Motivation in the Workplace

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# Table of Contents

Abstract .................................................................................................................. 4

Introduction ........................................................................................................... 5
  Background .......................................................................................................... 6

Purpose of Study .................................................................................................... 9

Statement of the Problem ....................................................................................... 10

Significance of Study ............................................................................................. 12

Literature Review .................................................................................................. 13
  Monetary Reward ................................................................................................. 13
  Promotions ........................................................................................................... 17
  Workplace Environment ....................................................................................... 20
  Constructive Feedback ......................................................................................... 25
  Chain-of-Command .............................................................................................. 27
  Consequences ...................................................................................................... 28
  Training ............................................................................................................... 30

Procedure Review ................................................................................................ 34
  Positive vs. Negative ........................................................................................... 34
  Combinations ...................................................................................................... 38
Abstract

Employees are an integral part of every business. Keeping employees motivated is key to retaining and maintaining an organization's employee pools. Motivation also enables employees to function at a high level of efficiency. The following paper is a research-based paper for the seminar paper course, which focuses on conducting a literature review to understand the factors that motivate employees working in a business office setting and specifically the finance industry. The final seminar paper will fulfill the seminar paper requirements for the Master of Science in Organizational Change Leadership, as part of the distance learning program through the University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

Keywords: motivation, employees, employers, business, finance
Motivation in the Workplace

Employee motivation is one of the most important aspects of running a successful business. Yet, many times, this is an area that goes unrecognized and overlooked by many managers and employers. Ben-Hur and Kinley (2016) wrote that motivation based purely on reward and punishment is hard to sustain over time and that most organizations pay insufficient attention to the potential power of intrinsic motivators. The main reason people choose to work and where they work is because of the monetary value assigned to the job and position. Reward-based methods of motivation are described by Wilson and Madsen (2008) as extrinsic motivators. Extrinsic motivators include monetary benefits, job title, avoiding punishment, and rewards. However, multiple other factors should be considered when maintaining and retaining an organization's current work force, such as intrinsic motivators. Employers need to promote a desirable and healthy work environment, in order to keep their employees engaged. According to Nickerson (2014), employees and employers alike need to “bee-in”, which is a commitment to working together as a team and as one unit. Without the appropriate amount of employee “bee-in”, employees can become frustrated and demotivated within their current positions. Employee training is the first step to creating a desired culture. Palan (2007) wrote engagement of the employee by the line manager and a competency-based learning culture go a long way to strengthen employee retention. By having employees engaged from the very beginning of their training, they can initially begin to feel a part of the organization itself. Proper training channels help to create employee engagement, which according to Jena and Pradhan (2017), is a positive attitude held by individuals toward their organization and its culture. Monetary benefits are and always have been the main motivating factor for workers, but workplace happiness, job satisfaction, healthy working environments, and a comfortable work-to-family balance, are all
major motivators to the overall employee work experience. Creating a strong sense of
commitment to the organization is also a vital way to motivate employees properly. Without
productive and happy employees, business cannot operate at a highly efficient manner, over a
long-term period, as supported by Shaw’s research (2017). This paper will focus on employee
motivators, more specifically motivators for employees in business and finance settings.

Background of Workplace Motivation

Employee workplace motivation is a topic that can be traced back to the industrial
revolution. Factories and production facilities gave birth to many of the workplace motivation
theories and strategies that are still used today within a business and financial working
environment. According to Lloyd & Mertens (2018), during the industrial age factories began to
focus on processes, efficiencies, and cost-reduction. Adam Smith’s book, The Wealth of Nations,
was a leading publication for the theory of production. Labor and employees during this period
were viewed as yet another element to be managed or as a “factor of production”. An employee’s
personal motivational factors and their wellbeing were not considered, other than as a means to
produce more goods and products. Workers during the industrial revolution also experienced
long hours and unsafe working conditions. If a worker was unable to perform assigned job
duties, that worker was let go and replaced by someone who would or could. The fear of losing
one’s job or position served as motivational factor to workers throughout the industrial
revolution. The exploitation of labor during the industrial revolution, eventually led to the
formation of labor unions and the idea that workers are more than just another tool or a “factor of
production”.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries began to build off of the concept of the worker
being more than just a tool, beginning with employers making a distinction between “labor” and
“production.” According to Lloyd and Mertens (2018), during this period Frederick Taylor began the movement towards scientific management and Christian von Ehrenfels, in his monograph, made the claims of the “whole” system. These theories summarized that that workers are a part of a “whole” system of parts, which are interrelated to one another, suggesting that labor itself is more than a means of wage-earning and production of material goods. During this period were the beginnings of a connection between the internal workplace and external family/society, as a part of the whole laborers’ variables. This connection between the internal and external environment would have an enormous impact on workplace motivation, as managers and philosophers alike began to understand the importance of worker happiness and satisfaction.

Beginning in the early to mid-1900s, social context began to emerge as an increasingly important subject to major companies such as General Electric and researchers such as Elton Mayo, according to Lloyd and Mertens (2018). Under their social context, an individual’s workplace motivation was viewed as a significant part of one interconnected system. Individual workers were newly defined as a “social man”. Employers started to realize that their employees have a life inside and outside of the workplace. Basford and Offerman (2012) stated that coworkers likely exert a substantial impact on their fellow employees and work environments. In order to maximize worker motivations, employers and managers needed to look at the total situation. Under a social context, motivation can be broken down to positive factors: effort, performance, and reward. Based on an effort, workers should feel a sense of social status, from their job, that will motivate them to provide the required work. A worker’s performance would positively affect their work because people want to attain goals and incentives. Lastly, reward
based motivation provides an intrinsic monetary incentive for workers to obtain their desired social status.

Modern motivational factors have become increasingly globalized. Khan and Wajidi (2019) wrote that organizations are becoming increasingly globally dependent on effective management and team building to survive and prosper. People are interacting and working with a larger variety and more diverse group of people than ever before. Employees have also began to have not only a connection to their employer, but a connection to their social status and community. Morgan (2016) stated that modern organizations are built on interdependence, where no individual has absolute authority and employees are linked by technology rather than hierarchy. Furthermore, getting people to move in the same direction is not a structural issue, it is an alignment problem. The sense of belonging to one’s social community serves as a form of motivation for individuals needing connections between their workplace and outside environments.
Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to research motivation in the workplace, specifically in the business and finance industry. Employees are the key to any successful business. Without employees the business cannot function or operate. Guga (2012) stated that motivated employees help organizations survive. A manager or business owner needs to know how to properly motivate an organization’s employees in order to maximize their and the businesses potential. Not only are motived employees more productive, but they are also more loyal and exhibit lower turnover rates due to workplace happiness. In the finance world, turnover can become a serious issue and one that needs to be taken seriously and addressed holistically. A motivated employee is less likely to become disgruntled with their current position and, furthermore, less likely to look for other employment options. Motivation can also take on many forms such as monetary, reward, promotion, work/life balance, workplace environment, and multiple other options. In order to gain a better understanding of what truly motivates employees, particularly in the business and finance environment, this paper will examine the various elements that lead to a motivated employee. Anderson (2020) stated that rewards actually produce results, making employees feel as if their contributions are being recognized. The acquisition of more and better knowledge, of what motivates an employee in the workplace, allows managers and employers to utilize multiple motivating factors, thus increasing an organization’s employee-production rates and promoting a healthy workplace environment.
Statement of the Problem

Employees are the back-bone of a successful business, yet many times they can be taken for granted and overlooked for the bottom line. Properly motivated employees can make an enormous difference, without many additional resources, in terms of time and money, needing to be spent. Far too often workplace problems can arise and unfold without the managers or business owners even knowing about any issues, as stated in Pynnönen and Takala (2018). Motivation to complete ones job traditionally can be broken down to being financially rewarded for time and effort. However, the problem with only using monetary motivation is that is a singular factor. Matsumura and Kobayashi (2008) wrote that the standard performance incentive is wages and that organizations need to increase non-monetary utility. There are multiple factors to consider as motivators other than compensation. Modern employees are demanding more than a simple paycheck from their employers. Morgan (2016) stated that employees measure their intrinsic satisfaction not only against the money they earn from their efforts, but against what they gain in self-esteem and from their satisfaction with the work environment and the work culture. Employees are looking for and demand a sense of belonging to one’s company and community. Afzal and Kumar (2018) wrote that intrinsic motivators include self-respect, personal growth and development. Modern employee’s uses intrinsic motivators as a way to associate themselves as a part of the organizations culture. Employees want to be a part of an organization that they can be proud to work for and that the employees can connect to on an individual level. Anderson (2020) stated that we should not understate the role of individual employees in a functioning organization. Employees should no longer be viewed as singular units, but as collective parts of an entire system and organization. If one employee is mistreated, that is likely to share with others, inside and beyond the organizations bounds. Michelson and V
(2002) wrote that scenarios such as these are played out on an almost daily basis in organizations. Michelson and V (2002) continued by suggesting individual employees regularly exchange information that may not strictly be termed as formal communication or public discourse between one another. An organization needs to be aware of how they treat or act around their employees, especially when using various motivational techniques. Otherwise the organization may risk internal or external scrutiny that would be contradictory to their motivational efforts.

Gone are the days of simply clocking in and clocking out. Employees and individuals make social connections to their job role and employment status. Employment and the employer have become a part of who an employee is within today’s society. Modern workers are looking for belonging in and out of the workplace. After all workers spend a majority of their awake hours a week, not at home with their families, but in the office with their coworkers and employers. In order to properly motivate employees, managers and employers must look past simply compensating employees and look into multiple motivation techniques, across a wide range of factors, to create the best workplace and office environment possible.
Significance of Study

The research, for this literature review-based seminar paper, will serve as a modern guide to managers and employers. Research by Guillén, Ferrero, and Hoffman (2015) supported the understanding that what motivates employees is essential to the success of organizational objectives. As the world and generations change, so must management’s techniques for motivating employees in the workplace. The current and upcoming generations of employees are much different than past generations. A one-size-fits-all way of motivating employees, in hopes of achieving their full potential, no longer applies. By understanding what motivates employees in the workplace, managers and employers can more easily bridge the gaps between different ranges of employees. According to Springer (2011), bank employees face myriad concerns specific to their field including low pay, high turnover, and problems with both job motivation and job satisfaction. Business workplaces are full of people with different backgrounds and experiences. The goal should be to bring everyone together to be as productive as possible, all while maintaining a workplace environment that is positive and open for all involved parties.
Literature Review

Monetary Reward

Earning compensation and a living wage is the main reason that most people go to work or seek employment. It is the lifeblood of motivation to show up every day and to do the job as required. Monetary rewards are used as the primary form of motivation for businesses and employers. This practice is supported by Rynes, Gerhart, and Minette (2004), who wrote that pay is a very important motivator. Without monetary rewards workers would not be willing or able to do the things they do and live the lives that they wish to live. It has been used for hundreds of years, as a way to motivate and reward employees. Brooks and Fenner (2018) wrote that materialistic behavior can be extrinsically motivated by monetary goals to increase individual identity, status, and happiness that can affect employee performance and organizational outcomes. Rynes, Gerhart, & Minette (2004) continued this concept when they stated money is not the only motivator and it is not the primary motivator for everyone. However, there is overwhelming evidence that money is an important motivator for many workers. Based on these findings, monetary rewards will continue to be the driving fuel for employers to encourage productive behaviors from their employees for years to come.

Without monetary rewards, as motivation, the prevailing opinion is that most employees would not perform their job responsibilities as directed. It is the main form of motivation used by employers in the business and finance world. Monetary rewards are an agreement between the employer and the employee to fulfill a specific role. Rynes, Gerhart, and Minette (2004) wrote that the broad usefulness of money, as well as its many symbolic meanings, suggests that, far from being a mere low-order motivator, pay can assist in obtaining virtually any level on Maslow’s motivational hierarchy, including social esteem and self-actualization. The employer
agrees to compensate an employee a certain amount of currency, in return the employee agrees to perform the tasks required of the assigned job. Based on this definition, monetary rewards can seem like a simple give-and-take form of an agreement. Many people would agree that the more an employee is paid, the harder and more productive that employee will be. However, for this to be the case, monetary rewards need to be used properly and correctly.

Employers need to pay their employees based on multiple factors. One of these factors is performance. Rynes, Gerhart, and Minette (2004) state that employers need to evaluate current pay systems with respect to the strength of pay-performance relationships with their employees. If an employee is performing at a satisfactory level, or the employee is exceeding the job requirements, additional or increased monetary reward may be a suitable motivating factor to continue the hard work. An employee whose performance is stalled or who is overworked may also be monetarily rewarded with bonuses or available overtime in order to be sure that they can perform the duties of their job properly. This is the case in many financial businesses, when departments that are excelling in their production rates are rewarded with a year-end bonus or with corresponding compensation raises. Managers and employers can also motivate people to work longer or more hours by providing time and a half or overtime pay to those workers. In finance, often a department may become overburdened by the amount of work to be completed in a given week. By compensating employees appropriately, the employee can be motivated to work the additional time needed to complete their tasks.

Monetary rewards also have some downfalls. Overpaying an employee can actually lead to a decrease in productivity. Employers need to be sure that employees are monetarily compensated in comparison of the individual’s performance and job responsibilities. The employee who is overpaid has no reason to try to excel at the assigned position. The reward of
monetary compensation is no longer a motivating factor for this employee. Guga (2012) wrote that employees can become stagnant. This means that a part of the employees entered a routine state and they are satisfied with what they already have. Employers cannot simply pay employees more and expect corresponding positive outputs. There are limits to be considered when determining an employee’s compensation level, such as existing pay rate, production rate, and equivalent pay scales. Shaw (2017) stated that monetary rewards should be based on job performance and that the employee who works harder or who is more talented should be rightly recognized by the organization.

Furthermore, employers need to be sure to not out-price their employees and job positions. If an employee is earning more money that their position calls for, in terms of production and profit, an employer can overpay their employee and be in a negative position. Shaw (2017) called for compensation to be equivalent to the nature of the job itself. Meaning that some jobs require more training, experience, and education than others. Certain jobs in the finance industry simply do not call for the same compensation levels as others based on job responsibility, required cognitive abilities, and production outputs. Employees need to be paid and rewarded on a positional and performance basis. Without proper evaluations and determination of the employee’s positional worth, employers could potentially lose out on earnings because the position/costs-breakdown is out of balance. When the equilibrium of profits to pay scale are not compatible, it may lead to certain employees being paid more than the positions itself calls for or demands. Business leaders must be sure that the amount of compensation an employee is earning is within position and industry standards. An example of overpaying an employee can be seen when longer tenure employees reach the end of their employment cycles. Often a business will look to move these employees towards retirement and
fill the positions with less expensive replacements in order to balance the scale. Massingham and Tam (2015) stated that there are two variables to consider: pay and work activity. Pay must match the value created by work. A business that is known for not compensating its employees fairly can gain an unfavorable reputation in the industry and eventually lead to an unmotivated current and potential work force. Likewise, over-compensating employees may cost the business more than the job itself is worth. A table of monetary rewards are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1

*Positive vs. Negative Monetary Reward Characteristics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Characteristics</th>
<th>Negative Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ Earn a Living Wage</td>
<td>☐ Stagnate Work Behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Achieve Self-Actualization</td>
<td>☐ Job Requirements Dictate Pay Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Provide Financial Stability</td>
<td>☐ Declining Production Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Elevated Production</td>
<td>☐ Profit/Income Based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Increased Motivation</td>
<td>☐ Decreased Motivation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Table 1 represents the positive and negative characteristics associated with monetary rewards.
Promotions

One’s ability to self-advance and climb the ladder, within an organization, is another example of a motivational force within financial intuitions. Promotions can be used to encourage proper behaviors and increase employee production rates. When an organization sets a standard of promoting individuals, within their existing organizational structure, they are giving their employees something more to work for. Employees can become more encouraged to do their current job roles, to the best of their abilities, in hopes of receiving a promotion in the future. Takahashi and Ufniversity (2006) stated that career advancement influences the workers’ behaviors and attitudes, such as motivation and organizational commitment, particularly in the case of stable employment. If a current position is not an end, the organizations employees can look forward to the opportunity to advance and take on additional responsibilities in the future. Promotions can give employees the motivation they need to strive towards higher goals. By receiving a promotion an employee might gain the satisfaction and recognition that they have worked hard to receive. Chan (1996) wrote that internal promotions can serve as a reward for efforts given by current workers. Supported by Bossler and Grunau (2019) who wrote that internal promotion to managerial positions are important to both employers and employees. Bossler and Grunau (2019) continued by stating that internal promotions can have a large impact on worker and firm performance and job satisfaction. With a promotion an employee can also gain a new title and corresponding pay increase. Promotions can be in title only, however the general case of a true promotion is a higher title and corresponding increase in compensation. Using motivational factors, such as monetary reward and promotions, is a topic that will be discussed in more depth later in the procedure chapter of this paper. Promotions are an effective
way to motivate employees and to increase an employee’s organizational and external social status.

Effective promotions can also be used as a hiring tool. By setting a standard for internal promotions, business can attract new talent with the promise of hard work paying off and employees having the ability to advance within the organization. In financial institutions, promotions with front line workers such as tellers, customer service representatives, and loan processors can be an effective way to motivate and retain employees. If entry level employees know that they have the ability to become heads of their departments or move into different and higher positons within the organization, they are more apt to be motivated in their current positons. Chan (1996) writes that internal promotions motivate employees to extend effort when they have a high chance of success. New and young talent especially can be influenced with the ability to advance within an organization. Community-sized institutions can use promotions as a way to attract young employees over large, nationwide institutions by providing qualified individuals the ability to advance faster than they may have in large financial institutions.

One pitfall of internal promotions, as a motivating factor, is the loss of external or new, higher-qualified candidates. A business that promotes internally, however, may increase internal motivation and happiness amongst its existing members and be willing to lose out on qualified external candidates, which might be perceived as a riskier potential gain. These missed candidates could have brought years of experience or outsider knowledge to the organization that could make a difference in all areas of the organization including motivation, though. Chan (1996) wrote that external candidates need to be considered when qualifications are significantly superior to existing ones. By not allowing or introducing other individuals into the organization, the current environment can flatten out and become increasingly resistant to change. This
Resistance to change can lead to more difficult challenges to motivate current employees or make positive changes in processes. An organization needs to have a balanced approach to using promotions as a motivating factor. If there is a need for an open position within the organization, a proper evaluation needs to be conducted to determine if a current member of the organization could be promoted to fill the role or if the organization would benefit from a new hire. For an organization, new ideas and thoughts can be an overall boon to the organization. These new ideas might lead to the establishment of more productive motivational techniques. New hires can have a similar effect as hiring a third-party consultant would have but the organization is benefiting by truly bringing a new person on as a team member. Furthermore, a new hire can help diversify the organization’s motivational processes by offering new, unique insights. Bossler and Grunau (2019) wrote that hiring external managers can be an effective way to diversify one’s managerial positions. Creating a different influence on the existing internal environment of the organization.

Another factor that can deter promotions from being a motivating factor is employees who become content in their current role. Making a promotion nearly always factors into account employee ability, motivation, and experience, according to Furnham and Petrides (2006). Some workers can become satisfied with their current job and responsibilities. They do not desire to take on any more work or roles that they do not already perform. An employee may also not have the ability or qualifications that a promotion entails. In cases such as worker contentment, promotions may actually decrease an employee’s motivation. This decrease in motivation can stem from the worker becoming over worked or from assuming too much responsibility. Panait and Panait (2018) stated that negative effects on the motivation of the staff include: unpleasant ambience or excessive stress; as well as a perceived very stable salary policy. An organization
having an overly stable salary policy eliminates the effectiveness of promotions by not correspondingly increasing compensation with a given promotional title. As stated by Ryan and Wallace (2016), salaries and the elimination of the reliance on overtime need to create a mutual gain or “win-win” between employee and employer. The worker may not want to have the additional stress that can come with a promotion and might be perfectly happy in the current role. Knowing employees is key to avoiding promoting an individual who does not want the promotion. The employer should speak with direct supervisors, as well as the employee, before offering a particular promotion. Direct supervisors will know the individual workers the best and can offer insights about who would be ready for a promotion. Employee performance evaluations and direct inquiries about employee desires and aspirations within the organization could be an effective way into gaining employee aspirational desires. Guga (2012) wrote that managers must allocate a greater amount of time for the evaluation interviews and be more open when it comes to the subordinates' initiatives. Business leaders can ask an employee if new or different responsibilities are desirable. Having open discussions between employers and employees can enable the employers to offer employees the proper promotions. Fu, Qian, and Liu (2018) wrote that employees must have the need for advancement, growth, and accomplishment in order for promotions to be an effective managerial tool. Based on the employee and employer conversations and observations, an employer can make the proper promotion to the correct employee.

**Workplace Environment**

Creating a healthy and friendly workplace environment can be an important factor when attempting to motivate a business’s employees properly. Employees want to work in a place that they feel comfortable. Schappe & Doran (1997) wrote that fair procedures were a critical aspect
of the “quality of work life” and were essential to good employer-employee relations. Motivated employees enjoy their job within their workplace and give outstanding performance, as compared to less motivated employees, according to Khan and Wajidi (2019), who stated motivated employees will definitely provide the best possible working environment to the team members with enhanced motivation, resultantly increasing the organization’s productivity. In order to use the workplace environment, as a motivating factor, a business must first establish a positive and safe workplace culture. Employees need to be comfortable with one another and not feel as if they are being over watched or overly controlled. An employer’s responsibility is to give the employees necessary tools to do their job correctly. It is not the employer’s job to do the work for the employee. An employer must have trust in the employee’s capabilities. Otherwise, the employer risks alienating employees and creating a culture where employees do not feel respected for the work they complete. A situation like this can be described as a “toxic work environment.” Employees in a toxic workplace environment tend to gossip or talk behind the backs of others, instead of openly with one another. Kotter and Cohen (2002) stated that workplace environments similar to this situation would have a lack of trust and the vision of the organization would not be shared by all members.

Creating a positive workplace environment evolves from the top of the organization down. Brooks and Fenner (2018) stated intrinsic motivation can increase organizational commitment through internal satisfaction, dictate workplace behavior, and improve task performance and teamwork. Leaders of the organization need to empower their employees in order to promote trust and open communication channels. Employees who trust their managers and employers can be more motivated to complete the work tasks that they are assigned. Trust is a major factor for most successful organizations. Kotter and Cohen (2002) stated that trust
enables the right team to work well together. Without trust, employees can feel belittled and unsure about their own or others’ capabilities. Employers do not need to control every aspect of the employees’ work life, but instead trust that they are performing appropriately. Putting trust in ones employees can motivate them to do their work to the best of their abilities. This concept was supported by Morgan (2016), who wrote that trust is the ultimate ingredient that transforms individuals into a collective, focused, and committed team. If an employee knows that the manager or employer trusts them, that employee will have more pride in a job well done, as it can be more of an original piece verses something that just anyone could do. A table of positive workplace environments are shown on Table 2.

Table 2

Positive Workplace Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Workplace</th>
<th>- Increased Employee Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Empowered Employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Promotes Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Builds &quot;One Team&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Elevated Production Rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Increased Motivation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Table 2 lists the characteristics of a positive workplace environment.
Establishing open communication channels is another way to increase employee motivation to complete job responsibilities. By establishing trust and open communication an employer can enable an employee to make individual choices and decisions, while at the same time encouraging them to ask questions or for help when needed. Open communication channels not only promote a positive work environment, but help build relationships among organizational members. Denton (1993) called open communication a competitive weapon for businesses and one that needs constant improvement. Employees, who feel that they can openly discuss work topics with each other, and superiors can feel more motivated to take on additional tasks and responsibilities. Since the employees know they can openly communicate for advice or help, employees can be more motivated and accepting to take on any additional projects when requested. By establishing an open communication channel between workers and managers, businesses can increase their productivity and create a healthy, open work environment.

Although employers want to create a trustful and open communication environment for their employees, two areas need to remain clear. First, employees need to remain on task. Employers who put trust in their employees need to be sure that their trust is not being taken for granted and that work is still being completed efficiently and effectively. If an employer notices that a particular employee or group of employees are sluffing off or not completing their job duties, due to the trust that has been given to them, it is the manager’s and employer’s responsibility to get them back on task and be sure that they are completing their work effectively. This was supported by Guga (2012), who stated employees are aware that only working together as part of a team, in a good environment, can they perform a profitable activity, both for the company and for themselves. In order to reestablish a positive work ethic, all while maintaining high trust levels, employers need to address behavioral issues head on. By holding
and conducting individual meetings or department meetings, managers can determine that the trust employees are given has not be taken for granted and that managers and employees are mutually respected. An employer can ask that employees present their completed work for approval before submitting final products. This can help ensure that work is being completed accurately and in a timely manner. Ultimately it is the manager’s or employer’s responsibility for the work that is completed. In the financial industry, the use of workflow pipelines and spreadsheets can also be utilized. By using pipelines and spreadsheets, employers can see exactly which employees have what files and where they are along in the process. This enables managers and employers to address issues as they arise or even before they become an issue.

Secondly, employers need to be sure that the open communication channels are not also being taken for granted. According to Rahman, Osman-Gani, Momen, and Islam (2015), a leader’s communication skill is one of the important factors which significantly influences the strength of relationships and motivational effectiveness between leadership and staff. Open communication channels can be great for workflow and can also be used to help relieve job stresses for employees by enabling employees to talk to someone when or if needed. However, open communication channels need to stay on point and not lead to other distracting conversations. To counteract any miscommunication, managers and employers can make slight changes to workstations or personnel. Making a slight adjustment to an employee’s workstation can help keep that employee on task and less distracted. This adjustment can be as simple as providing a different chair or desk. Adding dual monitors can also help, because they can save on paper and time at the printer that can lead to distractions; further, dual monitors speed time on task when cross-checking information or transferring information is necessary. Certain departments can be moved to different areas of the office based on their roles and relations.
Furthermore, switching personnel or introducing a new department member can help switch up the dynamic of a work group. This theory has been supported by Crumpton (2013), who stated that staff reorganizations and work-related priorities will create different organizational structures that help maintain accountability for individual work functions. Adding additional roles or responsibilities can motivate employees to remain on task. When individuals get new or additional tasks to complete, they tend to focus more on the task at hand and less to the other distractions that are around them. Again, this example leads to the employee becoming refocused and could motivate the employee to complete assigned job duties.

**Constructive Feedback**

Managers and employers should give employees feedback on their job and their performance. Using constructive or positive feedback methods can help motivate employees into keeping up their hard work. Kaymaz (2011) wrote that enough scientific research has established the positive effect of performance feedback on motivation. In an office and financial setting there are many different jobs and job responsibilities. Job positions such as analytics, processing, customer service, and bookkeeping require much attention to detail and often meticulous work. A manager or employer can make a huge difference by acknowledging the work that is completed in a timely and accurate manner. Giving employees constructive and positive feedback, for the work that they have completed, is a simple and nearly zero cost way to motivate employees, as well as reinforce desired behaviors. Supported by Zheng, Diaz, Jing, and Chiaburu (2015), who wrote that positive feedback produces an increase in employee performance.

After all, it can be the little things that make an enormous difference. Constructive feedback does not take much time, as a manager or employer, and comes with zero to little
financial cost. All it takes is a small bit of effort. This small bit of effort can make a significant impact on daily work life and employee attitudes. Simply knowing that their work is being noticed and appreciated can have a large, positive impact on the psychological health of employees. By plainly providing a follow-up email, a personal phone call, or taking the time to stop and say “thank you,” managers and employers can motivate their employees. Constructive and positive feedback can lead to feelings of gratitude and a sense of accomplishment, which in turn will lead to the employee’s willingness to continue to keep up the reinforced behaviors. Guerrero, Chènevert, Vandenberghè, Tremblay, and Ahmed Khalil (2018) stated that positive feedback leads to psychological empowerment and intrinsic task motivation.

Employers need to be sure that constructive feedback is warranted and not generic. Shaw (2017) wrote that employees are motivated by many things, one of them is the desire to be fairly treated. Employers need to be sure that the employees receiving the positive reinforcements are truly deserving of the feedback. Constructive feedback should not be overused or given out without the employees deserving recognition. Doing so, without true cause, could lead to the reinforcement of improper behaviors. Furthermore, giving all employees the same generic feedback, without being specific, can also lead to the feedback not being a beneficial tool. A generic response removes the effectiveness that a personal message would bring to the employee. Employers need to be aware that employees talk to each other and if all employees receive the same feedback, they will eventually figure out that the feedback used was not something in particular to what they did but just something that is said to everyone.

Feedback also needs to be directed in a constructive and positive manner. Providing negative or deconstructive feedback can have the opposite of desired results. Kim, Choi, and Verma (2017) stated that repeated negative motivation could have an adverse effect and
undermine the intended motivation. Managers need to be sure that the feedback they are providing is not degrading or explicitly pointing out errors that were made by the employee. The provided feedback should also not pick out that the work completed or submitted was merely adequate and could have been better if the employee had done something differently. Instead the work can be accepted, at its current stage, and a suggestion offered that might make the process easier or more efficient moving forward. It is important to not belittle the employees when providing feedback messages. Kaymaz (2011) stated that feedback is the most important tool used to achieve internal control in the process of personal homeostasis in situations at work. Providing negative-toned feedback to employees can un-motivate the employee and deter them from wishing to accept feedback in the future, regardless of tone. A manager who only offers feedback when a mistake has been made is someone that other employees can come to loathe to speak to and work with. Zheng, Diaz, Jing, and Chiaburu (2015) stated that the continued use of negative feedback lowers employee motivation and reduces employee performance. When approached by a manager who only provides negative feedback, employees and coworkers can instantly put up a wall of defense and not fully understand the message that is being conveyed.

**Chain-of-Command**

The pulling of one’s rank or using one’s title is another force that can be used to motivate employees. This method should generally not be used unless the circumstances call for it. Such circumstances could be when an employee is refusing to do a certain task or is unsure about a specific task. In the finance industry cashing out-of-network checks, gaining account approval, or making credit decisions are areas where one’s title or rank can be used. Pulling rank or using one’s title at times has a negative tone, but in reality, can be an extremely useful tool to motivate employee actions. The use of chain-of-command is used as a motivating factor to get work done
that would otherwise be stalled out or not be completed. According to Crumpton (2013), the clearer the chain-of-command, the more effective the decision-making process and greater the efficiency. By pulling one’s rank, business leaders can expedite a work process. In finance, someone with a higher credit limit or the ability to approve credit, can pull rank to forego the credit committee process. This tremendously speeds up the loan approval process and allows for better customer service. Employees who can approach a superior officer and use their ability to pull rank can more confidently do their work and in turn be more motivated to take on tasks because they know that they have the support of those above them.

However, pulling one’s rank can also have negative repercussions. By pulling rank or using chain of command too regularly, employees can begin to resent being told what to do or being bossed around. According to Pynnönen and Takala (2018), authoritative leadership is widely considered to be negative and to have destructive consequences, usually on the followers. Using one’s title or position needs to come naturally. Employees need to respect those in charge based on their actions and their job responsibilities, not simply because one person out-ranks them or is their superior. There is a time and a place to use the higher position to get things done but it is not appropriate for every situation. A good leader and superior officer in the finance industry leads by expertise, knowledge, and experience, not only by command. Employees are more motivated by an individual in a position of power, who inspires them to be better than they are, than by someone who orders or demands them to be better.

Consequences

The use of consequences, as a motivating factor, can be a tricky subject. Consequences are a “do this or else” way to motivate an employee. Consequences can be as severe as if the work is not completed by end of day, “you are fired.” Consequences tend to draw a line in the
sand and mark a clear “what if” situation. The harsher the consequence, the more motivating the consequence can become. Managers and employers should really only consider issuing hard consequences as a last resort. Pynnönen and Takala (2018) stated that management-by-fear can be defined as abusive behavior involving either creating threats or utilizing existing threats in order to get personal and/or organizational gain. Do so only if other motivating factors fail to complete the objective. Using harsh consequences can lead employees to become angered and frustrated with the way that management is treating them. An employee who is given such an ultimatum, as a motivating factor, can come to resent the person who has given them the “this or that” choice. Short term usage of consequences, as motivation, can have an effective impact because the work will get done on its scheduled time. Supported by Pynnönen and Takala (2018), who stated that, at least in the short run, fear and threats can result in positive outcomes. However, long-term consequences can have negative impacts on the relationship between employer and employee.

Consequences, as a motivating factor, can potentially also serve as a wakeup call for an employee or group of employees. Sometimes people need to be shocked into realizing that they are not fulfilling the duties of their job to their fullest potential or the organization’s expectations. The issuance of consequences as a motivational technique can show employees the seriousness of the issues at hand. It also shows that a manager or employer will no longer accept the current norms or employee behaviors that are being exhibited. Using consequences to motivate employees can have a drastic impact on their focus and attention to detail. Business leaders should use consequences with the seriousness that they entail. Petry, Mujica, and Vickery (1998) stated that consequences can lead to a substantial amount of workplace pressure and that pressure can lead to cutting corners, trimming work, or the engagement of cover-ups. If a consequence is
stated, the manager must follow through with that consequence if the stated terms are not met or if a discrepancy is found. If the manager fails to follow through with the stated consequences, the technique might lose any potential impact and becomes nothing more than empty threats. Using empty threats can have a devastatingly negative impact on employee and employer relations.

**Training**

Upon further review of the research conducted, employee training has stood out as another vital way to increase motivation among employees. Properly trained employees, especially new hires, set the stage for generating a positive workplace environment. The establishment of a motivated workforce begins on day one. It can be much easier to establish behavioral norms from the very beginning of a new hire than to change the norms later on. By creating a culture that demands and generates motivation, employers can use existing norms to train and promote the desired levels of motivation amongst employees. Siti Fardaniah and Shamsuddin (2011) wrote that in order for training to be motivational, it needs to satisfy an employee’s job-related needs, career-related needs, and personal-related needs. Training should be specific to a business’s employees and their job responsibilities. If organizations have experienced and seasoned employees, who are motivated to do their job, the rest of the workforce should tend to follow by the example that is being set.

Employee training initially starts with the businesses existing employees and managers. All members of the organization need to “bee-in” to the organization. Nickerson (2014) described “bee-in” as selecting the right team, gaining commitment, and communicating a unified vision. The establishment of one team or one unit leads employees to begin to work for and with one another. Instead of the employees being for themselves or pitting certain departments against each other, an organization needs to be an interconnected system. In an
interconnected system, all members can help and pick each other up if needed. Employees who can have faith and trust in one another are more likely to be motivated to work harder. The creation of a system among existing employees enables employees to work for something other than themselves and motivates employees to do their best for the entire organization.

New hires or new members to the organization need to be trained from the very beginning in order to motivate proper behaviors. According to Monk (1996), the best way to ensure a positively motivated team is to hire the best people. By first establishing a motivated workforce, the existing members can now be used as examples and trainers for newly hired employees. Without the support of properly motivated employees, training new employees can be difficult. New hires need to see how the company and their coworkers conduct themselves on a daily basis. Highly motivated individuals are able to train their new cohorts in the same effective and efficient manner in which they operate. Monk (1996) wrote regarding employees that on one level of expertise builds on another. New hires can begin to see the importance of the job first hand. Training with a seasoned employee allows for new hires to get a better understanding of the job’s requirements and responsibilities. New hires need to “bee-in” with the rest of the organization. Nickerson (2014) again described “bee-in” as demonstrating respect to build trust and relationships to eliminate fear and uncertainty. Newly hired people can have many fears and uncertainties about their new job. If an employee is to be a motivated individual long term, that motivation will need to start from the very beginning of their tenure.

Properly motivating employees also begins with the top of the organization. Managers and employers need to be fully committed to any motivational technique that employees are expected to follow. Wei-Tao (2006) stated that training has more importance and greater impacts on attitude when supervisors are actively involved in the training methods. By showing
commitment to motivation, managers and employers, are leading by example and stressing the importance to the organization’s entire workforce. Cohen (1990) wrote that training is more effective when managers and employers are supportive of the training and linked to motivations. When business leaders fail to show commitment and seriousness, employees may not be as motivated or trusting of the newly desired motivational methods. Managers also need to show employees the real workplace applications of the training and motivation techniques, according to Cohen (1990). Training needs to have a reason or purpose behind it. The organization should not hold unnecessary training classes, or those without a clear cause. As an example, in the finance industry, employees in the loan department do not need to take the same annual training as people in the customer service department. There may be a few overlapping courses, such as diversity training, but overall courses need to be job specific, as not all the same regulations relate to both positions.

Resistance to training is normal, especially amongst existing or long tenure employees. According to Smith (2005), resistance is natural and to be an expected part of any process. In order to remove resistance and increase motivation, employers need to make it clear that previous behaviors are no longer to be accepted and that this is the new way business is to be conducted. Making a clear distinction between new and old cultures or behaviors is the quickest way for a business to implement change and increase the motivation within the organization’s workforce. Nadim and Singh (2019) wrote that when change is imposed on the organization and its employees from the above, it is generally resisted. To ease natural resistance managers need to lead the new change effort by example, listen to their employees, and involve them in the motivational change process. Smith (2005) stated that by listening to and engaging with those who resist change, rather than simply endeavoring to overcome their opposition, managers have
the opportunity to actively involve and engage people in the change process. Listening to employees and gaining their engagement is key to overcoming resistance. Without the business leader’s commitment to motivation, employees may not be as motivated to new changes and motivational techniques. Having a strong commitment to the new motivational behaviors from the top-down should enable the entire organization to begin to share the same views and vision. Calabrese (2003) wrote that individuals who choose to resist change may do so, but those who stay will untimely become a part of the new culture whether they choose to or not. The longer a new motivational force has the support of an organization’s leaders, the lower the employees’ resistance will become over time.
Positive vs. Negative

Motivational forces can be categorized as either positive or negative. When dealing with positive motivational factors, managers and employers are using motivational methods that encourage member participation, trust, and communication. Factors such as reward, promotion, constructive feedback, environment, and training can all be associated with positive motivational methods. Petrova (2017) stated that in every aspect of motivation through rewards implies positive emotions and satisfaction for the individual. The use of positive motivational methods help the entire organization reach its goals and expectations. Positive motivational techniques are used to create healthy and safe work environments, where all employees feel free to communicate openly with one another. Existing and future employees desire to work for a business that utilizes positive motivational forces. Positive motivational forces can be attributed with long term gains and success for the overall business and working experience. Shaw (2017) stated that granting workers new responsibilities and respect can benefit the entire organization. The use of positive motivational forces provides the responsibility and respect workers need. Businesses that use positive motivational forces are places that employees can be proud to work for and proud to be a part of. Figure 1, as shown in Team (2020), represents positive vs. negative motivation in the workplace.
Note. Figure 1 displays positive vs. negative motivation factors in relation to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors, as stated in Team (2020).

While many of the above listed motivational techniques are associated with positive factors, certain motivational techniques can be more closely related to negative motivational factors. The motivational factors such as chain-of-command, consequences, feedback, and even training, to an extent, can be associated with a negative tone. Kim, Choi, and Verma (2017) write that negative feedback emphasizes an employee’s incorrect responses, weaknesses, and lack of accomplishments. The use of negative motivational forces can have an immediate effect on
desired behaviors and could be used to quickly motivate employees into completing the task at hand. However, the continued use of negative motivational factors can have serious long-term consequences. Wicker, Brown, and Al (1991) stated negative-based values increased when goals were considered necessary rather than freely chosen. Continuing to use negative motivational forces can lead to mistrust and a breakdown of communication channels between employees and business leaders. Lawrence and Robinson (2007) wrote that although organizational control and power are often designed to diminish workplace deviance, they also have the capacity to incite it. The long-term longevity of the business should not be built on the fears of consequences or repercussions for not completing one’s job responsibilities. Businesses with high amounts of negative motivational factors can experience overall lower employee job satisfaction and higher turnover rates. Banks and other financial institutions already experience high turnover rates, according to Springer (2011). Negative motivational factors could make employee turnover numbers even more dramatic for banks and businesses. Employees can become burned out more quickly in negative workplace environments and ultimately lead to lower production and service levels.

The intended use of the motivational factors has a large impact on how it can be interpreted by employees and staff members. Both positive and negative motivational factors need to be used for their intended purpose effectively. Managers and employers can effectively use motivational factors by being clear and decisive with their actions and decisions. Scott (2017) stated that organizations can also use extrinsic motivators as well as intrinsic motivations, such as recognizing employee efforts, listening to their concerns, acting on their suggestions and offering training opportunities. If manager’s or employer’s intended use for a motivational force is to have positive or negative recourses among employees, the manager or employer must use
the motivational force accordingly. As an example, if a training seminar or provided feedback on a project is intended to be positive and help the employee grow, business leaders need to be sure that the way the motivational force is presented is corresponding to the leader’s intent. This can be done with a personal message or meeting; a manager and employer must be sympathetic to the situation and have a mutually beneficial discussion with the employee. The employee does not want to have a feeling of belittlement or embarrassment. Nor should the employee feel as if they have been called out individually, especially in front of their peers. Xu, Payne, Horner, and Alexander (2016) stated that employees desire to be treated fairly by managers and will react more favorably when fairness is perceived. In order to receive desired results, the application and intended purpose of positive or negative motivational factors is critical to consider.

As important as using motivational forces for their intended purpose is, as a manager and employer, being aware of how employees will receive the motivational force is equally important. Different employees receive and interpret situations differently. The use of one motivational factor, such as training, could be a positive growth opportunity for one employee but a degrading experience for another. Xu, Payne, Horner, and Alexander (2016) wrote that some individual differences that are important to consider when understanding reactions to change include an individual’s willingness to change, ability to manage changing demands, and dispositional resistance to change. Being aware of the potential pluses and minus of both positive and negative motivational factors will not only increase the effectiveness of the motivational technique but can also decrease the chance of the motivational factor being received negatively. Having solid, open communication channels in place will help erase any confusion between manager and employee. Kotter and Cohen (2002) described the creation of buy-in by using wide communication channels to get as many people, as possible, acting towards a certain reality.
Furthermore, having a supportive base of coworkers and a positive workplace environment already in place will help ease the process. If employees view a manager’s actions as being in their best interest, the employees may receive motivational forces in a more positive manner. Likewise, if the employees tend to view than manager as strict or stern, the motivational factor that is being presented could have a more negative tone and effect, regardless of intended purpose. Despite a manager’s or employer’s intended purpose, one’s reputation may become a determining factor in how motivational forces are perceived and received by employees.

**Combinations**

Rarely is there ever a one-answer-fits-all to any sort of problem requiring attention or a solution. The use of motivational techniques in the workplace is no different. Tesone (2005) wrote that individuals evolve throughout their working lives and empirical evidence suggests that socialization needs are a priority with younger workers, only to be replaced by more self-actualizing and self-esteem needs with age. The use of only one motivational force is unlikely to be overly successful with a large or diverse workforce. Similarly the application of motivational forces as a one-time application will not have lasting consequences. Gneezy, Meier, and Rey-Biel (2011) wrote about “crowding out” and that the use of only one form of motivation, whether extrinsic or intrinsic, can have diminished returns over time. Various motivational techniques require to be used in combinations and used repeatedly, over an extended period of time, in order to draw on their desired effects. Without continuous reinforcement, the desired behaviors and motivational levels of employees will begin to venture off and back to their previous outputs. By using a combination of motivational techniques, managers and employers can keep their employees engaged and not lose any momentum gained by the application of particular motivational techniques.
The use of multiple motivational techniques should also complement each other. Motivational factors such as monetary reward and promotion can be combined to have even greater desired effects. As stated previously, these two motivational factors typically go hand-in-hand. The reason for this is because together, monetary rewards and promotions are more effective than they would be by themselves. Grynko, Krupskyi, Koshevyi, and Maximchuk (2017) wrote that labor motivation is a new payment system, in which wage growth depends not only on production, but on the training and increase in the number of assimilated employees. Most employees do not want a promotion that is in title only. A title only promotion could mean more responsibility for the same amount of pay. This form of motivation offers the employee no real benefit. Monetary rewards without increased organizational status are also a short term solution. They provide an employee with immediate and momentary satisfaction but do not provide the continuous long term reward, as a new role and position would do in combination. This concept is supported by Rynes, Gerhart, and Minette (2004), when they quoted former General Electric CEO Jack Welch, “The money isn’t enough, but a plaque isn’t enough either. You have to give both.” Another positive combination includes promotions and training. If an organization invests time, money, and other resources in an employee’s training, the business should utilize that employee within the existing organizational structure. Businesses can do this by promoting the employee into a higher organizational position and grant increased responsibilities. The use of motivational techniques such as constructive feedback and workplace environment are other great examples of complementing motivational methods. In order to promote a healthy and positive workplace, managers and employers can provide constructive and gainful feedback to their employees. The positive feedback helps promote and motivate behaviors that are deemed acceptable to the organization. Meanwhile, constructive feedback and
the healthy workplace environment in combination deter motivational forces that are unrepresentative of the business’s current and desired culture.

Another effective combination of motivational techniques is the use of complimenting methods. Complimenting methods use two unrelated or different motivational techniques together. This motivational procedure allows for the strengths of each motivational technique to positively complement the other. An example of complimenting methods would be the use of constructive feedback and consequences. Constructive feedback enables the manager to directly interact with the employee, meanwhile consequences can be used to show the employee what would have happened had it not been for their actions or decisions. Providing an employee constructive and positive feedback for their actions gives the employee the positive motivation they require for their work. Simultaneously, consequences can be used to outline what would have happened or what the situational results would have been had it not been for the employees actions, thus praising the employees efforts for a job well done. Wiegand and Geller (2005) wrote that many people work to avoid failure in some, if not multiple, areas of their lives. The combination of feedback and consequences gives the employee a sense of reward by reinforcing their correct decision, all while outlining the seriousness of the situation. The use of chain-of-command and training is also an example of complimenting methods. Using the chain-of-command to bring an employee under direct supervision or to train an employee enables the formation of a mentoring relationship. The higher the supervising manager’s position within the organization the more effective chain-of-command and training can be. “Minding the Gap” (n.d.) stated that more seasoned workers have experience that can only be gained from real life encounters, while younger workers have the new ideas and energy that a company needs to stay innovative. The willingness and use of higher-ranking members, within the existing organization,
being used to train or mentor new members can be extremely effective and productive for the growth of the organization. The new and seasoned employees can feed off of each other for energy and knowledge. Billett (2003) wrote that evidence points to the potential efficacy of mentoring in the workplace to develop the kinds of outcomes required to improve an organization’s workplace capacities. This complimenting method allows for the younger or new employee to gain the knowledge and insights of their superior, all while the superior employee can get the energy and new perspectives provided by the young employee. Lyons and Perrewé (2014) stated that most research showed that mentorships with positive outcomes also had high-quality interpersonal relationships. The closer the bond between mentor and protégés, the more effective and lasting the mentorship will be. Figure 2 illustrates positive combinations that can be used to motivate employees.

**Figure 2**

Positive Motivation Combinations

- Monetary Rewards → Promotion
- Promotion → Training
- Constructive Feedback → Workplace Environment
- Chain-of-Command → Training
Note. Figure 2 illustrates the combination of positive motivational factors.

A motivational combination that needs to be used more cautiously or avoided all together is the use of double negatives. Double negatives are when a manager or employer uses two negative toned or derogatory motivational techniques simultaneously. Negatively toned motivational factors should be used singly or in combination with positive motivational techniques. Negative motivational techniques carry enough weight on their own and do not require the combination with other negative motivational factors. The combination of two negative motivational techniques can have a doubly negative desired effect on employee morale and employee performance or motivation. According to Mardanov and Cherry (2018), “Negative acts” refers to abusive behavior that occurs in the workplace – whether it is a verbal assault or the threat of violence against targets. An example of using two negative motivational techniques in combination is the use of chain-of-command and consequences concurrently. When a manager, supervisor, or employer uses phrases such as “do this this or else” and/or “because I am the one in charge,” the negatives can outweigh any potential gains and lead to increased employee resentment and resistance. The employee’s work may get done on time, but the repercussions of double negative combinations can have long term consequences. The long-term consequences will result in more time and effort needing to be placed on the repair of relationships than the building of new relations. Chandrashekar and MH (2019) stated that when de-motivators of a firm are higher, then the firm itself is less likely to be productive. Wasted time on repairing relationships versus building relationships takes away from the desired effect of motivational forces and can cause more harm than benefit over the course of a business situation.
**Time and Place**

Motivational timing can have an enormous impact on the effectiveness of a motivational technique. According to Grynko, Krupskyi, Koshevyi, and Maximchuk (2017), motivation is a conscious desire for a certain type of satisfaction and success. When times are good or when business is coming off of a “win,” it is time to continue and maintain current motivational efforts. Managers and employers do not want to decrease or lower efforts towards motivational forces just because times are good. Instead momentum needs to be maintained in order to continue positive production gains. Kotter and Cohen (2002) stated that wins give those working hard towards a vision a pat on the back and an emotional uplift. Motivation is not a one-time deal or something that can be done only on special occasions. The use of motivation needs to be a consistent and constant process. When the time calls for it, such as a large project or preparation for an exam in the finance industry, motivational efforts can be temporarily increased and then returned to normal levels once the project is complete. However, a manager or employer should not decrease levels to a below normal level following an increased motivational period. Panait and Panait (2018) wrote that once employees become motivated, they try to maintain that state; first and foremost, performance standards must be maintained at a high level. Otherwise a business and financial office can risk losing the achieved momentum and motivation all together.

In an opposite situation, when a business is suffering from tougher times or coming off the “loss” of a deal or client, again now is not the time to decrease or radically change motivational factors. In times of hardship, a manager or employer should begin to look at more positive motivational forces that can be more widely utilized on the existing workforce. Turning towards negative motivational forces can add to the current hardships and continue to deteriorate the existing situation. Tougher times or “losses” are also not an appropriate time to break down
existing communication channels and begin barking out orders. Shaw (2017) wrote that increased stress and low job satisfaction can foster numerous health problems for employees. Shaw (2017) continued with turning to negative motivational forces can lead to lower employee self-esteem and impaired interpersonal relationships. Organizations can instead increase positive motivational forces, as a way to show employees that all employees are in this together and to generate unity. A supervisor can show the employees support by increasing their positivity and enthusiasm during down periods. Panait and Panait (2018) stated that motivation should not be considered and interpreted as an end in itself, but served to achieve high performance, performance being a superior level of accomplishment of purpose. During slower or harder times is a perfect time to reevaluate existing motivational techniques and increase or introduce stronger, more positive methods. A business must either maintain, increase, or improve their motivational techniques when tougher times require it.

Knowing a business’s employees is important when selecting the proper motivational technique to use. Managers and employers need to rely on their professional relationships with employees when selecting an appropriate way of approaching the usage of any motivational technique in the workplace. Ariani (2017) wrote that studies support good social relationships as a way to enhance motivation among peers. Certain employees, whether receiving the motivational force or not, may not react well to receiving motivation in front of others. Some employees react better when a message is delivered in an individual method. While other employees will respond better to group motivations. Holding individual meetings is a great way to be discrete and to maintain confidentiality for employees, especially during monetary rewards or initial promotions. Chain-of-command and consequence are also motivational techniques that are better left to the individual versus the group. Not everyone needs to know what employee is
receiving what particular form of motivation. It is important to respect not only the recipient of a motivational force but the entire group. Ng (2016) wrote that increases in perceived respect promote increases in gratitude toward the organization, which in turn promote increases in perceived organizational embeddedness over time. Managers and employers need to determine whether a motivational factor is better designed for the individual or for the business group as one unit.

Speaking to and providing motivation to groups, departments, or the entire organization needs to be tailored to what is best for the many, not the individual. A manager or employer cannot require the entire organization to relate to the same motivational techniques that are tailored for an individual employee. This idea is supported by Lewis (2011) who wrote that well-known theories of work motivation were conceived with individuals as the unit of analysis, and that they may not apply for groups at work. Group training is an example of an excellent way to provide motivation to the masses. Managers and employers need to be conscientious of the individual members that make up a group. When training in a group setting, an organization does not need to indicate which particular individual requires the training, it can be left to group development. Detsimas, Coffey, Sadiqi, and Li (2016) stated that workplace training that allows employees to systematically develop and upgrade their skills is essential for enduring and sustainable success.

The creation of a healthy workplace is also a key to properly motivating the entirety of the group. The more open the communication channels and the more trust among organizational members the more open employees can be to receiving motivation in a larger setting. Knesek (2015) wrote that feedback when used appropriately should be welcomed by employees and used on a regular daily basis. During a department or organization-wide meeting, providing
constructive feedback that reinforces desired behaviors can be a great way to motivate other employees within the organization to follow along with the rest of the members of the business.

Although the vast majority of motivational situations and business issues will take place within the business’s office, holding an outside-of-the-office event or meeting can be an effective way to present the desired motivational message. Outside-of-the-office events or meetings can also serve as a motivational act in itself. Gray Southon, Todd, and Seneque (2002) stated that moving outside the realm of professional isolation allows for more engagement, combination of skills, and a closer connection to staff. Outside-of-the-office events can be lunches, after work gatherings, or business sponsored events. Hosting outside-of-the-office events for an organization’s employees can be a great way to show not only gratitude towards employees work efforts but as an organization bonding tool. Frangenberg (2016) stated attending a work holiday party or happy hour can be a fun way to engage and network with coworkers in a relaxed setting. Frangenberg (2016) continued that employees and employers should avoid office gossip and make events fun. By limiting office talk or having specific periods assigned to conducting business, at outside-of-the-office events, members of the organizational can get to know each other better and on a more personal level. Employees today demand more than the nine-to-five clock-in and clock-out business environment. They want to have a connection between themselves and their career. Outside-of-the-office events are a great way to encourage organizational members to make better connections to their coworkers and their workplace. Encouraging employees to bond and let off some steam with each other, every now and then can give employees the motivational boost they need.
Conclusion

Motivation in the workplace can come in many different forms. However, one thing that remains consistent is that it is the employees of a business that keep and make the business successful. Conrad, Ghosh, and Isaacson (2015) stated that motivation is operationally defined as the inner force that drives individuals to accomplish personal and organizational goals. Without properly motivated employees, a business is not able to function at a highly successful level. This research-based seminar paper has examined multiple different forms of motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic. The paper has also researched various procedures, as to how to apply the motivational methods to any real-life situation. The findings of this paper come from research being conducted through a multitude of academic texts and scholarly journals.

Positive motivational factors have been shown to be more effective than their negative motivational counterparts. Positive motivational factors reinforce desired behaviors instead of criticizing improper behaviors. Employees who experience positive motivational factors on a consistent, daily basis are more apt to be highly motivated in the workplace. Zeb, Saeed, and ur Rehman (2015) wrote that employees in the banking sector who are properly motivated can have an increased enthusiasm in performing their duties, reduced job stresses, and improved overall employee performance. Employers and managers who utilize positive motivational forces are likely to see a decrease in job turnover rates and job-related stress issues amongst employees. Positive motivational forces give employees the motivation they need and employers the results they desire.

The use of positive motivational forces in combination with each other has also been found to have increased desired results. By combining multiple motivational forces such as feedback and training or monetary reward and promotion employers can utilize the positive
factors of both motivational forces. Employers also need to select the appropriate motivational factor at the right time. Not all employees are going to react the same way to various motivational forces. According to Karanika-Murray and Michaelides (2015), people function and develop most effectively in a workplace that supports motivation and have a higher individual job experience when the workplace climate supports motivational norms and values. Employers need to know their workforce and use the correct motivational factor when the time calls for it. By using the correct motivational factor at the correct time, employers can achieve the results they need to run a highly productive business.

Motivational factors also need to be used on a consistent and daily basis. Not all motivational factors need to be extreme or course altering. It can be the simple things, such as providing positive feedback when an employee does something correctly and effectively. Giving employees small “wins” more frequently can help the business achieve more and larger “wins” in the present and future. This conclusion was supported by Kotter and Cohen (2002) who wrote that short-term wins or victories nourish faith in the process. Employees are the foundation to any business and without the proper motivation and support behind them, employees are not given the tools they need to be successful. Employers and managers need to take pride in their jobs and the performance of their employees. In the successful business, all members of the organization are unified and work as one highly functioning team. Gillet, Vallerand, Lafrenière, and Bureau (2013) concluded that the use of positive motivation led to the most positive outcomes and higher levels of performance. Providing positive motivation to the right employees, at the right time, gives all members of the organization the keys to being successful and motivated in the workplace.
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