

Five Steps to ... Motivating Others

In the second and final part of her series on motivation, Fiona Setch explains some key strategies that can help you inspire your team

A senior job title does not automatically mean that colleagues will be motivated by your presence and leadership. Motivating people is a skill that can be developed, but it needs practice and fine-tuning.

Incorporating motivating strategies may sound like extra work onto an already busy workload. However, when you inspire and motivate others, no task is too great to take on and the team has a greater sense of purpose and achievement, leading to even better patient care.

1. Be a positive role model, especially when communicating with your colleagues

This starts from the moment you meet and greet people. I once worked on a ward where the ward sister was renowned for her moody temperament. The staff used a code of weather reports to update each other on how the atmosphere was. For example: 'It's been a sunny morning; however, the outlook for this afternoon is a severe frost' indicated that you would rather be anywhere other than on the ward round with sister.

There is so much 'just surviving' communication used in workplaces. For example: 'How are you?' 'I'm OK, could be better.' This would not convince me this ward round/meeting was going to be inspiring.

However, a more positive response, such as 'I am really well and really looking forward to the team meeting' would make people feel valued and positive. Even if you are not feeling 100 per cent, by using positive language, you can also change how you feel.

2. Listen, or you tongue will make you deaf

Promoting a reflective, learning culture and using every opportunity to share team learning means that individuals feel their contributions are being listened to. The Adult Learning Cycle is a useful framework for meetings, exploring team dynamics or critical incident reviews.

For example, it can be used in the case of a team meeting to review a challenging family who are complaining about the care of a relative:

- **Experience.** What is the situation? What are the facts, the specific information? Writing this on a flipchart for everyone to see can be very helpful
- **Reflection.** What ingredients contributed to the situation becoming so challenging? Acknowledge that the team did a good job under challenging circumstances.
- **Conclusion.** Gain an understanding. Why did this occur? Collect any theoretical information that may assist in understanding the situation.
- **Planning.** How could we make this situation different next time? How can we improve our performance?

Devise a team action plan.

Working through this process should have shone some light on why this patient and their family were challenging and how to transfer this learning back into their care and future patients' care.

This part of the learning cycle is the most crucial part for a team to learn together and plan action points for next time.

Leading your team through this process can be a very empowering and motivating experience for all members of the team.

3. **Appreciate your whole team**

When Clive Woodward was making his final selection for the 2003 Rugby World Cup final in Sydney, he stood up and praised the players who were not selected. In his view, it was everyone behind the scenes as well as the final squad that went on to win the World Cup.

In your clinical environment there will be members of your team who have a direct contribution to patient care and some who have an indirect, but equally important, role in the team. Saying thanks for their contribution may not sound like an obvious motivator, but it is the small touches that make the difference.

4. **Establish a set of team rules**

Mr Woodward suggested to the England rugby squad they develop their own set of team rules and wrote them in their black book. He gave them themes and facilitated their

discussion. One of their team rules was punctuality: the team decided that each person would be ready for a team meeting ten minutes before it started.

Think about your team and punctuality – how much time is lost by people turning up late for meetings?

In health care, it is not always possible to be on time. However, it could be your team's decision that meetings would start and end on time and that it was each person's responsibility to be punctual and prepared. By having this discussion, team rules become owned by the team and facilitated by you, the team leader, to empower the team towards their vision of providing high-quality patient care.

5. Lead your team by example

The word 'motivation' comes from the Latin verb 'to move'. Giving a positive role model through leading by example, you would be certain of moving your staff.

In today's increasingly busy NHS, being able to motivate others will not only provide you with a more dynamic team but also better team morale – and improved job satisfaction for yourself.

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