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THE NEW LEADERS

**A LEADERSHIP MANUAL FOR THE
MANAGERS OF THE THIRD MILLENNIUM**



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CHAPTER 5

WHAT OUR STAFF WANT IN ORDER TO GIVE THEIR BEST

“Personally I am very fond of strawberries and cream, but I have found that for some strange reason, fish prefer worms.”

Dale Carnegie

Dale Carnegie’s quotation introduces us to one of the greatest challenges faced by those who manage personnel, i.e. to truly understand the driving forces that mobilize individuals.

In this chapter we set out the results of our investigation of the motivating factors that stimulate people into action and get them involved in the company’s goals and activities.

Take the fish example above. If a fisherman were to put strawberries on his hook and fail to see any fish taking the bait after a while, he might become irritated or demotivated, and wrongly believe that “the fish are not hungry”. This mistaken conclusion would probably lead to further failures in his fishing career.

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We can apply this example to the sphere of motivation of human resources. If I attempt to “motivate” my staff without playing on the factors that TRULY motivate them (or even by using factors which they consider demotivating, while I believe I am motivating them), I might come to the conclusion that “these people have no desire to work”. This conclusion would be as wrong as saying that “the fish are not hungry”.

Let’s therefore banish this idea that people have no desire to work. The correct idea is: “If inadequately motivated, people will give the impression that they have no desire to work.”

If a manager or someone who aspires to a position of leadership has the idea that “people have no desire to work”, firstly it shows that they consider themselves the “effect”. Secondly, it is one of those ideas that influence actions negatively and result in personnel management failures.

If adequately motivated, people will give their best, just as fish will do everything they can to take the bait... if there are worms on the hook.

Let’s delve into the field of staff motivation to dispel some of the confused ideas that exist on the subject.

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Staff motivation is easier to understand if we compare it to a sale. In sales we try to make the customers make a financial effort in order to satisfy some of their needs.

Likewise, in staff motivation we are trying to make our employees make an effort (be more organized,

work harder, pay more attention to quality, visit more customers, be less critical, and so on).

For staff members to make this effort, they have to perceive that they have some advantages to gain and that some of their needs will be satisfied.

In developing societies, the salary at the end of the month may be a sufficiently powerful driver for the employee to make this effort. If I lived in Senegal, where jobs are very scarce and the standard of living is fairly low, being employed and KEEPING my company job would offer me an ongoing opportunity to improve my standard of living and be of itself a powerful source of motivation.

Unfortunately (or fortunately, since it would be hard to live without running water in the house or not to have suitable customers to sell our goods to), the inevitable result of improving standards of living in a country is that our employees will gradually view their salary more and more as something that is owed to them for “the time they spend at the company”. Indeed, just a couple of months after starting the job, their salary begin to be less and less of a motivating factor. It is something they take for granted, or at least that is how the majority of employees come to regard it.

This is not due so much to the employees’ lack of goodwill or bad intentions, but rather to the fact that **a)** often what we are offering them, they would also be able to get from other employers (particularly for some types of jobs for which demand exceeds supply); **b)** the social security system, particularly in Europe, sometimes leads workers to wrongly regard the salary as something that can be taken for granted.

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I am not in any way saying that I agree with the position outlined above. I am simply describing what happens in the majority of cases.

The salary that workers get at the end of the month is no longer sufficient to create motivation and engagement. The evolution in our standards of living has brought with it an evolution in the demands and desires of our employees, and to keep thinking that merely by paying them a salary at the end of the month we are implementing a program of staff motivation is tantamount to saying that “we can continue to meet the demand for utility cars by selling Ford Fiestas”. Not that the Ford Fiesta is a bad car. On the contrary. But the evolution in demand has been such that while the Ford Fiesta was probably the best utility car on the market a few years ago, nowadays it is hard to tell what the customer really wants.

Let’s now go back to our comparison with sales activities. We are asking our employees to make an effort that often requires them to apply themselves energetically; it requires them to overcome some fears, some personal limitations, some mistaken ideas that have been deeply rooted in them for a long time. We are asking them to put themselves to the test, to change.

But what are the “strawberries” or the “worms” we are putting on our hook? We have said that a mere salary is taken for granted. What else should we be putting on our hook?

Some business owners, having got to this point in the book, will probably get angry and criticize what I am saying. “What do you mean?” they might object. “I’m already paying 4,000 Dollars a month for that lazy bones! He should work hard for the salary I give

him, because I pay him at the end of EVERY month!”, and other comments along those lines.

Such reactions, though understandable, are characteristic of the entrepreneurs who really need to continue to read this chapter. Indeed, by holding fast to these opinions they will no doubt have already had many failures in the management of their staff.

Only in developing societies is the salary a truly motivating factor for employees and, even then, it is ONLY such up to a few months after they have been hired. After that, it loses much of its motivational appeal.

To get to the solution of the problem of motivation, we have to evolve and realize that we have to view the person we are managing as an INTERNAL CUSTOMER.

“As an information age company, people are your most important resource. And this resource goes home every night to the community and they either will or will not come back the next morning. The most enlightened companies view all their employees as freelancers who are independent entrepreneurs.”

Ed McCracken

People are a company’s most important asset. We have to know what the drivers are that motivate them and spur them into action, and if we don’t, then we had better study and understand them pretty quickly. Today’s sweeping spread of technology means that the leading companies are those with the ability to hold on to and motivate people. Companies that fail to take this change on board and to introduce policies to motivate and

engage their human resources are doomed to inevitable failure.

AN ERROR IN UNDERSTANDING THE CUSTOMER'S NEEDS INEVITABLY LEADS TO MISSING A SALE

In any sales training course, we are taught that in order to achieve a sale you first have to understand the customer's needs. If I understand the customer's needs, I can position my product (and thus the financial effort the customer will have to make to buy it) as the system the customer has for meeting his own needs.

Let's suppose that I am trying to sell an entrepreneur my motivation and training services and that he, as an entrepreneur, views the fact that everything should be of the highest quality as the most important factor.

I, the salesman, say to him, "Look Mr. Smith, I work quickly and my courses are inexpensive." Would he be motivated by my offer?

Probably not. Since the most important aspect to him is quality, the fact that I work quickly and my courses are inexpensive has demotivated him.

But the point is that I have "demotivated" him in terms of the purchase, while I was apparently saying something that, as far as I was concerned, should have motivated him. In other words, in my view, I was speaking well of my product.

We know very well, in fact, that the most important thing in selling is to find out the customers' needs and **ONLY LATER** to begin to describe our products and services **SO THAT IT IS CLEAR TO THEM**

THAT THESE CONSTITUTE THE SYSTEM THAT WILL SATISFY THEIR NEED.

Although what I am saying is simple, indeed almost obvious, in practice this is **THE MISTAKE THAT MOST OF US MAKE IN STAFF MOTIVATION.**

If I approach employees without knowing their needs, unaware of what really motivates them, and start talking with a view to “selling” them the importance of working hard in the company, of being more accurate, more determined, more persuasive, then I risk ending up with demotivated coworkers.

Why? Because, not knowing what their needs are, there is a risk that I may be putting strawberries, a fork, or a melon on my hook.

At the beginning of my career, when I was still a novice salesman, my most frequent mistake was to begin to describe the merits of my product without having understood my customer’s needs, or simply supposing what they were. My closing ratio was terrible.

As in the fish example, before I put something on my hook, I have to understand what is going to stimulate my internal customers (my staff); otherwise the risk is that instead of motivating them as I think, I will actually be demotivating them.

WHAT MOTIVATES OUR INTERNAL CUSTOMER (OUR STAFF)

We conducted a survey on motivating factors, i.e. the drivers that spur people into action. In this very extensive investigation we submitted a questionnaire to members of staff from various

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different categories, asking them **WHAT THEY WANTED FROM THEIR SUPERVISORS.**

We conducted the survey using a vast and representative sample of workers from diverse business sectors and doing a variety of jobs, though all of them of a subordinate nature. In all likelihood some of your employees, too, acted as “guinea pigs” in this exercise.

The questionnaire we submitted to the employees contained a list of 10 motivating factors and we asked all these employees to rank them in order of importance from 1 to 10, where 1 would be what they most wanted from their supervisors and 10 what they least wanted from them.

However, aware of the fact that employees don't always have clear priorities (indeed, many of our company staff are not Harvard graduates in behavioral sciences and are therefore not able to recognize with certainty the stimuli that drive them to action), we then **ACTUALLY TRIED** to get their supervisors to give them what they had requested. We realized that giving them what they had asked for did not invariably lead to their increased productivity. So we made slight variations in what we were offering the staff until we found the things which, when given to them, would “set them in motion” and boost their productivity with absolute certainty.

We also got the company managers involved in the survey, asking them what they believed their staff wanted.

The results of the survey were surprising and made us realize that in the majority of cases, when business owners or managers were trying to

motivate their staff, they were going fishing with “strawberries hooked to their fishing lines”.

By way of introducing the results of this survey, we will do a little exercise. In the table below you will find ten possible staff motivation factors. Ask yourself the following question:

“What do my employees want from me?”

I would then ask you to rank these 10 factors in order of importance from 1 to 10 (ranking “1” as your most important factor and “10” as your least important one), taking into account your current staff.

<p><i>WHAT DO MY EMPLOYEES WANT FROM ME?</i></p>

(Rank from 1 to 10 in order of importance taking into account your current staff)

Good working conditions

To feel involved in work-related problems

Non-oppressive discipline

Full appreciation for the work done

Management loyalty towards the staff

Good salary level

Job promotions and growing with the company

Understanding and concern about personal problems

Job security

Interesting work

**MANAGERS WHO DEMOTIVATE
EMPLOYEES WHILE THEY THINK THEY
ARE MOTIVATING THEM**

What did you rank as your top three factors? In your view, what are the factors that your staff truly want?

While conducting this study we realized that the factors ranked at the top by managers often did not coincide with what their staff actually wanted. Due to this, we had managers interacting with their staff, thinking that they were motivating them, whereas in fact they were demotivating them.

We must point out that this was not one of those typical political surveys conducted over the phone or where the individuals are handed a questionnaire to fill in. It took years of work to collect the data and test it. However odd the results may seem (but, you'll find that you will eventually agree with them), each time we tried to do something without taking into account the values that emerged from the survey, we ended up with highly demotivated staff.

As the results of this survey gradually emerged, my and my colleagues' first reactions were of surprise and disbelief. We could not understand how the staff could prefer certain specific stimuli rather than others. It didn't seem to be consistent with what our staff themselves were telling us. It was as if, in a hypothetical survey conducted with fish, the latter were telling us that they preferred strawberries and cream, but then in practice would only move into action if we were giving them worms.

The same happens with our staff. Even if they might tell us in words that they wish for other factors, what they really desire is ranked as follows:

1) FULL APPRECIATION FOR THE WORK DONE

In other words, employees **want their supervisors to tell them about the things they have done well and not only those they have done poorly.**

People will not do everything they do in a day wrong. They frequently also do some things well. They may sometimes be behind schedule on specific tasks. But very often they ARE on schedule or even ahead of schedule.

The fact is that when our staff do something well, **THEY WANT US TO TELL THEM ABOUT IT AND TO POINT IT OUT TO THEM.**

In the modern manager's mentality, however, there is this absurd tendency to believe that "whatever has been done well is to be taken for granted and is simply the person's job, so it doesn't deserve to be mentioned". Conversely, what has not been done well, should be pointed out, corrected and immediately brought to the attention of the person responsible for it. The thinking behind this is: "It is more important to draw attention to the things that haven't been done well than to those that have been done well", which means being **UTTERLY demotivating.**

If we wish to have motivated staff, then the above sentence needs to be **REVERSED:**

IT IS MUCH MORE IMPORTANT TO DRAW OUR STAFF'S ATTENTION TO THE THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN DONE WELL THAN TO THOSE

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THAT HAVE BEEN DONE BADLY, because that is the only way to motivate people and “fire them up”.

I am not saying that we should not correct our staff's mistakes or that we should overlook them. In Chapter 10 we will see how we should be acting to correct staff members when they make mistakes and the exact procedure to follow that will not lead to demotivation.

What our employees are asking us is that WHEN THEY DO THINGS WELL WE SHOULD POINT IT OUT TO THEM. Appreciation is in fact what truly moves people into action and improves their performance.

Let's examine the following company situation.

In a company, ten technical members of staff were involved in the following experiment: they were divided into two groups of equal abilities and all the members of the two groups were given ten mathematical problems relevant to their jobs.

The members of the first group, regardless of the results they achieved, were told they should make more effort and improve since their performance had been inadequate. To prove this, they were shown all the problems they had not been able to solve. They were thus advised to apply themselves more to their studies since in two weeks' time, they were told, there would be a second test.

The members of the second group, regardless of the results they achieved, were told they had done well since they had solved correctly many of the problems that had been given to them (in actual fact, they had solved more or less the same number of problems as the first group). Like the members of

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the first group, they too were told they would be given a new test two weeks later.

Well, in the subsequent test, EVERY SINGLE MEMBER OF THE FIRST GROUP GOT WORSE RESULTS THAN THEY DID IN THE FIRST TEST. EVERY SINGLE MEMBER OF THE SECOND GROUP GOT BETTER RESULTS THAN THEY DID IN THE FIRST TEST.

The outcome of the experiment seems to be absurd. It would almost seem that by only telling people what they did well you will boost their thirst for knowledge and productivity.

According to Kenneth Blanchard, author of the best seller *One Minute Manager* and motivation expert, the good manager SHOULD WALK AROUND THE COMPANY AND CATCH PEOPLE WHEN THEY ARE DOING SOMETHING RIGHT. In Blanchard's view, if managers acted this way they would have constantly motivated staff.

Note how the above is in stark contrast with the way we managers usually go about things, our typical mental attitude being something like this: "Let's take a walk around the company to see what a mess they're making."

How many times do we say "Well done!" or "Great!" to our staff through the course of a day? If we don't say that at least a dozen times every day, then we are denying them the fuel they need in order to grow. We have to train ourselves to add to our vocabulary words or sentences such as: "Great!", "You're a star!", "Excellent!", "That's really well done!" We have to say these words to our staff literally DOZENS of times in any one day.

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Some of us might object that “if we tell our staff too often how good they are, they will constantly be asking us to raise their salaries”. This is only true for about 5 out of 100 individuals. For the remaining 95%, if you fail to appreciate regularly everything they have done well, all you will get is demotivation and, consequently, lower productivity.

What’s more, as we will be demonstrating at the end of this chapter, **IF WE DO NOT SAY “WELL DONE” TO THEM ON AN ONGOING BASIS, PEOPLE WILL END UP BEING MOTIVATED EXCLUSIVELY BY SALARY RAISES.**

We have found that **THERE IS A DIRECT RELATIONSHIP** between the number of times managers express recognition and appreciation of their staff and the latter’s level of motivation. Likewise, we have found that managers who rarely or almost never express their appreciation of their staff, ALWAYS AND INEVITABLY have a group of demotivated people under their command.

As I was talking about this need to express recognition and appreciation of people during a course, one of our clients, the manager of a rapidly growing supermarket chain, voiced his total agreement. He had actually realized that when he gave the employees written recognitions during meetings, these generated an even greater motivational effect than financial incentives. In some cases the employees would frame these recognitions and hang them up on the wall at home.

If you want to get a measure of the importance each of us gives to appreciation and recognition, take a look in some closet in your home. Stored away somewhere you probably still have some of the medals you won at school games when you were a child. These items have no financial value and are

often anything but beautiful. But we don't throw them out. Why? Because appreciation is motivational, extremely motivational.

While analyzing this factor, some of you might think, "No, I really can't say 'well done' to people. I can't do it. My attention is automatically drawn to the things they haven't done well, not to those they've done well."

I would remind you that you need to apply what was pointed out in Chapter 4: IF YOU WANT THINGS TO CHANGE, YOU HAVE TO CHANGE FIRST. In this book, in fact, we are not talking about "manipulative techniques" designed to "secretly influence people". We are talking about the fact that the achievement of success requires constant training in order to improve personal characteristics, to change as individuals, to change deeply-rooted but incorrect ideas that lead us to act in the wrong way. We have done that many times in the past, in order to become better salespeople or better managers. We also have to do it in the management of our staff.

We have to train ourselves as of now to express appreciation and recognition to our staff. We may have to make a little effort to start with, but with time (and witnessing the positive results thereby achieved), this attitude will become more and more natural to us.

In some cases, our ability to express appreciation and recognition to our staff may be weakened by some incorrect ideas we have built up in our minds:

- a) "When I was an employee (or a salesperson, or a secretary or a factory worker) I behaved differently.

- b) I don't see why they should need all these things to work hard. I didn't need that in my days."

This idea leads managers and supervisors to keep using "themselves" as the standard for assessing their staff. There is no greater mistake than this.

If our staff were REALLY like us, if they had our same abilities and our same self-motivational skills, they too would probably be business owners now or would be holding OUR job positions!

As Blanchard says, "Don't wait until people do things EXACTLY RIGHT before you praise them." Sometimes the result achieved by an employee is a GREAT RESULT, even though it still may not be perfect to us. We might have a salesman, for example, who had not made a sale for a long time and one day he comes to the company office and HAS FINALIZED A CONTRACT! Before that, he would come into the company day after day looking sad, dull and almost depressed. "Have you closed the deal?" "No, we've got good negotiations going on, but nothing settled as yet" (almost apologizing).

Today, however, he has closed a deal. He comes into the company excited and smiling. He goes up to the sales manager and presents him with a fine contract. He expects something from his sales manager, something that will reinforce his behavior and his attitude, which is now the attitude of a winner. And what does the sales manager say to him? "Well, but the payment times could have been better..."

He has just dealt a blow to his sales rep. Contrary to what the sales manager might think, that salesman will plunge into the depths of despair again.

The second idea we have to eradicate from our minds is the following:

b) “The staff’s good results are as they should be. Why should I say ‘well done’ to people who are simply doing the job they are being paid for?”

Now let’s imagine Lionel Messi, Wayne Rooney, Cristiano Ronaldo or one of the world’s highest paid professional soccer players. What do you think would happen to their motivation if none of their teammates ran up to hug them when they scored a goal? How would they feel if there was no mention of their great sporting feat in the Monday papers or on television?

You might say “they are professionals” and “scoring a goal is the least we can expect from them”. Diego Maradona might even say, “When I was playing I used to score better ones.” That way, however, we will only ever have a demotivated team of players.

Entrepreneurs and managers who take the results of their staff for granted have reached such a state of “personal emotional aridity” that their attitude is probably suitable for dealing with purchases or accounting, but it has nothing to do with managing people.

We should never take for granted the results achieved by our staff. It may have been easy for us to achieve what they did. We are also probably paying them well for what they do. But please, when they get results, let us not say, “Why ever should I say ‘well done’ to them if they did the invoices properly? After all, it’s their job...”

PERHAPS FOR US, with our great experience, “doing invoices properly” IS EASY. BUT FOR OUR STAFF IT MAY BE A RESULT THAT HAS REQUIRED THEM TO MAKE A MAJOR EFFORT.

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In support of what has just been said about full appreciation, I would like to tell you about a personal case which in my opinion illustrates very well the idea of how full appreciation of the work done by an individual can work miracles.

My nephew Alex is in grade school and is not at all interested in studying. He is a little like those pupils taking part in the case history on IQs quoted earlier who would take frogs to school. One day at school, Alex happened to be called up to the blackboard to do a division problem that no-one in the class, not even the brightest students, were able to solve. Alex has a hard time with division problems and until that day had gotten them virtually all wrong. Yet that day, probably fortuitously, he managed to solve it. Everyone in his class started saying, "Great Alex! You're really brilliant." He got a genuine ovation. That day I was having lunch at my mother's house and I saw him running into the house saying, "Grandma, let's eat fast because I have some things to do afterwards." At this change of attitude I became suspicious and said to myself, "I wonder what he has to do, he's probably up to something, I'd better look into it."

So I started asking him, rather insistently, what he was planning to do that afternoon. I was worried he might get into some kind of trouble. He kept avoiding going into details, repeating to my mother that we had to eat quickly as he was busy.

On my insistent questioning, he eventually told me what it was that he had to do after lunch: "I have to do some division problems!!!", he said.

At school **THEY HAD UNWITTINGLY MOTIVATED HIM** and now he, who really had no time for studying, was suddenly transformed.

He wanted to do division. Why? Because someone had told him he was good at it!

That is exactly what we will get by expressing appreciation: people will concentrate even more on the things they have done well, they will train with greater commitment and will gradually achieve consistently better results.

Appreciation costs nothing. But it can work miracles in bringing about changes.

“Everyone has a sign around their neck that says: ‘Make me feel important’. If you can do that, not only will you succeed in business, you will succeed in life.”

Mary Kay Ash, founder of cosmetics giant Mary Kay Cosmetics

THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR STAFF’S DEMAND FOR FULL APPRECIATION

But on closer examination, our employees’ demand that we show them full appreciation extends further than our saying “well done” to them when they do things well.

Looking at the matter superficially, a manager might wonder, “But does having to express Full Appreciation for the work of my employees mean that if one of them accidentally knocks over a wall with a forklift truck, I should go up to them and say, ‘Great, well done! You could have knocked down the whole warehouse, instead you managed to only knock down a wall. Congratulations again!’???”

And this leads us to the management of mistakes or of the less effective members of staff. Sometimes I

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realize that looking at the work of some of our staff, we just can't find anything to congratulate them about, or they make mistakes. How do we behave? If we limit ourselves to pointing out their mistake, they will tend to become demotivated. If, however, we say "Well done" and overlook it, they might persist in making the mistake.

In other words, how do we apply this principle of Full Appreciation to staff who are not very effective?

To understand this, we have to analyze in more detail the meaning of the fact that our staff ranked Full Appreciation for the Work Done as the top motivating factor.

The fact that Full Appreciation for the Work Done was ranked first means that OUR STAFF MEMBERS WANT A BOSS WHO ENABLES THEM TO RECEIVE EXPRESSIONS OF "WELL DONE!". In other words, our employees want supervisors who help them get results, who turn them into winners. They want coaches!

When talking about the most successful companies, Tom Peters argues that they transform men and women of average capabilities into winners and that they allow and even encourage people to distinguish themselves.

Our employees want a boss who can help them be winners and who allows the skills they have within them to emerge. In the sentence "transform men and women of average capabilities into winners" we have one of the most important keys to motivation. Every time we are able to get our staff to demonstrate their capabilities and competence, we get staff who are more highly motivated.

Let us consider ourselves for a moment. What does the new branch we opened mean to us? What does achieving an increase in our market share from 20% to 27.5% mean to us? Why do we put so much effort into trying to make our companies grow? Do we do it only so that we can earn more?

Sometimes I meet entrepreneurs who, despite being millionaires, get to the company at 6 o' clock in the morning. They are the first to arrive and the last ones to leave. They could probably sell everything and retire to the good life in the Caribbean. But despite this, they keep talking to me about investing, getting the company to grow, opening more branches and launching new products.

Why do they act that way? Because they, too, are seeking full appreciation. What is a new branch except a way of showing their competence, their skills? What are those old medals we keep in the closet except a piece of evidence showing that we, too, have been winners?

MANAGERS WHO TRY TO GET THEMSELVES MOTIVATED BY THEIR STAFF

In spite of the fact that what we have just said also clearly applies to ourselves, every time I walk into a company I meet managers and supervisors lacking in motivation who GO TO THEIR STAFF IN ORDER TO GET THEMSELVES MOTIVATED. It is not a paradox. It really does happen.

You might, for example, have a Sales Manager going out with their sales reps in a support capacity. He is not truly motivated. Before they get to the customer's place of business, this Sales Manager says to his rep, "You keep quiet, I'll do the talking

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now.” Or a couple of minutes after they have gone in, he takes charge of the conversation and conducts all the negotiations himself. He closes the deal or gets the order. When they leave the negotiating table, what does this not-very-motivational sales manager say to his rep? He says, “See how it’s done?” What does the salesman answer him? “My goodness, you’re brilliant!!!!” Now the sales manager, having received full appreciation for the work he has done, has motivated himself. What this sales manager has failed to notice is that his salesman is often saying something else as well: “It will be extremely difficult for me to become as good as you are...” Why?

Because we have just BRUTALLY DEMOTIVATED HIM! Our job as managers or supervisors is to SHOW HOW GOOD HE IS, it is to put HIM in a position to receive expressions of appreciation. Our job is ABSOLUTELY NOT to show how good we are! Because that way we are trying to get ourselves motivated by our staff instead of us motivating them.

It’s quite dramatic to watch how many U.S. managers go to their staff “trying to get themselves motivated by them”. There are managers who when faced with their staff’s difficulties will go to them and say, “Wait, look here, I’ll show you how it’s done.” Then they do the work themselves and when they have finished they say to their staff, “Did you see that?”

NO! NO! NO! Of course, if it is useful, go ahead and show them how to do it, BUT THEN YOU SHOULD ERASE THE WORK DONE AND MAKE THEM DO IT UNTIL THEY ARE ABLE TO DO THE WORK PROPERLY, and, if necessary, you should train them, even ten consecutive times, because YOUR

job is to train them so that THEY can be told “well done!”

In other cases, you have the manager who gets to work feeling somewhat demotivated and bored. He sees one of his staff doing a job fairly well. He goes up to him and says, “Look at this, I’m going to show you that this can be done even better and in even less time. Just watch this. Look, I can even do it with my eyes closed. Look, now with no hands...”

In other words, this manager is constantly trying to show his staff how good HE is, how capable he is. Why? BECAUSE HE HIMSELF IS LACKING IN MOTIVATION. Perhaps the goals he should be attaining are not so clear to him, perhaps he is overloaded with work. Who knows? The fact is that this manager doesn’t walk around the company trying to catch people as they do things right, or train them in order to make THEM more effective. Instead, he walks around the company to prove how good he is.

As absurd as it may sound, it is as if I, an average basketball player, were playing alongside Michael Jordan and he wanted to motivate me. Michael Jordan stands in midfield and says, “Look, I’m going to show you I can score a three pointer from midfield.” He shoots and scores a three pointer. “I’ll show you I can do it again.” He shoots and again a three pointer.

“Watch closely, I can do it blindfolded.” NO! NO! NO! That’s not a manager. He is a demotivator of his staff! The true manager, the true leader, is the individual who stands in midfield with his staff member and says, “Now we’ll stand here and YOU’LL score a three pointer. It doesn’t matter if we have to stand here all night. I know eventually you’ll make it and you’ll become as good as I am, probably

even better.” The true leader is the person who turns others into winners.

A DRASTIC CHANGE OF APPROACH

Everything we are saying requires a radical change in the manager’s approach. We have to change an idea that we frequently hold as crucial and, as such, influences the vision we have of our work.

The manager’s approach has to shift from

<p>MANAGER WHO DOES THE WORK to MANAGER WHO HAS OTHERS DO THE WORK AND CREATES PRODUCTIVE PEOPLE</p>
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And this is what we should do if we wish to boost our staff’s motivation drastically. Every one of us has to single out five or six good individuals and devote ourselves entirely to them as if we were coaches, to enable them to grow and eventually become winners.

We will only get a group of strongly motivated people if we devote ourselves virtually full time to our role as coach. The manager who takes on all the work because “I’m the only one in here who knows how to make things go the right way”, or because “I’m forced to do this job myself; my staff would never be able to do it” IS ONLY SHOWING EMPHATICALLY THE FACT THAT HE IS LACKING IN MOTIVATION AND THAT THOSE JOBS ARE HIS WAY OF SHOWING HOW GOOD HE IS.

This kind of manager ends up being overloaded with work, works every weekend and always has to deal

with crises. Furthermore, he will always and invariably find himself with demotivated workers.

To conclude this section on Full Appreciation for the Work Done, I would like to mention one of the greatest generals of all times: Napoleon. He caused a great many upheavals in Europe and millions of victims, but one thing is certain: people from all sides attribute to him a huge ability to motivate staff. Legend has it that he even managed to have an army mostly made up of bare-footed men march through the frozen Alps.

Talking about people, Napoleon actually said:

“People would not sell their lives for all the gold in the world. But they will give it to you for free in exchange for a medal.”

Let’s give medals to our staff. Let’s catch them when they are doing something right and tell them so emphatically. Let’s train THEM to be winners instead of walking around the company trying to get ourselves motivated. In no time at all, we will discover that our staff will give us not only their time but their hearts as well.

Let us now continue with our investigation. The second factor that our employees want from their supervisors is:

2) TO FEEL INVOLVED IN WORK-RELATED PROBLEMS

What does “To Feel Involved in Work-related Problems” mean?

Involvement has to do with information, i.e. the fact of having information about what is happening.

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John Carlzon, former CEO of Scandinavian Airlines, said, “An individual without information can't take responsibility. An individual with information can't help but take responsibility.”

Let's apply this argument to the soccer field, not because this example doesn't hold true in a company but because looking at sports as a model of motivation can sometimes be helpful. In sports, in fact, every coach knows full well that the team's motivation is crucial. Just five minutes of demotivation for a player, in any sport, can mean losing the game. Having motivated players is one of the most important factors of all.

Imagine a center-forward player who, for some strange reason, is only allowed to see half of the field of his opposing team, where he has to score a goal, and is not allowed to see the field of his own team. Now imagine his coach, five minutes before the end of the game, shouting at him: “Hey, you have to score a goal!!!!” and he replies, “What do you mean? I've already scored two!” He isn't aware that in the meantime three goals have been scored against his team.

Or we could take the example to extremes and imagine a team of football players who for some strange reason are never aware of the score of the game, or where they are ranked in the league table, and that they don't even know who “that team in yellow-green jerseys” they are playing against is. What would the motivation level of those football players be? Low, you would say. All these examples enable us to see the result of not providing information to our staff.

Do our staff know the result of the game? In other words, do they know how things are going? Do they

know what the volume of sales is? Do they know what the company's plans and priorities are? Are they CONSTANTLY informed about what is going on?

Let's take the example of the football player even further and imagine that as well as not knowing his team's league ranking or the current score of the game, he doesn't even know what the other players are actually doing ("it's not so important for him to know, all he has to do is do his job and do it well"). What would his motivation level be? Low. But at one point, his coach shouts at him, "Hey, come on, you have to run! Help defend, for heaven's sake! I pay you a million a year. You've got to make an effort!!" What would we think of such a coach? We would think he was really incompetent and that he doesn't realize that however much he may shout at that player or pay him, if he wants to involve him and wants him to perform, he has to provide him with information about what is happening.

However absurd it may be, this is the situation in the majority of our companies. Let me tell you about a case I have been involved in personally. A company with around one hundred employees contacted us because it claimed that the factory workers were slack and had no sense of engagement. In their view "they couldn't care less about the company". We were asked by the company's management to carry out a lengthy training with all the workers in order to "raise their level of responsibility towards the company" (quoted verbatim).

Instead of getting into lengthy training programs, all we did was to give all the factory workers a brief questionnaire with four questions they had to answer:

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1. Last month, were company sales higher, lower than or equal to the same month of the previous year?
2. Are year to date company sales rising, equal to or lower than last year's sales?
3. What are the goals that the company has set itself this year?
4. What are the goals that the company has set itself for the next three years?

What do you think they answered? There was a great muddle of information. From the answers it was impossible to work out whether that company was growing, was stable, or was weakening. The factory workers in other words, were telling us that they didn't know the score of the game, the state of the league table rankings and didn't even know what championship game they were playing in. All we had to do was have a meeting with the managers and get them to understand that it was not a case of their staff being slack but of them failing to involve their staff.

Communication is the binding force that holds an organization together. The most productive companies make sure that there is free circulation of information. They show confidence in their staff by providing them with important financial information. Well-informed staff are productive staff because they feel involved.

“People without information cannot act responsibly. People with information are compelled to act responsibly.”

John Carlos, Alan Randolph, Ken Blanchard,
Empowerment Takes More Than a Minute

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The management of the hotel chain Holiday Inn, for example, on realizing that the daily average of rooms occupied was only 67%, decided to start telling all their employees every day the percentage of rooms occupied. This change alone set in motion a process whereby every member of staff drastically improved their customer service approach. Within 18 months the percentage of rooms occupied reached 85%.

Intel would not have gotten where it is today (the world's leader in microprocessors) without a motivated and involved workforce. One of the crucial factors was the policy introduced by its CEO Andy Grove to provide as much information as possible to as many company employees as possible. "Management is about organized common sense," argues Grove. "We communicate and communicate and communicate at every level, in every form. Anyone can ask anybody any question."

In the 70s and 80s, Dana Corporation, under the leadership of Rene McPherson, managed to achieve second place in the "Fortune 500" list in terms of return on invested capital despite the fact that it operated in a sector with modest technological content. The company's per capita sales have tripled in ten years. One of the core ideas of McPherson's philosophy is as follows:

"Nothing more effectively involves people, sustains credibility or generates enthusiasm than direct communication. It is critical to provide and discuss organization performance figures with all of our people."

Not having information, not being aware of what's happening, has a negative impact on the staff's morale and enthusiasm. Individuals who are not actively involved by being supplied with information

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will frequently stop considering themselves as being part of the game.

Holding regular meetings, circulating statistics, plans and information about the company's performance, as well as holding interviews where WE OURSELVES explain what we would like to achieve as a company, can help enormously to galvanize the group of people we are managing.

Jack Stack, CEO of SRC Corporation (an American company dealing with re-manufacturing of engines), was one of the pioneers in the campaign to ensure that employees had access to corporate financial figures, that they understood these figures and also how their own work could directly influence the performance of the entire company.

Stack started his career with International Harvester. He was made plant manager of a division which the previous year had had (by far) the lowest productivity level of the whole company. Stack decided to give every shop floor manager the daily statistics measuring shop floor productivity, and asked them to compare these with those of the other company departments. Within just three months, his division's productivity went from the lowest to the highest.

According to the previously quoted Tom Peters, one of the most important factors shared by successful companies is that they make comparisons between employees' results. In Peters' view, in the best-managed companies, information is shared so extensively that all employees are immediately aware of those who are doing their job properly and those who are not. This generates a kind of internal pressure to improve. Control is no longer in the hands of the manager but in those of coworkers.

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Peters goes on to argue that all of us are more sensitive to comparison of results than we might think. The important thing is that the company should not present the information in a critical manner. It may be that the reason why, when we look at the figures all on our own, we are spurred into being better than others and improving our performance. It is precisely our unconscious desire to be a winner. If this tendency of human beings is further boosted by an environment geared towards full appreciation of the work done, then we have a resulting cocktail of factors that will spur individuals into action.

By involvement, however, we don't just mean providing every employee with the figures that measure their own productivity so that they can compare it with that of other employees. Indeed, that would be like telling a sport player the rankings of the top scorers without letting him also know the league table position of his team. Involvement means, first and foremost, explaining the company's performance, regularly showing the trend in sales and in other important figures, and explaining objectives. All in all, it means making all our employees feel that, to us, they are an important part of the team.

Therefore, in order to get motivation we have to provide information.

In other words, we should hold meetings, show statistics and explain what they mean, and regularly illustrate short- and long-term plans. It is not enough to hold annual or semi-annual meetings. Meetings should be held regularly in every department.

While the effective leader GETS HELP FROM HIS STAFF by involving them in company activities, the

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mediocre manager is always overloaded with work and barricaded in defense repelling the rival team's attacks single-handedly. He is too overburdened to find time to explain to his young talents what is happening and how they could help...

The third factor that our employees want most from us is:

3) UNDERSTANDING AND CONCERN ABOUT PERSONAL PROBLEMS (= TAKING A GENUINE INTEREST IN THE STAFF MEMBER AS A PERSON)

I have added “taking a genuine interest in the staff member as a person” to further clarify the point that this doesn't mean “we should allow our staff to unload all their personal problems onto us”, but that, regardless of everything else, regardless of the economic relationship that binds us to our staff member, he or she is important to us as a person above all. We want them to feel good and to be a winner. If one of our salespeople hasn't sold anything, we are concerned not only because he is not reaching his target, but **FIRST AND FOREMOST** because he is not attaining his own goals.

The following corporate case is really illuminating in this respect. A company in the manufacturing industry called a general meeting of all its assembly line workers. They were asked what they needed in order to boost productivity. Workers answered that was needed was “more light on the assembly line”. In other words, the workers claimed that productivity was suffering as a result of poor lighting on the plant machinery.

Thereupon, the production manager had the amount of light boosted. Two weeks after the change

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was introduced, what happened to productivity? It increased. So they called another meeting with all the workers and asked them what could be done to boost productivity even further. The workers answered that “the plant machinery should be laid out in a different way”.

The production manager thus had the machinery moved around according to the workers’ suggestions, but as from that moment, HE GRADUALLY HAD THE LIGHT BROUGHT BACK TO ITS FORMER LEVEL, IMPERCEPTIBLY AND LITTLE BY LITTLE EVERY DAY. Two weeks later the light had gone back to the same level as before the experiment but the machinery was now laid out as the workers wished it to be. What happened to productivity? Well, you may not believe it, but it increased yet again.

Two weeks later another meeting was called. This time the workers said that the shift supervisors should carry out a number of checks at the beginning of the shifts. So the production manager had the shift supervisors do the checks as suggested, but at the same time, little by little and with various excuses, he had the plant machinery put back more or less as it was before. And what about productivity? You will not believe it, but it grew yet again!!

What can we conclude from the above experiment? That what REALLY MOTIVATES PEOPLE IS NOT SO MUCH WHAT YOU DO, BUT HOW MUCH ATTENTION YOU PAY TO THEM AND HOW MUCH INTEREST YOU TAKE IN THEM!!

The workers’ productivity was higher because someone was taking an interest in them. Someone was listening to them and was in some way getting them involved.

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Every time you really take an interest in our staff, every time you REALLY feel concerned about them, they will consequently take an interest in you.

One manager who proved to be very skilled in involving his employees is Lee Iacocca. He actually saved Chrysler from bankruptcy twice. Of all the stories going around about the “Iacocca legend” there is one I have found particularly striking. Despite being an extremely wealthy man, Iacocca would eat with his assembly line workers in the cafeteria. Why? Because he claimed that it was only by taking an interest in the people who worked for him that he could get the companies under his management to be productive.

Taking an interest in people is so important that we will talk about it again in the chapter that analyzes leaders’ personal characteristics. For the time being what we need to know is that our employees react in a positive manner if someone is actually taking an interest in them, if someone really FEELS what they feel, and doesn’t treat them as mere numbers but as individuals.

But we need to be careful. What we have said above doesn’t mean that we have to take onto our shoulders all our staff’s personal problems. It means we have to listen to them, get to know them and understand what is happening in their lives. Our taking an interest in them and offering them some advice can often work miracles on their level of motivation.

Some managers will say: “I don’t want to take an interest in my staff’s personal problems. I have enough of my own to worry about”, or “If I take an interest in my staff’s problems they’ll start asking me for money”, or again, “If I am too concerned about their problems they’ll begin to lose respect for

me”. Yet again, managers who have these kinds of thoughts are those who have been experiencing problems with their human resource management for quite some time. Why? Because there is no substitute for our taking an interest in people.

Let’s then ask ourselves when was the last time we had lunch with one of our staff and TRULY took an interest in the career goals they had set themselves. Or the last time we asked them how things were going in their lives. When was the last time we proved to him that, regardless of his productivity, he was important to us as a person?

Do we know the goals and ambitions of all the key individuals working for us?

Do we notice their emotions and pay attention to their problems? Do we make them our own?

If we are not doing that, or are only doing it partly, we are missing a train from the point of view of productivity, and we can’t even conceive how important that train is. To bring home the point, I will not add further theoretical explanations but will quote the words of an employee of a company that was completely put back on track thanks to a shrewd manager:

“What motivates me is knowing that the company takes care of me; therefore I take care of them. I really do think that.”- C. A.

Managers frequently say that they can’t take a personal interest in their staff because they don’t have the time and they are overloaded. This idea suggests firstly that these managers probably don’t realize that their company has grown and that they have to change from being “a manager who does the work” to “a manager who gets others to do the

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work". Secondly, such managers will be constantly overworked because they ignore the people around them. Since they don't motivate people, they will always end up with all sorts of setbacks that they will have to deal with themselves.

RANKING THE OTHER FACTORS

Immediately after Full Appreciation, Involvement and our Concern, our employees ask us for "Good salary levels" and "Job security".

However important Full Appreciation may be to our staff, it is certainly not a complete substitute for the fact that they also have financial needs. But let's take a look at the workers' complete ranking of motivating values:

<i>WHAT EMPLOYEES REGARD AS MOST IMPORTANT</i>

1. Full appreciation for the work done
2. To feel involved in work-related problems
3. Understanding and concern about personal problems (taking an interest in him/her as a person)
4. Good salary level
5. Job security
6. Interesting work
7. Job promotions and growing with the company
8. Management loyalty towards the staff
9. Good working conditions
10. Non-oppressive discipline

A study of the results emerging from this survey provides further information about what truly motivates our people.

Let's consider the factor that our employees rank as the sixth most important one (Interesting Work). We wondered why this factor was ranked only sixth.

We got to the conclusion that what constitutes an “interesting job” for our people it is a job they are good at and in which they have the chance to prove their skills.

Ken Blanchard argues that if individuals get positive feedback when they are doing something right, they are very likely to continue behaving positively in the future.

Why “Job promotions and growing with the company” was ranked seventh? Because if I work in a company whose managers train me to become a winner and catch me doing the right things, if I am involved in work-related problems and my superiors take a GENUINE interest in me as a person, well... I WILL GROW FOR SURE IN THAT COMPANY! I don’t feel the need for a “career plan” and don’t even ask for it.

It is interesting to note that “NON-OPPRESSIVE DISCIPLINE” was relegated to tenth place. What does this mean? It means that if we appreciate individuals, if we involve them and are really interested in *their* success, TOO, they are not worried about being subjected to harrowing work hours or being forced to work hard. They will give us their soul.

THE EXPECTED REMUNERATION PACKAGE

To get an even deeper understanding of staff motivation, we have to add a further concept, that of the “Expected Remuneration Package”, where the term “package” refers to a “set of things”.

Every individual who starts a job or begins working with a company expects remuneration. This

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remuneration is not made up exclusively of money but actually consists of a set of things. The concept of “Expected Remuneration Package” explains how and why a worker becomes demotivated.

<i>THE EXPECTED REMUNERATION PACKAGE</i>	
<u>Tangible Remuneration</u>	<u>Intangible Remuneration</u>
Wages/Salary	Full appreciation of work done
Bonuses	Involvement in work-related problems
Facilities/Equipment	Concern for him/her as a person
-----	-----
= Hard Factors	= Soft Factors

Our staff expect remuneration. This is made up of TANGIBLE (consisting of tangible or material elements, i.e. “hard factors”) and INTANGIBLE remuneration (consisting, that is, of “soft”, intangible or immaterial elements).

Both types of remuneration must be present; OTHERWISE OUR STAFF WILL BECOME DEMOTIVATED.

Hard factors consist of salaries and wages, bonuses, quality working facilities or the best equipment for doing one’s job (for example: “I’ll give you the company car” or “I’ll give you state-of-the-art technology to work with”).

Soft factors, as seen above, are Full Appreciation, Involvement and Concern for the worker as a person.

Whenever the balance of remuneration is upset (where soft factors or hard factors are missing), we get a demotivated individual.

I was explaining earlier that some of our problems are due to the fact that our staff members are not Harvard graduates in behavioral science. Indeed, the problem is that our staff are often unable to tell which motivating factors they are missing. We might, for example, be faced with the following kind of situation.

Let's suppose we are not providing soft factors to one of our employees. We constantly point out to him what he is not doing right, for instance, without ever praising him; we provide him with little information and seldom take a real interest in him. Although he carries on working in the company, HE WILL FEEL THAT THERE IS SOMETHING MISSING. He is not exactly sure of what it is but he feels that something is not as it should be.

When his friends ask him how his work is going, he will probably answer something like this: "So so" or "I'm not really sure, not that it's going badly, but somehow I don't feel all that good about it..."

One evening he goes home and his wife asks him, "How did it go today?" He says, "Not so bad". His wife says, "What is it?" "Well, I'm not sure" (He's not a Harvard graduate and doesn't realize what is going wrong). His wife says "But tell me, what's the matter?" "I don't know, it's as if there was something missing." His wife: "It's because you get paid so little!"

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Now he brightens up and says, “Maybe that’s it! If I got paid more I’d feel better.” He goes to work and asks for a raise. In actual fact, money is not the real problem; it is not what is missing. He feels that there is something missing and comes to the conclusion that it is money.

We give him a raise. What do we get? We get what in the trade we call the “flash in the pan” effect. As we have not solved the real problem (IE the missing soft factors) he is more productive for a couple of months and then everything goes back to what it was before.

I am not saying it is wrong to give raises to staff who deserve it, on the contrary. I am only saying that **TO USE HARD FACTORS TO COMPENSATE FOR THE LACK OF SOFT FACTORS CAUSES THE FLASH IN THE PAN EFFECT**. Often it is not money or incentives that are missing. It is soft factors that are missing!!!!

To keep up an individual’s motivation, both soft and hard components of the Expected Remuneration Package must be present. For example, if there is no bonus plan, then this missing “hard factor” will contribute to creating demotivation. But we have to heed the fact that the staff who took part in the survey told us that **SOFT FACTORS ARE SLIGHTLY MORE IMPORTANT TO THEM THAN HARD FACTORS**.

Despite what we might think, a lack of soft factors immediately causes our staff members’ motivation level to drop. Although they might continue to work with us, their dedication and their “hearts” will be elsewhere.

One of my clients operates in the telephone communications sector. He is one of the largest dealers for a leading cell phone provider. As the

company grew, he realized that there were quite a few staff members who needed to be motivated. The first time I met him he showed me around his company. He showed me his new data processing center, the cleanliness and tidiness of the warehouse, the new uniforms he had provided to every employee, the major investment he had made to create a kind of company cafeteria, and all the efforts he had made to meet the needs of his staff.

He pointed out to me that the salaries and pay scales enjoyed by the staff were excellent. All the things he was showing me were fantastic. There were really not many companies that offered a working environment such as this. At the end of the tour he said to me, “Well, Paolo, I can’t understand why in spite of my offering all of this to my staff, they are not motivated.”

He was only providing them with hard factors! He was not “catching people when they were doing something right”, the staff members he was getting truly involved in the company game were few and far between, and “he never had any time” to take a real interest in his staff. It was hard to get to talk to him.

He was the kind of business owner who is always overloaded with work and who, when his staff talked to him about something, would already be thinking about something else. In other words, he didn’t do much listening.

He could invest as much as he liked in “hard factors” but he would never get truly motivated staff. He eventually got them when, in addition to “hard factors”, he also started providing “soft factors”.

**FEELING THAT YOU ARE THE EFFECT
WHEN YOU ARE ACTUALLY THE CAUSE**

Going back to what we explained in Chapter 3, we can say that one of the biggest problems of human beings is to consider themselves the “effect” of things of which in actual fact they are the “cause”. If I never water the plants that my florist sells me and they wilt, the fault doesn’t lie with the florist but with me. Yet, absurd as it may seem, I could stand by and watch my plants die and think, “that florist is really a cheat. Look at the plants he sold me, they won’t even last for two weeks.” Alternatively, I might say, “Damned plants, look what you’re doing to me! You’re doing it on purpose.”

If I consider myself the “effect” of something of which I am in fact the “cause”, I am getting myself bogged down in a problem that can never be resolved. I will never be able to resolve it if I continue to blame others for it, because it is me who is creating the problem. If I don’t realize that **IT IS ME WHO IS NOT WATERING THE PLANTS**, I may change the type of plant I buy, I can change my florist, but the plants will continue to die. If I consider myself the “effect” of something of which I am the “cause”, the problem will persist.

When I don’t express full appreciation to my staff, when I fail to involve them and don’t take a real interest in them, I am causing them to be less motivated and, therefore, less productive. And if I then “go around the company catching people when they do things wrong”, I constitute one of the main factors of demotivation in my company.

The problem is not my staff. It is not my hiring procedures. The real problem is me.

Yet the managers who go about their work without bearing in mind the factors we have pointed out thus far will continue to say or think that “the real problem is their staff”. It is a classic example of how one considers himself to be the effect of things of which in actual fact one is the cause.

Such managers will frequently feel hostile towards their staff, will get upset about their mistakes and, by so doing, will exacerbate not only their staff’s situation but also their own state of mind.

Our employees are our internal customers. They give their devotion and their hearts to the leaders-coaches who enable them to get on the stage and be winners, and who, by involving them and taking a genuine interest in them as individuals, make them feel part of a group.

We may ignore what has been discussed in this chapter. We can disregard all the market research and continue to fail to provide our staff the stimuli which they regard as motivating. In that case, however, we must not wonder why we feel alone in the management of our company.

Put the right bait on your hook!

SOUND PRINCIPLES OF TIME MANAGEMENT