Title:
Employee Development: Motivate Employee Participation in Professional
Development Opportunities and Improve Performance

Word Count:
516

Summary:
An employee development and training program is not something to be checked off
on a checklist. The strongest organizations make employee development an
integral part of their culture and strategies for success. Learn how to
increase your performance by motivating the seemingly unmotivated.

Keywords:
employee training and development, training and development, employee
development, professsional development, employee training, motivation

Article Body:
When companies think of employee development, they often search for training
programs, educational seminars, coaching or the latest book that might offer
ideas on what employees can do to sharpen skills or strengthen expertise.
However, none of these programs will be effective if the organization lacks one
critical success factor: individual motivation. An individual has to want to
develop himself before any employee training and development program can be
successful.

Some say they're 'too busy.' Some say they're 'already developed.' Some blame
the boss. Some like burying their heads in the sand, afraid of what they might
learn about themselves.

What can you do to help your employees achieve best performance?

<i>Here are some tips to help motivate the seemingly unmotivated and increase
your organization's overall performance.</i>

1. Target the highly motivated and strong performers.

All organizations have individuals who are highly motivated. They stand out
more easily. They typically like challenges and welcome growth opportunities
for themselves. Engage them in activities to help them get even better. The
improved performance of the highly motivated will help raise the bar for your

entire organization. Those who are less motivated will have to step up the
pace.

2. Focus on the future.

Rather than concentrate on performance areas that aren't working for an
individual, talk about possibilities for the future. It's easier to become
energized about new possibilities than dwelling on weaknesses. Determine the
positive outcome that will occur if a change/improvement is made. For example,
you might say, "We can reach more buyers if you can speak more frequently to
groups. What can you do to hone your presentation skills to help secure more
business?" Help employees keep their eye on the goal, not their ego.

3. Open dialogue about desire.

Discussions about development should be positive and ongoing -- not limited to
annual performance reviews. Let the individual lead. Rather than saying, "Here
are areas you need to develop," ask "What would help you build on your strengths
or increase your effectiveness?" When a particular approach has been identified,
ask for commitment to follow-through. Create a culture where ongoing
development is expected, encouraged and rewarded at all levels.

4. Start at the top.

Executives should model the commitment to growth and development that they want
to see throughout the organization. After all, many problems disguised as
employee development issues actually reflect leadership deficiencies of the firm
or organization.

Consider using assessments of some kind to help employees gain a more objective
perspective about them. Assessments can be helpful or destructive depending on
how they are used. In the end, it's all about achieving what both the employees
and what the organization wants. Be clear about what's most important to both.

An employee development and training program is not something to be checked off
on a checklist. The strongest organizations make employee development an
integral part of their culture and strategies for success. They constantly seek
new and innovate ways to engage their people in development opportunities to
achieve best results.