

Industry News

One Size Fits All Won't Work to Motivate Employees

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SHL, a provider of talent assessment solutions, recently issued research that found that there are striking differences in what motivates different employees. For instance, only a quarter (25 percent) of employees find their manager motivational all or some of the time. The findings offer a cautionary note to employers who rely on a broad-brush approach when it comes to encouraging employee productivity.

For example, according to the SHL research, men are much more likely to be demotivated by poor senior management (38 percent) and poor line management (29 percent). Women, on the other hand, are more affected by criticism (17 percent) and poor relationships with colleagues (19 percent) than their male counterparts.

Age also can have an impact on motivation, with young employees (aged 18 to 34) more likely to be demotivated by uninteresting work (37 percent) than those older than 35 (26 percent). Young workers also are more motivated by company culture and their work environment than older colleagues.

Surprisingly, almost one-third (31 percent) of those surveyed said they rarely or never find their manager motivational. Managers in the legal, financial and banking industries fare the worst (39 percent), with those in media, marketing and advertising faring the best (19 percent).

"Low motivation can have destructive effects in the workplace," said Dr. Hennie Kriek, president of SHL Americas. "The majority of respondents (46 percent) said that low motivation leads to stress, while a large number find it causes procrastination (43 percent). And almost one-third (30 percent) agree that it would result in them looking for a new job."

The current economic situation does not appear to have the expected negative effect. Fifteen percent of respondents said they are more motivated as a result of the economic downturn; reasons for this include fear of redundancy (53 percent) and increased workload (41 percent). Almost two-thirds (63 percent) said the economic situation has not had any effect on their motivation, while another 15 percent admitted it has made them less motivated.

"A motivated workforce is crucial to ensure employees are happy, engaged, productive and good advocates for the company," commented James Bywater, global consulting manager at SHL. "It doesn't always take a lot, but it is important to ensure that you are motivating the right people in the right way, as everybody is different.

"Some people are motivated by money, competition and high pressure, while others prefer encouragement, team working and being appreciated by colleagues. Getting it wrong can lead to unenthusiastic and unproductive employees, which can have a devastating effect on the bottom line."

In recognition of the importance of assessing what motivates different people, SHL has updated its motivation assessment tool that explores which elements are important by individual. This information is invaluable for managers when deciding how to manage their team and unlock each person's potential.

The new version includes an updated Employee Motivation Report that has been redesigned for ease of use, including five sections denoting motivating and demotivating factors, plus hints and tips on how best to manage the individual.

For more info: <http://www.shl.com>