

GET YOUR STAFF MOTIVATED!

By Erika Petrelli, *The Leadership Program*

Keeping your staff motivated is a challenge especially when you don't feel motivated. Keep in mind, your staff is looking to you for leadership and direction and with a couple of changes, you can motivate them through your words and actions. Check out these tips for getting yourself and your staff motivated!

- 1 START WITH YOURSELF** - You cannot begin to motivate others if you don't feel motivated yourself. Your energy is contagious and your actions toward your staff communicate more than your words ever will. What can you do to keep your own tank full, so that you can be present to fill the tanks of others?
- 2 APPRECIATE THEM** - More than anything else, people just want to be appreciated. How much are you recognizing, through emails or thank you's, the work that your staff is doing? Are you noticing the little things as well as the big things?
- 3 CREATE A COMMON PURPOSE** - People work harder when they understand the "why" behind what they are doing. Rather than just assigning your staff tasks, involve your staff in the decision making process and explain the context behind decisions that are made without them. Work together to create a company mission and values so that your entire team is working toward a shared vision.
- 4 KNOW YOUR STAFF** - We all have lives that extend beyond the hours and scope of our work. How much do you know about your staff—their families, their hobbies, their other jobs, their pets? The more you know, the more you will understand what they need and how they tick.
- 5 COMMUNICATE CAREFULLY** - When you are communicating with your staff, are you communicating mindfully? When they come into your office with a question or concern, do you stop typing and turn to face them, or do you keep on working? When you send an email, do you begin with a formal greeting, asking them how they are, or do you just get straight to

business? When communicating, always ask yourself "How would I feel if I were on the receiving end of this communication?"

- 6 STOP TALKING** - Someone once said that we have two ears and one mouth for a reason—we should be listening twice as much as we're talking. Make sure you are listening to your staff, empowering them to make their own decisions and do things their way, not always necessarily your way.
- 7 BE WRONG MORE** - If you want a motivated staff, you have to create an environment where failure is okay, where mistakes happen and growth comes from learning, trying again, experimenting. For your staff to feel safe to make mistakes, you have to feel safe making mistakes in front of them—confessing when you are wrong or when you do not have an answer. That doesn't make you weak, that makes you a role model.
- 8 FOCUS ON THE BRIGHT SPOTS** - Often times as leaders, we spend a lot of energy working with staff that are struggling in the job. Instead, why not focus on the "bright spots," shining a light on those whose work is exemplary? Highlighting what's going right showcases for the entire staff exactly what your expectation is, and gives them tangible examples of excellence.
- 9 BE THE THING YOU WANT THEM TO BE** - Never ask your staff to do something that you aren't willing to do, and don't set expectations of performance that you do not follow yourself. If you want to create a motivated staff, use yourself as the example.
- 10 REMEMBER THE ENVIRONMENT** - Staff will be motivated as much by the space where they work as they are by the people within it. How motivating is your space? What is on the walls? How are the desks set up? How much light is there? What feelings are evoked when you walk in? Consider your space a key component in creating the mood of your staff.

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SEE MORE AT: <http://naaweb.org/tip-of-the-week/item/92-get-your-staff-motivated#sthash.zkJg4pZE.dpuf>

OPENING DISCUSSION

Which of these tips resonates with you?

Who has an example of a time when using one of these tips would have been helpful?

What about an example of a time you've used or seen someone else successfully use one of the tips? What was the outcome?

What questions or other thoughts do you have about the article?

APPLICATION ACTIVITY

You notice your staff seem to be on auto pilot, doing what they have to do to get through each day but nothing extra, no buzz or excitement in the air. How would you approach your staff?

It's only Tuesday but you are wishing it was Friday! Three staff out sick yesterday and two more called out today. Lead Teacher Suzie wants to talk with you as soon as possible and Jonathan just informed you he does not want the extra responsibility of coordinating the next parent event. Where would you start?

CLOSING REFLECTION

Thinking about the tips reviewed today, which do you think are your strengths and which ones to could you use to improve your skills? How will you integrate these tips into your work?

CERTIFICATE of PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



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_____ **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT HOURS, EARNED BY:**

CONTENT INCLUDED:

Start With Yourself • Appreciate Your Staff • Create a Common Purpose • Know Your Staff
Communicate Carefully • Stop Talking • Be Wrong More • Focus on the Bright Spots
Be the Thing You Want Them to Be • Remember the Environment

FACILITATOR: _____ **DATE:** _____

| What are three essentials for motivating your staff?

| Explain "Be wrong more."

| Mindful communication is...

Supports Content Areas 7, 8, and 9, Levels 1-4 of the NAA Core Knowledge and Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals