of employee feedback is not just a “nice to have” or something that happens during the annual performance review - employee feedback is a vital aspect of year-round performance management and development.

- 6. Offer Employee Growth.** Boost employee morale by giving them a sense of purpose so they have a goal to work towards and something to look forward to. It doesn’t have to be a job promotion, instead, you can send them to a course or conference to better their professional skills. Employees want to feel a sense of growth to be truly motivated.

11 Ways to Boost Employee Morale (cont'd)

- 7. Run A Calm, Healthy & Organized Company.** Sure, pushing yourself and your team to the limit sounds like the right thing to do and is inspiring, but it won't work in the long run. Your goal should be to reduce stress, maintain a healthy work-life balance, and to run a calm, healthy, and organized company.

Offer an EAP (employee assistance program) that helps employees work through problems and stress, whether it's work or home-related. An EAP is designed to help your team work through issues that may impact their health and wellness, or even their work performance.

- 8. Train Managers.** If managers are not the direct cause of the low morale, the responsibility to fix employee morale is. Be sure to train all your managers in emotional intelligence, communication, giving feedback and recognition, and different leadership styles.

Managers can directly impact engagement and morale, so investing time in training them is one of the most important strategies for fixing low morale.

Chron, a small business publication, found that job satisfaction generally increases and self-esteem improves when employees better understand the workings of the company. Training can also enhance morale on the job and loyalty to the company. Workers who believe their company offers excellent training opportunities are generally less likely to leave their companies within a year of training than employees with poor training opportunities.

- 9. Organize Team-Building Activities.** What's the importance of team building games? For starters, it leads to collaborative and motivated work culture, aids in problem-solving among team members, fosters meaningful and open communication among peers, leads to creativity and out-of-the-box thinking, enhances productivity, boosts employee morale, and it helps to keep creative juices flowing!

Make team building games enjoyable and education at the same time, that's a surefire way to lift employee morale for the time being. (This isn't a long term solution but it can do the job just the same). Organize a scavenger hunt or create an office trivia challenge to energize your employees.

If you have remote workers, then look into these team building games made especially for remote workers!

- 10. Have Amazing Employee Incentives.** Now, this isn't a long term solution, but when morale is low, dishing out some fun employee incentives can do the trick. Bring in some puppies from the local shelter, give out some scratch-offs, let employees work from home for the day – it's amazing what these employee incentives can do.

OR, you can develop something that can help your employees evolve personally and professionally. Sign them up for a course that ties to their professional responsibilities or give them helpful books to read to develop their skills further. But studies have also found that the longer you stay at work, the more important it is to get outside of the office, even if it's just for a few minutes because creativity can take a hit when you don't change environments.

11 Ways to Boost Employee Morale (cont'd)

11. Encourage Genuine Breaks. Research has found that only a mere one in five people take a lunch break and that white-collar workers are actually the least likely to take a break. And far too many staff members eat lunch at their desks!

“We know that creativity and innovation happen when people change their environment, and especially when they expose themselves to a nature-like environment, to a natural environment. So staying inside, in the same location, is really detrimental to creative thinking. It’s also detrimental to doing that rumination that’s needed for ideas to percolate and gestate and allow a person to arrive at an ‘aha’ moment.”

– Kimberly Elsbach, professor at the
University of California

Encourage your employees to get away from their desks, at least for five minutes every hour. For example, grab a cup of coffee, take a walk outside for some fresh air, stretch your body, and more. When you make this a habit, you are happier and can contribute greatly to the bottom line because you’re refreshed.

But studies have also found that the longer you stay at work, the more important it is to get outside of the office, even if it’s just for a few minutes because creativity can take a hit when you don’t change environments.

Source: connecteam.com. Written by Rea Regan

20 Creative Ways to Boost Employee Morale

If you're tuned into your workplace, you can tell when employees exhibit the subtle and not-so-subtle symptoms of low morale: eye rolls, high turnover rates, fewer employee conversations, decreased collaboration, and diluted performances.

The best approach to tackling low morale is to embrace positive changes before it takes hold, offsetting boredom and frustration with meaningful benefits, individual acknowledgements, and opportunities to grow. Here are 20 proven ways to get the ball rolling:

1. Crowd-source company outing ideas.

How many times have you been to a company outing that missed the mark? Instead of putting your HR team in charge, ask for anonymous nominations for a company-wide outing -- then let your team vote for their favorites. Giving employees the opportunity to shape rewarding activities ensures that your effort serves everyone.

2. Eradicate email.

Email not only drags on employees' productivity, it wears on well-being by increasing stress and requiring high levels of reactivity. In fact, 92 percent of employees experience a spike in blood pressure and heart rate after reading an email in the office. Instead of utilizing email for all communication, integrate software like Trello, Asana, and Slack to lessen or completely negate its impact.

3. Let go of jerks.

Executive coach Rodger Dean Duncan describes jerks as those who "intimidate, condescend, or demean, swear, behave rudely, belittle people in front of others, give only negative feedback, lie, act sexist or racist, withhold critical information, blow up in meetings, refuse to accept blame or accountability, gossip, and spread rumors, use fear as a motivator, etc."

What's the easiest way to boost morale? Let go of the jerks -- weeding out this kind of behavior among upper management can have an even greater impact on employee morale than raises or promotions.

4. Ask for feedback.

A posture of openness gives employees permission to contribute to positive change. Google, for example, uses a survey called Googleist to elicit feedback from employees on a wide swath of issues. It then recruits volunteer groups to tackle issues and solve the company's biggest problems. At When I Work, we use a tool called TinyPulse. Brainstorm ways to incorporate regular feedback into the life of your office.

*20 Creative Ways to Boost Employee Morale (cont'd)***5. Develop strong and transparent promotion tracks.**

Forty percent of millennials expect promotions every one to two years. To maintain employee morale among a new generation of employees, you need to emphasize the viability of your promotional tracks. Be clear about opportunities to grow, not just during recruitment but on a regular basis.

6. Encourage real lunch breaks.

Research suggests that only one in five people take lunch breaks and that white-collar workers are least likely to step away from their desks for a break. Management professor Kimberly Elsbach told NPR that “staying inside, in the same location, is really detrimental to creative thinking.” Get managers on board to take a coffee break, go for a walk or check out a new restaurant every day. Those people have the greatest leverage to model morale-boosting habits.

7. Increase vacation days.

Just as employees are hesitant to step away from their desks for lunch, they often shy away from vacation time despite its potential to boost morale. Some companies try to break the mold by offering unlimited vacation days, but that's not necessarily a solution either. As writer Lotte Bailyn argued, “Unlimited vacation time may sound wonderful in theory, but in reality, less is more. Too much choice is restrictive and confusing.” Instead, increase vacation days and add a bonus for employees who truly take a time-out -- no work email, no phone calls, no laptop on the beach.

8. Recognize personal milestones and losses.

Individuals experience higher morale when employers appreciate them as people first and employees second. You can still recognize personal milestones and losses while respecting privacy -- even a simple note from you would do. Respond as you would to a friend, with kindness and consideration. Seeing as how 78 percent employees spend more time with co-workers than they do with family, a supportive community will go along way to fostering happiness.

9. Celebrate work anniversaries.

Work anniversaries are relationship milestones between an employee and a company. According to a survey from Globoforce, 82 percent of people would feel good if people noticed and recognized their work anniversary, but only 36 percent of people say a work anniversary made them feel valued. Have a conversation with your staff about the best way to honor work anniversaries. And while you're at it, make sure to celebrate your company's birthday. It's a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with your mission while generating good feelings.

10. Offer discounts and sponsored programs.

By offering to pick up the tab on some essentials, you nurture a positive relationship with employees. Consider paying for or subsidizing transportation, technology, gym memberships, or childcare. If your company enjoys partnerships with other organizations, consider asking them to offer a mutual discounts on services for your and their employees.

*20 Creative Ways to Boost Employee Morale (cont'd)***11. Bring Your Family to Work Day.**

Family is one of the most important aspects of people's lives. Opening your doors to children, spouses, parents, and siblings connects professional and personal worlds. No doubt, families will feel pride upon seeing the work of your employee in their natural habitat, garnering appreciation and a shared sense of connection.

12. Give substantial bonuses.

A 2013 Harvard Business School study found that giving clear, unconditional, and unexpected financial gifts to employees leads to higher productivity. As the researchers state, "Gifts are roughly as efficient as hiring more workers." Imagine the positive impact you would have giving a big bonus to a single mother supporting a family or a young professional paying off student loans? Unconditional gifts can revolutionize your employee morale.

13. Incorporate play.

Playing games leads people to compromise, meet others' needs, and work together as a team. Diffuse a competitive environment by incorporating humor and play. Add a Ping-Pong table to the break room, bring in a karaoke machine once a month, or even encourage a small group to undertake an art project for the office.

14. Create a lenient inclement weather policy.

When a blizzard, flood, or hurricane rolls into town, be especially cognizant of employee safety, and when necessary, let workers stay home. As an alternative to an awful and extended commute, chances are employees will be more productive during a snow day at home than they would in the office. Also note that a lenient inclement weather policy is particularly important to employees with young family, as childcare options are rarely available when schools close.

15. Limit office hours.

In fields such as finance, law, and medicine, young staffers are expected to put in heavy hours. Despite the appearance of productivity, this marathon-approach to work weighs on well-being and doesn't necessarily increase results. Empower employees with time-management training and peer support, as well as clear boundaries around office hours.

16. Offer sabbaticals.

Companies like Adobe, Deloitte and Kimpton Hotels have adopted sabbaticals as a way to increase quality of life and encourage retention among employees. Based on the time of service, an employee can take a break to pursue her passions, volunteer, or spend time with family. These kinds of extended breaks give individuals a viable option beyond quitting or transferring to a different company.

*20 Creative Ways to Boost Employee Morale (cont'd)***17. Free professional development and tuition reimbursement.**

Eligible employees can work toward their degrees remotely while working at the coffee giant. Consider putting aside money for professional development programs and to reimburse employee tuition toward academic degrees. Not only will it boost employees' achievements and self-esteem, it will empower your company with a competitive workforce. Starbucks is leading this trend, having just expanded their employee tuition reimbursement plan in partnership with Arizona State University.

18. Reinvent team-building exercises.

The best team-building exercises will overturn organizational structures and allow individuals to explore their own strengths. Instead of playing "the trust game," encourage employees to lead voluntary workshops or exercises in an area they are knowledgeable about -- an avid outdoorsmen could plan a kayaking trip or a top-notch baker could teach people how to bake a new recipe. The options are endless!

19. Offer a paid day off for birthdays.

Cake is great, but instead, give your employees the ultimate birthday boost: an extra day off to spend whenever and however they like. Your generosity will come back in the form of employee appreciation.

20. Encourage outsourcing and delegation.

Employees often feel overwhelmed. Instead of expecting individuals to do it all, encourage outsourcing work to freelancers and outside experts as a way to plug in the holes. With specialized contractors implementing strategy, you free up your employees to think big and develop innovative initiatives.

Studies reveal that a key employee's exit can cost between 70 and 200 percent of the individual's compensation. With high costs accompanying low morale, it pays to invest in a positive community and individual satisfaction -- they can go a long way to improving your company and its numbers.

Source: inc.com. Written by Sujana Patel

5 Benefits of High Employee Morale in the Workplace

Low employee morale has a profound effect on your workplace. Employees with low morale are less motivated and productive. On the other hand, high employee morale goes hand-in-hand with many aspects of high-performing workplaces.

Take a look at what benefits you can expect if you boost your employees' morale.

1. Improved productivity

When your employees believe in your company's mission and see themselves developing their careers with you, their productivity is higher. More specifically, highly engaged teams show 21% greater profitability.

2. Decreased absenteeism

Absenteeism is costly – and a major cause of unplanned absenteeism is low employee morale. If your employees' lack vision and motivation, they are more likely to avoid work in general. High employee morale significantly increases your employees' motivation to come to work and do their best.

3. Higher retention

According to research, highly engaged employees are 87% less likely to leave their companies than disengaged employees. Knowing that high employee morale leads to employee engagement, it is clear that you need to amplify your employees' morale if you want to retain them.

4. Better customer service

When their morale is high, your employees are more satisfied and happier with work. This shows in your customer service employees' patience and will to solve your customers' problems. On the other hand, when your employee morale is low, your employees might be uninterested to do their best and please your customers.

5. More creativity and innovation

In a company with high employee morale, employees are motivated and eager to contribute to a company's success. According to research, 59% of engaged employees say that their job brings out their most creative ideas compared to only 3% of disengaged employees.

Source: seamoscloud.com. Written by Sara Ana Cemazar

5 Questions to Ask Your Team Members Every Month

No one likes the proverbial my-way-or-the-highway boss, the control freak, or the micromanager. So how do you avoid being a bad leader to your team?

It's all about asking the right questions.

These aren't stultified performance review questions—but real questions that can dramatically improve an employee's morale, output, and quality of work.

Asking the right questions is perhaps the only way to be a truly effective manager. Here are 5 questions to ask your team during monthly check-ins or even weekly 1:1s.

1. What's your biggest accomplishment this month?

Everyone likes talking about their wins, so why not start with that? Here are a few ways you might phrase this question:

- What have you been working on recently?
- Is there any work you're proud of?
- What are some highlights of your recent work?
- Any good success stories?

Why the question is effective:

- This question provides a sense of forward motion and progress. A worker needs to know things are moving along and getting better.
- Relaying positive information gives your team member a sense of personal accomplishment. By communicating positive information, they're setting an upbeat context for any further discussion.
- The answer can give you both oversight power and improvement potential. You have a measurable way to track your employee's work and to see if they're contributing in the ways you need them to.

2. What's your biggest challenge right now?

Challenges are good things because they make us better. While this question may not have the same psychological uptick as the first one, it's important to ask nonetheless.

Why the question is effective:

- First, you get to understand where your team member is struggling. You may have no idea the software is malfunctioning or a coworker is slacking. As a manager, you've got to be aware of any pinch points in an employee's process, work, or even the company culture.
- This question also puts your conversation into problem-solving mode. And a problem-solving conversation is a productive one. You've gone beyond small talk and office chit-chat and are actually working on things that have ROI.

5 Questions to Ask Your Team Members Every Month (cont'd)

You get to improve processes, eliminate barriers, and enhance productivity. When you know about a problem, you can fix it. Thankfully, most challenges have a solution.

3. What should we do differently?

Every team member has a different perspective on the company. Your job as a manager is to synthesize all this information and improve the company.

Everyone can add value - and not just the value that comes from performing a strictly defined job title. Your team can provide value by sharing their own managerial insights.

One question my CEO asks me is, “What processes can we improve?” Every week. Same question. I don’t always have any improvements to suggest, but at least the opportunity is there.

Why the question is effective:

- It shows your team things can be done differently. A good company is dynamic-adapting to workers’ needs, adjusting to the shifting market, and accommodating industry trends. Introducing “do different” terminology in your discussions opens up the possibility of change and improvement. That’s invaluable for both worker satisfaction and company growth.
- Team members recognize the value they can provide beyond their job description. As mentioned above, everyone has a larger role to play in the company. You’ve got to harness this contribution. Your workers need to understand their role in improving the company as a whole.
- You gain insight that enables you to introduce changes that make the company better. Sure, you may not always act on every suggestion. But now and then, you’re going to discover some things that truly need to change.

4. What resources would be helpful to you right now?

Using the word resources leaves the door open to a wide variety of things - whether it’s a virtual assistant, a larger desk, a better computer, more meetings, fewer hours, or even a vacation. Just be sure there’s a mutual understanding that you can’t deliver anything or everything they want.

Why the question is effective:

- This question gives you concrete, actionable information you can use to help a team member grow and improve and lets them know you’re prepared to do anything you can to help.
- You may be surprised by the answers you get. Sometimes, what you think your employees need is different from what they actually do. You may be prepared to throw more people or money at a project, whereas the real need is a small, inexpensive tweak. You won’t know unless you ask.

5 Questions to Ask Your Team Members Every Month (cont'd)

5. Is there anything I can help you with?

Finally, provide a connection that lets your employee know you're a human. This is the broadest question of all and can transcend the office, the work, and the business. Feel free to spin the question in a more specific way based on things you know are going on in your team member's life:

- Perhaps your employee had water damage in their basement. "You guys had some damage from the flooding? Is there anything I can help you with?"
- Maybe she's participating in a community volunteer project. "You're heading up the Main Street Cleanup this week. Anything you might need help with?"

Why the question is effective:

- This question reaches beyond strictly professional needs, allowing you to understand any personal factors that may influence their work.
- Communicating your interest in your team member's life and improvement helps build trust and strengthens your working relationship.
- This question truly demonstrates your concern for your team member's success and well-being. You're more than just a company-minded manager. You're available to improve their work-life balance.

How to Ask Your Team Members Questions in the Right Way

Just as important as asking the right questions is asking them in the right way. Otherwise, these questions will be as useless as sound waves disturbing the ether. Here are 3 tips for asking the right questions in the right way.

1. **Ask sincerely.** Ask these questions with authenticity. You really want to know the answers. You're not reading a form—you're engaging with a person.
2. **Ask humbly.** You ask questions to get answers. In other words, you ask to learn. Be prepared to hear answers you may not like. This isn't a time to protest answers with a no-can-do attitude. It's a time to listen—openly and honestly. Be patient, and hear your team member out.
3. **Ask frequently.** I'm suggesting that you ask these questions monthly. Totally transparent answers may not be forthcoming the first time you try. But as your team members are reminded of these questions, the gears begin to turn, and the thoughts begin to flow. Make these questions a regular part of your conversation.

Using Questions to Build Employee Trust

Being an effective manager is about understanding. You won't understand unless you ask the right questions and listen to learn.

Questions are one of the manager's most powerful tools. Knowing how to wield them with precision is your key to becoming a better leader.

Source: teamgantt.com. Written by Daniel Threlfall

6 Proven Methods for Boosting Employee Morale

How seriously do your company's leaders take employee morale? If it's not a priority, your organization may be at a disadvantage: numerous studies have shown that positive work cultures are more productive than those that aren't.

With sites like Glassdoor where employees rate workplace culture, leaders can't afford to overlook the benefits of happiness at work. Here are six strategies that companies with strong positive employee morale have used to make their employees love working for them.

1. Promote Work-Life Balance Among Employees

Matthew Ross, the co-founder and COO of mattress review site The Slumber Yard, says that he and his co-founder both come from the investment-banking world, where late nights at work were commonplace. "However, for our company," he says, "we feared the late nights would burn out our employees and eventually make them resent us." When one employee resigned because of what Ross suspected was burnout, he says, "we knew we had to make a change or else other people would likely starting leaving as well."

After an IT audit, he and his partner discovered that their employees were working well into the after-hours. In response, they made a new rule: No work emails between 7 p.m. and 5 a.m.

"If we see email traffic during the off-time, my business partner and I will simply talk to the individual the next day and just remind them of the rule," says Ross, who adds that while it's rare, it's usually a positive conversation. "We say something along the lines of how we appreciate their commitment and work ethic but we want them to enjoy their evenings."

He points out that although they appreciate the hard work, high turnover is costly for business. "It takes time, money and resources to train up new employees," Ross says. "When our employees go home at night, we want them to spend time with their families, partake in outside activities and just recharge their jets."

He has since noticed that his employees seem more energized and upbeat in the mornings, leading him to believe that boosting employee morale increases productivity in the long-run.

2. Invest in Trust Building

According to a Slack study on the future of work, 80% of workers want to know more about how decisions are made in their organization, and 87% want their future company to be transparent. And employee morale can only reach a certain level without trust in leadership. After all, employees aren't likely to communicate or contribute if they don't feel safe expressing themselves honestly at work.

That's why at the authentication and authorization platform Auth0, managers are coached in offering actionable feedback and recognition. "Feedback should never be so generic that the person who receives it has no idea what they should do with it," says Melinda Starbird, Auth0's vice president of people and culture.

6 Proven Methods for Boosting Employee Morale (cont'd)

Auth0 partnered with LifeLabs Learning to train its managers to be effective leaders while practicing radical transparency. That means no one in the company would purposely withhold information that he or she knew was important to someone else. “If you ask, you will get an answer,” says Starbird.

Transparency and open communication are useful when leaders need to help explain organizational changes, reduce uncertainty, and get workers excited about new opportunities. “When employees feel valued and vested, they are part of something bigger and work for the benefit of the company, not just for themselves as individuals,” Starbird says.

3. Go Beyond “My Door Is Always Open”

“The thing that works best in my experience is actually getting to the front lines and talking to employees,” says Marissa Letendre, an independent human resources consultant who has worked with Fortune 500 companies like Amazon. “Stay interviews are a great way to start,” she says, especially in companies that have already built trust with their employees.

For stay interviews, Letendre often starts with “What keeps you here?” and “If you had a magic wand, what would you change?” She says the changes employees crave are often inexpensive and achievable, like more engaged and effective leadership, or the ability to have an impact and a voice.

Letendre recently conducted interviews with frontline employees at a 70-person company. From the information she gathered, the company created a culture committee with a small budget to establish fun activities, brainstorm companywide initiatives and designate coaching leaders—all with the added bonus of sustaining positive employee morale. “Through this,” she says, “we saw a 32% increase in employee engagement and a 28% average increase in performance companywide.”

4. Give Teammates a Chance to Interact Outside the Office

The financial services company Acuity has received positive reviews on Glassdoor from employees about the opportunities it provides for team members to get to know one another. These interactions come in the form of picnics, lunchtime trivia events, and monthly happy hours where family and friends are invited.

“These fun events get people together and get them away from their desk so they can interact with each other, not just in a professional way but to get people involved on a more personal level,” says Jordan Lindstrom, a senior human resources specialist at Acuity. New hires are also invited to social events, including the company holiday party, before they even begin work, getting them incorporated into the friendly, inclusive culture ahead of their first day.

6 Proven Methods for Boosting Employee Morale (cont'd)

5. Support Employee-Led Initiatives

PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) began its Be Well, Work Well health initiative in part because its employees were doing it on their own. “Our people know they need to be healthier, so that kind of stuff started happening in the offices,” says Anne Donovan, a people experience leader at the accounting and consulting firm.

Donovan adds that employees were already organizing wellness classes and ways to incorporate health at work. When a course on physical, mental and emotional well-being for senior management proved popular and effective, she says, “we stepped back and said, ‘This needs to be scaled to the entire firm. This work is important, our people are craving it, they want to work in a different way.’”

By investing in the initiative - which includes work breaks and a habit bank - the company demonstrated that not only does it care about its employees, it listens to what they want, too.

6. Don't ignore the power of small gestures

Whether it's swag like Bluetooth speakers to promote a continuing-education video or a pre-Thanksgiving pumpkin pie, Lindstrom says, Acuity also likes to surprise its employees with something small that lets employees know “We're thinking of you; we appreciate your value.”

One year at PwC, employees got a surprise gift card right before the Fourth of July as a thank-you from the company chairman. Small gifts like this can't wholesale change culture, cautions Donovan, but, she says, “it was a cute bump.”

Employee morale boosts are an ongoing effort.

Of course, it's a wiser investment to show your employees you care about their happiness in the form of morale-friendly policies than with a tasty pie. But in a perfect working world, morale is tended to throughout the life of an organization, in addition to day-to-day tokens and treats.

Source: slack.com. Written by Claire Zulkey

Employee Benefits that makes Perfect HR Culture

Employee Benefits act as motivation at the workplace. What benefits keeps the best talent sustain in the company? Let us know.

By CuteHR

1. HEALTH INSURANCE

Health insurance costs are shooting up massively. It is usually the most expensive employees' benefit (by a wide margin), but it's the most desirable benefit an



2. FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULE

Extended hours often lead to burnout, or employees leaving to join companies with even better perks. Giving employees the option to adapt their hours and work locations, they appreciate the flexibility and in turn, produce even better results.



3. GENEROUS OR UNLIMITED VACATION

Giving employees plenty of opportunities to pursue their passions and unwind from work can go a long way towards improving performance when they are at work. This break ensures that they don't become frustrated



4. FREE FOOD

Free food is an excellent way for companies to say thank you to their employees for their hard work. Periodic treating of employees to a meal goes a long way to tell them that their hard work is appreciated.



5. INCENTIVES/GAMIFICATION

Reward payments in the form of prizes, bonuses, awards, and other incentives. Turning work into competitions or games can motivate employees to do their best.



6. 401(K) PLANS

The human body has been designed to resist an infinite number of changes brought about by its environment. The secret of good health lies in successful adjustment to changing stresses on the body.



7. SENSE OF BELONGING

This workplace will fare much better than one with outrageous perks that do not keep an eye on building a connective workforce.



Survey Questions to Evaluate Your Employees' Morale

Extremely low employee morale is fairly easy to detect, as well as incredibly high morale. However, you have to survey your employees to find out the exact state of employee morale in your company.

Here are some of the questions you can use to test your employees' morale.

| Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you like coming to work? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | What do you like about your workplace the most? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | How connected do you feel to your colleagues? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Would you say that the office atmosphere is friendly? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Is there anything that is stopping you from working the most productively you can? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | What are our company's values? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you feel that your personal values are reflected in our company's values? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | What demotivates you at your work? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you feel like your work is recognized by your colleagues and superiors? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you believe in our company's statement? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you aware of how you contribute to this company's success? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you feel respected in your workplace? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you feel our organization cares about you? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you have goals you are working towards in your job? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | What do you think is the state of employee morale in our company? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | How likely are you to recommend this organization to friends and colleagues? Why? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | What do you think our company could do to raise employee morale? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do you feel like you get enough feedback on your work? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | How meaningful do you find your work? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are you satisfied with your work-life balance? |

Source: semoscloud.com. Written by Sara Ana Cemazar

What Causes Low Employee Morale in the Workplace?

Lack of Growth

Employees need personal growth just as much as the business does. When the company isn't growing, employees can grow bored and unmotivated. Research has proven that employees need growth to stay engaged and motivated because, without growth, they will become disengaged and will eventually leave for a more challenging role. This is the opposite of staff morale.

No Clarity

If employees don't know what you expect of them or they aren't aware of what's going on in the company, they won't be motivated to get the job done to the best of their ability. You have to set clear and realistic goals for each employee. Schedule one-on-one meetings to track progress and to clear up any confusion.

Leadership Changes

Change can be hard to handle, but it's a necessary evil. Whether there was a merger or a new hire at the top level, morale can take a hit when confidence is shaken, because if the company culture changes, so do morale. You have to monitor employee morale when a change is implemented.

Leadership Problems

More often than not, poor leadership causes low employee morale. Those in leadership positions must understand how their behavior affects the team. If they don't, morale will gravely suffer and if nothing gets addressed, morale will only plummet.

The Company Itself

Sometimes the company itself is the biggest and most important factor that can directly impact employee morale. The company can influence an employee's attitude towards his or her work. Often, the reputation of a company can build up the employees' attitude toward it and that attitude can be designed long before the interview process. Sometimes, a reputation precedes you and your company image so make sure its an image that draws employees in instead of scaring them away.

With the above outlined, you understand the importance of employee morale and what causes both high and low company morale, so you need to tackle it head-on and add its process to your company culture.

Source: connecteam.com. Written by Rea Regan

You Can Boost Employee Morale

Employee morale describes the overall outlook, attitude, satisfaction, and confidence that employees feel at work. When employees are positive about their work environment and believe that they can meet their most important career and vocational needs, employee morale is positive or high.

Like employee motivation, you can't give an employee positive morale. As an employer, though, you do control large components of the environment in which employees work each day. Consequently, you are a powerful contributor to whether an employee's morale is positive or negative.

Portions of the environment that you control that have an impact on employee morale include things like the effectiveness of your managers, the quality of manager's interaction with employees, and the way employees interact with each other on a day-to-day basis.

You hold the cards to creating the environment or culture in which these positive factors are valued. For starters, it's as simple as rewarding and recognizing the managers who best display the characteristics you want to see in their interactions with employees.

Contributors to Positive Employee Morale

When employees have confidence in the capability of their company leadership, they tend to have positive morale. When they share a vision for where the company is headed and are positive about the direction, employees also exhibit high morale.

Feeling part of the goals that are bigger than themselves (and their job) contributes significantly to positive employee morale. Many employees want to feel as if they are part of something important and contributing to success for the greater good is a real morale booster. A deep focus on serving the needs of customers also promotes positive employee morale.

Communication is another significant factor in positive employee morale. Employees want to feel that they are privy to the important information about their company, their customers, and their products. They also need current information so that the decisions they make are congruent with their success in the company.

The interaction of employees with their immediate manager and coworkers plays a role in employee morale. Effective, harmonious interpersonal relationships bolster employee morale and make employees feel that going to work is a worthwhile endeavor in addition to collecting a paycheck.

The relationship with their immediate manager and their communication and interaction with the senior managers are also significant. Employees want to feel as if they are valued equally with other employees and held in serious regard by the senior team of leaders.

Positive Employee Morale Detractors

When employees dislike their manager and compete with co-workers for attention and appreciation, morale is generally low. If employees lack confidence in the company's leadership and direction, morale will also be affected. When an employee is unsure what is expected of them (and hence experience a lack of accomplishment) morale is low.

*You Can Boost Employee Morale (cont'd)***Steps to Improve Employee Morale**

Factors that can contribute to positive employee morale include the following:

- Providing reasonable, supportive management and leadership personnel who have integrity and will treat employees fairly and consistently. Avoid favoritism.
- Treating employees with respect.
- Treating employees as if they are one of your organization's most significant resources.
- Providing regular employee recognition.
- Taking actions that empower employees so they can make decisions about their jobs.
- Offering open and regular communication about issues important to employees.
- Providing feedback and coaching.
- Offering above industry-average benefits and compensation.
- Giving employees the opportunity to develop their professional skills and their careers.
- Providing employee perks and company activities.

You can measure your organization's success, in part, by measuring employee satisfaction. Building positive employee morale is not difficult; it just takes desire, time, and commitment on the part of management and the organization.

Source: thebalancecareers.com. Written by Susan M. Heathfield