

The Firings Will Continue Until Morale Improves

By Brian Geery and Sally Sweeney

Hopefully we have all had a least one experience as a customer is which we would later just have to tell someone, "You wouldn't believe how nice this person was where I bought this!" In reflecting on the experience, could this person have been so nice if they were feeling unmotivated? Of course not!

So, what causes people to be motivated at work? Let's explore three major motivation factors:

1. Caring management
2. Recognition
3. Career advancement

Caring Management

Christine Purnell, Vice President of PTC Banking Systems in Bradenton laughed when she heard someone joke about working at a particular company whose unspoken motto was, "The firings will continue until morale improves!" All of us can imagine how it would feel working for a boss who possesses a managerial attitude of, "Do this or else..." Christine knows, and perhaps that is why her team is always so motivated. A recent survey of PTC's customers indicated the experience with PTC's employees is what keeps them so loyal. PTC enjoys a customer retention rate of over 90%... in other words; their customers almost never do business anywhere else! Meet Christine and you know that if you worked on her team, you'd feel great. You would be motivated because you knew your management team truly cared about you as a as a person. Christine puts employees first. She cares. Christine wants to know not, "How are you?" but, "How are you, *really?*"

Judy Clark, a manager at AAA, takes 20 minutes every day just to walk to her desk. That's because Judy stops at every one of her team member's desks to say hello and find out how they are doing. Judy doesn't just say, "Hi, how are you?" Usually her greetings are more like, "How did little Jimmy do in his play last night?" or, "Is your aunt coming home from the hospital today?" Is it any wonder Judy's team continually wins awards for member satisfaction? Do Christine and Judy do anything you can't do? Show that you care by being truly interested in people as people and you will *feel* the impact on employee motivation!

Recognition

Sam Scarboro is a top performing salesperson at a Florida branch of a California based computer systems company. He wasn't always a top producer. Last January his company was sold. A few weeks later he received a fax of a production report which listed his name in the middle. There was a hand written note from the new President at the corporate headquarters in California which stated, "Sam, thanks for all the effort you put into selling our products. I realize it hasn't been easy with all the changes our company has been through. Keep up the good work and I'll bet your name moves even higher up this list!" The next month Sam sold even more and his name was inching up the performance report. When the new report was published, he actually

received a phone call from the President who said, ‘Sam, we haven’t met in person yet, but I can tell if you keep up the good work I’ll be seeing you at the president’s club trip. Thanks for keeping up the sales at our southeast branch!’ Sure enough, Sam’s performance improved and now he is regularly ranked as a top producer. How hard is it to recognize someone for a job well done? Will a little recognition improve employee motivation? You bet! Just ask Sam, but you’ll have to wait until he returns from the Hawaii president’s club trip.

Career Advancement

Beth Hennessey took over as manager of customer service for a Sarasota based call center. Upon arrival she was greeted with what seemed like a spinning door for people quitting. Needless to say, her team was unmotivated. She took team members for coffee, a walk or lunch and asked them individually how they felt about their jobs. Beth rapidly learned that her team members felt they were in a ‘dead end’ job with no room for advancement. The next quarter Beth introduced new position descriptions. She took the Customer Service Representative position and redefined it into three positions; Customer Service Representative, Senior Customer Service Representative and Customer Service Supervisor. Team members became eligible for promotion after a certain tenure and performance record. Promotion meant a new title, some additional training and responsibilities, and a slightly higher pay scale. Over the next three quarters the door stopped spinning as employee retention sky rocketed. Motivation improved dramatically because team members now felt there was room for career advancement. Although Beth’s payroll budget increased slightly, the expense was significantly offset by reduced recruitment and training costs.

Improving employee motivation is not hard and does not cost much. Take action now to show that you care, provide recognition and develop a career advancement program. Soon your customers will be bragging about how nice your employees are and returning to buy more. Not only will you observe rapid positive results and increase your bottom line... you’ll feel good, too!

About the Authors

Sally Sweeney, Managing Partner, Quota, Inc.

A proven top performing sales professional, Sally knows what it takes to build a solid team of top performing technology sales professionals. As a sales professional, before founding Quota, Inc., Sally earned numerous top performer awards, consecutive President's club trips and regularly brought in sales above quota.

During her more than ten years in sales and sales management positions, Sally developed a successful track record in driving the sales of intangible services and enterprise wide software.

In the recruiting field, contract, contingency and executive search work all fall under Sally's repertoire. She has helped fill positions that included administrators, technologists, service representatives and executives. Through this experience, Sally found her passion – building technology sales teams. Sally has followed her passion and placed innumerable quota achieving sales professionals.

Sally is an avid student of sales strategies. In addition to being trained in the most popular sales methodologies, Sally stays current on new literature and trends in the profession of selling.

An enthusiast for matching people to companies, Sally is the coauthor of *Buy Me, I'm Worth It*, a book that enables job seekers to apply sales and marketing principles to their job search.

As the leader of the recruiting team at Quota, Inc., Sally ensures clients and candidates receive unparalleled service. Her team goal is to enable clients to expeditiously hire technology sales professionals who will achieve or exceed their quota, quarter after quarter *and* help create a dynamic and cohesive corporate culture.

Brian Geery, Senior Partner, Quota, Inc.

Brian knows what it takes to build world-class sales organizations. He began consulting with technology companies in 1991 and has since worked with some of the most explosive growth technology companies to structure and develop their sales organizations.

Brian consulted with Cambridge Technology Partners when their annual revenues were \$20 million with 125 employees – when revenues topped \$580 million and with 3,500+ employees, CTP was acquired by Novell in 2001. He has consulted on sales strategy with CEOs or Sales Executives at Intel, HP Invent, Nortel Networks, Thomson Investment Software and over 100 other companies.

Before joining Quota, Inc., Brian was hitting his numbers for 15 years as a salesperson, sales manager and branch manager at three 'underdog' technology companies – now they are top dogs.

Brian's strategies for sales success have appeared in numerous publications, including the Wall Street Journal and regular appearances in Sales and Marketing Management Magazine. Brian has appeared on radio and television and has been a featured speaker at business conferences throughout the country including Inc. World, The International Quality and Productivity Conference and MIT.

Brian is former founder and president of the Sales and Marketing Toastmasters Association and former vice president of the Sales and Marketing Executives Association.