



BRIEFING

Motivation plan: a 9-step guide

the
voucher
association



The Motivation Plan: a 9-step guide

Committing to setting up a motivation scheme is easy. Ensuring that the scheme is effective and sustainable is much more difficult. Before setting up a motivation scheme, it is worth checking out The Voucher Association's guide to the perfect motivation scheme.

1. Set goals that are achievable

Nothing switches someone off more than an objective, that seems like a mission impossible! For Ms or Mr Average the only way to keep them turned on is to set goals that are realistic and fair. You can offer the best rewards in the world but they will be meaningless if targets are not seen as achievable. The high flying 'I'm successful and I know it' performers will probably say 'I can hit any target' and will go to any lengths to achieve it but this will not be the response from the average performer.

Objectives must also be relevant to the individual's job responsibility. Don't target a sales executive to improve profitability if he/she has no authority to reduce costs or increase prices. It won't work.

Perhaps the best way of setting goals is to approach the task from the point of view of the participant. Asking individuals to set their own targets may seem crazy but more often than not, they will set themselves objectives which are higher than those that would have been set by the company! It follows that the desire to achieve target is increased because the figures become OURS, not just mine or yours.

Don't impose across the board objectives – remember you're dealing with individuals!

2. Communicate effectively

Communication of a motivation programme to participants must be a clear message that is easily understood. Whether it's conveyed in print, by email or over the internet, participants must buy into the idea and understand exactly what they need to do to achieve objectives and earn awards. This may involve devising measurement structures, creating a branded incentive theme and providing regular updates throughout the programme. However it's done, participants need to know in simple terms what's expected of them.

3. Have lots of winners

You already know that 'success breeds success', but in the arena of motivation, being able to recognise and reward all those who have succeeded promotes a more productive and positive environment than one with lots of demotivated losers. Of course winners must be genuine, but the process can be helped along by the creative use of the reward structure.

4. Make awards frequently

Staff need to be kept switched on by a programme as they'll quickly lose interest if they're not reminded about the benefits. If the campaign is for a year, why not shorten the pay out horizon to monthly or quarterly? It's not necessarily about huge award values but about frequent winners. Use your award budget creatively by reserving an amount for interim awards – this keeps interest levels high and ensures that you recognise success early on in the campaign.

Contacting The Voucher Association

Tel: 0870 241 6445 Fax: 020 7490 2296

Email: info@voucherassociation.co.uk**5. Have a most improved award**

This has Ms or Mr Average written all over it! This is their chance to shine and prove they've got what it takes. A participant who has a poor performance in a month or a quarter can be revitalised by the opportunity to qualify for an award in the next period based on his/her improvement. This method is all about encouragement, spurring people on to keep trying despite perhaps an early poor performance.

6. Have an employee of the month

Implementing some short term goals helps to keep people focussed. Criteria could change each month to give everyone the chance to demonstrate a particular skill. For example, in a sales office, possible goals might include the greatest number of orders taken, the greatest number of new product introductions or the highest average order value. This gives a chance for your average participant to compete more fairly within the group.

7. Present rewards with style

Presentation of awards is often neglected which underestimates the power of rewarding in public. Your average employee will value the experience of being recognised by his/her boss and peers. When the time comes to announce winners, make that extra effort to get the whole group together to celebrate their successes. Don't worry, this doesn't have to mean an expensive awards ceremony, just taking time out to present rewards shows the importance of individual contributions and makes people feel valued.

8. Encourage sustained effort

Nothing de-motivates your average member of staff more than watching the ruthlessly ambitious sales executive streaking ahead from the start, leaving everyone else well and truly behind. Your ordinary performer will have no hope of catching up and the frustration will show! However if everyone starts afresh each quarter or each month with pluses and minuses wiped out, it gives the chance to compete on equal terms. Cumulative performance should be used to reward over the whole campaign and it is here that the high flyers will show through.

9. Choose the right reward

Cash may seem like the obvious reward for star employees – who wouldn't want a little extra money? But many employees will use the money to help pay bills rather than treat themselves to something special that will help the warm glow of being rewarded last longer. If an individual gift seems like the perfect solution, then think about the administrative nightmare of choosing a specific gift for each employee and the high chance of getting it wrong!

Vouchers provide the perfect solution, allowing the employee to choose something that they can hold onto for a long time, be it a piece of jewellery, an ornament for the house, the latest electrical item or even memories from a weekend away.

Content provided by Capital Incentives & Motivation Ltd.

About The Voucher Association

The Voucher Association was founded in 1996 to promote and represent the interests of UK voucher providers. The Voucher Association has a broad range of aims and objectives:

- To represent the interests of the voucher industry
- To promote the concept of vouchers
- To enhance the standing and raise the profile of the voucher industry
- To maintain and promote communication between members
- To improve awareness of market developments within the voucher business
- To address consumer and legal issues relating to the voucher industry
- To enhance members' knowledge of issues relating to the production, distribution and redemption of vouchers, and to establish standards of best practice
- To provide consolidated industry market data to full members
- To promote The Voucher Association as the representative body in areas where the Association has an interest
- To communicate the views and opinions of The Voucher Association to any relevant government department, public authority or other body
- To co-operate with any other organised body or company in furtherance of the general interests of the voucher industry

The Voucher Association does not aim to influence individual member companies to adopt a majority or general view in an aspect of business practice. The integrity of member companies is a basic premise and remains the responsibility of each participating representative. The Voucher Association may not represent the views of specific member companies.



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