

## 1. Reading comprehension.

### 1.1. Look at the following expressions and use them to complete the sentences in the article.

heavy hitters		hits the mark		the cream of the crop
throwing money at		up to scratch		optimum levels

### High achievers... and how to keep them.

**A.** Looking through the self-help sections in your local book shop, you'll find plenty of guides: how to be successful at work, how to boost your career, any number of habits of the successful businessperson. Finding people's thoughts on success for the individual is not hard. But what happens when you are the manager of an employee who consistently **(1)**? While high achievers can deliver as much as 400% higher productivity than the average worker, the bad news is that they are going to be harder to satisfy. What's worse is that most organizations have policies that are able to deal with workers who are not **(2)**, but how do you deal with the staff who are working at **(3)**?

**B.** It's important to evaluate what the main motivators are for high achievers: both extrinsic and intrinsic. While a good salary and pay bonuses, which are examples of external and extrinsic motivators, are obvious choices for why a top employee would want to stay in the company, research shows that this is often not enough. Intrinsic motivators, such as having a sense of adding value to a company, being given autonomy, and being able to develop as a professional are vital to an employee's sense of well-being. So if you're just **(4)** your best person, but they're not learning anything and they don't feel valued, it may not be long until you're getting their resignation letter. Here are some ideas to keep **(5)**.

**C.** Firstly, help them to be visible outside your department or team. Give them an opportunity to present ideas to senior management or to other departments in the company. Ask them to head a group on a particular task and given them responsibility for that, allowing them the opportunity to lead and be consulted. Showing them that their opinion is valued and sought after, perhaps even beyond your department, is a good way to make them feel a sense of purpose.

**D.** Avoid micro-managing top achievers at all costs. No one likes it, but if you don't allow your best employees to spread their wings and use their creativity to address problems without you constantly watching over them, they will soon find other opportunities and move on. Highly productive employees are much more likely to crave leadership opportunities and independence and will resent not having freedom or the scope to grow.

**E.** Actively discuss future career paths within the company with them. High achievers are not going to want to stay in one position indefinitely. Talking with them about further possibilities within the company lets them know that their work is noticed and appreciated and that they are paying attention to the possibilities they are creating. It also shows that you are interested in their development beyond the role that they are currently in. It's in your interest as a manager that when they inevitably leave, they stay with the company, or possibly with a more advanced role within the department, rather than take their talents to a competitor.

**F.** Give high achievers say over their development. If possible, secure a budget for their development and allow them to decide how they would like to use it and what they would like to learn, gearing their training to their interests and needs. This gives them a sense of participating in their training and a sense of autonomy rather than a sense of having to go to the mandatory training session. Again, this will make them feel valued and actively engaged in what they are doing.

**G.** While retaining such employees may require allocating finances to them, it is a solid investment for the company. Keeping high performers in the company is much simpler than attracting new ones. Equally, top employees tend to have the effect of encouraging top performance in others and attracting like-minded individuals to the company too. So making the effort to keep **(6)** will pay dividends, both seen and unseen.

*Forbes, the BBC*

## 2. Vocabulary improvement.

Match each vocabulary word or phrase from the article with its correct definition.

2.1. Optimum levels		a) To feel bitter or angry about something
2.2. Autonomy		b) To set aside resources or money for a specific purpose
2.3. Micro-managing		c) Making sure employees remain with the company
2.4. Crave		d) The best or most favorable conditions
2.5. Resent		e) The act of managing every detail of someone's work too closely
2.6. Retaining		f) To intensely desire something
2.7. Allocating finances		g) Independence or freedom in decision-making

## 3. Choose the correct option.

### 3.1 What is the primary challenge organizations face with high achievers, according to the article?

- a) They often do not meet performance standards.
- b) They are more challenging to please compared to typical employees.
- c) They require less supervision than other employees.
- d) They prefer lower salaries and fewer responsibilities.

### 3.2 What are intrinsic motivators mentioned in the article that are important for high achievers?

- a) High salary and bonuses.
- b) Job security and fixed schedules.
- c) Feeling of contributing meaningfully, having independence, and growing professionally.
- d) Public recognition and frequent vacations.

**3.3 Which strategy is recommended for making high achievers feel valued and giving them a sense of purpose?**

- a) Offering them more vacation days.
- b) Permitting them to share proposals with top executives.
- c) Increasing their salaries significantly.
- d) Micromanaging their tasks to ensure quality.

**3.4 Why should managers avoid micromanaging top achievers?**

- a) It prevents them from working overtime.
- b) It limits their innovation and freedom.
- c) It leads to increased absenteeism.
- d) It causes them to become too dependent on supervision.

**3.5 How can managers demonstrate interest in a high achiever's development within the company?**

- a) By offering frequent promotions without discussions.
- b) By giving them routine tasks to ensure consistency.
- c) By reducing their workload to prevent burnout.
- d) By having conversations about potential career trajectories within the organization.

**3.6 What is the benefit of allowing high achievers to decide on their development and training?**

- a) It saves the company money on training costs.
- b) It ensures they attend mandatory training sessions.
- c) It reduces the need for external consultants.
- d) It provides them with a feeling of independence and involvement.

**3.7 What is a long-term benefit of retaining high achievers in a company?**

- a) It motivates peak performance in colleagues and draws in comparable skilled individuals.
- b) It ensures that all employees receive equal attention.
- c) It eliminates the need for hiring new employees.
- d) It reduces the company's overall training budget.