

# PERSONNEL MOTIVATION: STRATEGIES TO STIMULATE EMPLOYEES TO INCREASE PERFORMANCE

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## ABSTRACT

Personnel motivation is a key factor in getting employees to increase performance. The question, however, is what managers can do to motivate employees to such a level that performance will indeed increase. An attempt is made in this article to identify strategies that management can pursue to motivate employees to improve their performance. Although the list of strategies proposed is far from exhaustive, it is nonetheless representative of the various methods managers can use to enhance employee motivation. It is hoped that these strategies will stimulate the reader's thinking about additional ways to heighten employee motivation.

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## INTRODUCTION

Some workers do not produce the quality of work or maintain the level of productivity which they are capable of. To some extent this may be attributed to reticence on the part of the worker. The predominant cause, however, is likely to be underutilisation of the potential and capabilities of workers by management. Workers are frequently bored, uninvolved and underutilised and this may contribute to their level of productivity falling below their real potential. Management often fails to present employees with the necessary challenges and opportunities for achievement or to provide the type of leadership that will motivate them and direct their behaviour towards increased performance.

That the issue of employee motivation remains a crucial one in most institutions was confirmed by an extensive survey carried out to determine the perceptions of employees and their supervisors about employee motivation. It

was found that the greatest lack among managers was their ability to accurately perceive the factors that motivate their employees (Kovach 1995).

The question of what management can do to create an environment in which employees can be motivated to a high level of performance therefore, requires management's attention. This article is an attempt to identify a few strategies that may be important for managers to consider in order to stimulate employees to increase performance.

## **1 WHAT DOES PERSONNEL MOTIVATION MEAN?**

Some authors see motivation as being contained within the individual whereas others view it as arising from sources outside the individual. Examples that view motivation as something that exists within the individual (internal or inherent motivation), are the following:

- Motivation is 'an inner state that energizes, activates or moves, and that directs or channels behavior toward goals' (Berelson & Steiner 1964:240).
- 'Man is by nature motivated. He is an organic system, not a mechanical one ... We do not motivate him, because he is motivated. When he is not, he is dead' (McGregor 1966:208).
- 'The needs, wants and desires which exist within an individual, make up his internal motivation. These factors influence him by determining his thoughts, which in turn lead to his behavior in a particular situation' (Hicks & Gullett 1975:276).
- Motivation is 'getting somebody to do something because *they* want to do it' (Denny 1993:12).
- 'Motivation is the driving force in any individual which moves him (or her) to act in a certain way. Practically spoken: it is what drives your employees to give their best for your business' (Franken 1994:15).

The following are examples of authors who view motivation as something arising from outside the individual (external motivation):

- Motivation is 'the function which a manager performs in order to get his subordinates to achieve job objectives' (Scott & Mitchell 1972:76).
- Motivation is 'the process by which managers stimulate employee behavior and direct it toward achieving desired personal and organizational goals' (Megginson 1981:293).
- 'Motivation is any influence that causes, channels, and sustains people's behavior' (Hellriegel & Slocum 1989:424).
- '... motivated employees are the product of good management – and that is *their* responsibility' (Grensing 1991:xi).

Although the responsibility of management is clearly emphasised in the

external motivation theory, proponents of this theory do not negate internal motivation theory. They rather consider external motivation as a theory that builds on internal motivation. External motivation theory, in other words, includes the forces which exist inside the individual as well as the factors controlled by the manager, namely job context items such as salary and working conditions, and job content items such as recognition and responsibility (Hicks & Gullett 1975:283).

With the latter in mind, it is also important to take note of the views of Herzberg (1968:53–62). He showed that every manager has two different kinds of factors he or she should consider in dealing with his or her workers. Both kinds are absolutely necessary in getting jobs done though they must be considered separately. These factors are called maintenance factors and motivation factors. Maintenance factors, like salary and working conditions, simply keep the worker on the job. The presence of these factors causes satisfaction whereas their absence causes dissatisfaction. Although these factors are prerequisites for motivation and cause satisfaction, they do not contribute in enhancing a worker's desire to increase performance. Herzberg indicated, for instance, that money is not a prime motivator in getting people to do better work, although it may be important as a means of getting things that do motivate such as recognition.

Motivation factors like achievement, recognition and responsibility on the other hand, directly affect the motivation of the worker in making it higher or lower according to whether or not the manager is using a particular strategy to stimulate the worker's desire. The presence of these factors will both satisfy and motivate. Although their absence may not necessarily cause dissatisfaction, it may lead to an absence of motivation.

Although Herzberg's theory has been subjected to a great deal of criticism, one of the most significant aspects he emphasised was the fact that job satisfaction is dependent on the task itself. To merely get workers to do a job is not motivation. The manager's task in motivation is rather to make sure his or her workers enjoy doing what must be done. Franken (1994:16) correctly observes in this regard: 'I think that there is clearly a difference between 'must work' and 'wants to work' and this is where Herzberg's differentiation lies'. To get workers to enjoy carrying out a task relates to pride of achievement (Mol 1991:20). If the task itself is not a source of pride for the worker, he or she will not be motivated. This, according to Mol (1991:20), is based on the assumption that the majority of workers have a basic need for self-esteem and pride.

To conclude this discussion on the issue of what personnel motivation means, it can be said that each individual is already motivated, **but** that such inherent motivation can and should be stimulated by means of external motivation to inspire performance. It seems that in order to get a highly motivated team of employees who want to work, who strive to reach their peak performance everyday, who enjoy the continual challenge of improving results and who maintain confident, positive attitudes, management can play a decisive role in

providing the stimulus by enriching tasks in such a way that it will provide opportunities for increasing performance, responsibility and a sense of utility and personal pride. 'Employee motivation is entwined with so much of what a manager does. Perhaps a majority of the actions taken by a manager, either directly or indirectly, somehow affects employee perception of positive and negative outcomes experienced in either the short or long run' (Grant 1990:x).

## **2 HOW CAN MANAGERS MOTIVATE EMPLOYEES TO INCREASE THEIR PERFORMANCE?**

Mol (1985:43) emphasises three levels of work performance on which workers can operate, namely the minimum level, middle or expected level and the maximum level. Workers who operate on the minimum level tend to do less than what is expected of them, attempt to evade work and are not reliable. On the middle level workers are only doing what is expected of them. Although they are reliable, they are not doing something extra. They are only doing what they are told to do. Workers who operate on the maximum level, however, do more than what is expected of them. They are working extra hours, taking initiative and are more productive than what their supervisors expect of them. Parachin (1999:13) makes the point: 'They worked with intensity – as if their lives depended on it. Successful people aren't satisfied with good enough. They prize excellence the way most of us value survival'.

Instead of being satisfied with employees operating on the minimum and/or middle levels of work performance, managers should rather inspire them to aim at the maximum level and, as Daniels (2000:53–54) puts it, 'want to' do rather than doing only what they 'have to'. In this regard managers need to stimulate the following internal motivations of employees (Kushel 1994:69):

- Enjoyment of the work itself.
- Desire to have a 'piece of the action' such as sharing the setting of objectives, leadership, authority and responsibility.
- Pride in performing excellently.
- Need to prove some secret point to themselves.
- Achievement of one or other deep-seated value.
- Having a deep and abiding believe in the importance of the work they are doing.
- The excitement and pleasure of a challenge.
- Desire to exceed previous levels of performance.

The obvious question that must be answered, however, is what in particular can managers do to stimulate the internal motivation of employees? Although there are numerous methods listed in the literature, the following strategies are considered to be the most significant for managers to succeed in this task:

## **2.1 Developing an effort/performance and performance/reward probability**

Managers should be aware that employees are likely to perform exceptionally well in the following circumstances:

- when there is a high probability that their efforts will produce achievement
- when there is a high probability that achievement will lead to realising the stated objectives
- when there is a high probability that management will notice their achievements and that they will be rewarded in some form (Steers & Porter 1991:508–511)

For employees to exert high effort, they must sense that effort will indeed pay off in terms of performance; in other words, they must sense that effort is highly correlated with performance and that higher effort will yield better performance. The stronger the perceived correlation, the stronger the motivation (Grant 1990:15). Grant (1990:15–16) points out, however, that the ability of employees to perform (which includes characteristics, knowledge and skills) is a key determining variable of employee work performance. Ability determines the extent to which effort leads to performance. If ability is high, the employee perceives that effort has a good chance to yield success. On the other hand, if ability is low, the employee senses that no matter how hard he or she tries, good performance seems unlikely, if not impossible. Perceived high ability therefore is a necessary condition for one to perceive a strong correlation between effort and performance and that effort will lead to performance.

Grant (1990:16–32) identifies 25 ways managers can use to get employees to see that they have or can easily acquire the ability to perform well. The following are worth mentioning here, namely:

- Help employees build their self-confidence.
- Show employees why their jobs are important.
- Show employees that their abilities, skills and characteristics are compatible with job requirements.
- Provide periodic opportunities for employees to participate in skills and knowledge upgrading programs.
- Make sure employees have adequate technical knowledge and skills to use information, methods, techniques or equipment in the execution of specific responsibilities.
- Make sure employees have conceptual skills to understand how various functions of the institution compliment one another, how the institution relates to its environment and how changes in one part of the institution affect the rest of the institution.
- Make sure employees have interpersonal relations skills to effectively interact

with each other, to work with and through other and to properly coordinate their efforts with those of others in the institution.

- Make sure employees have requisite problem-solving skills to identify, define and resolve difficulties.
- Define jobs so that it is not overly complex and confusing.
- Let employees participate in formulating their jobs and performance evaluation criteria.
- Be sure employees experience real on-the-job successes.

It is important to note that in the case of both effort/performance and performance/reward probabilities, the value that employees attach to the strength of those probabilities will determine whether it will have any motivational value or not. The value that management attaches to those probabilities will not necessarily determine its motivational value. Not only have managers to realise that the rewards they offer should be aligned with what employees want; they should also understand why employees view certain outcomes and rewards as attractive and others as unattractive. An effort/performance and performance/reward probability should be based on the interest of the employee wherein each employee seeks to maximise his or her expected satisfaction (Robbins & DeCenzo 1995:283). Managers should bear in mind that such probabilities will have little motivational value if employees do not rate them highly from their perspective. Managers need to establish what the values and interests of employees are and should then act accordingly as far as possible.

## **2.2 Setting objectives aimed at increasing performance**

Objectives may have a significant effect on personnel motivation. Setting objectives incorrectly may cause, rather than solve, problems. If, for instance, the set objectives that are unfair, arbitrary or unreachable, dissatisfaction and poor performance may follow. If difficult objectives are set without proper quality control, quantity may be achieved at the expense of quality. Setting objectives aimed at increasing performance therefore requires managerial judgement. Managers should be mindful of the following in this regard:

- To have a positive effect on performance, objectives need to be unambiguous and specific rather than generalised or vague (Capozzoli 1997:16). Vague instructions to employees such as 'to do your best' should be avoided. Standards should be set that are measurable. Unmeasurable standards become merely subjective indicators of how a job should be performed and help neither the employees nor the managers. In developing standards, managers can use numbers, time limits or error/rejection tolerances to establish objective measures of performance. Specific measurable standards give employees a powerful reason for wanting to perform well as they serve as a yardstick for success.

Employees also need to be clearly instructed on the priorities of the different tasks given to them. They must understand on what their efforts should be concentrated. It must be clear to them which tasks must be performed without error and which tasks must be performed timeously. They must be able to distinguish critical duties from the not-so-critical.

- A mistake that is commonly made when objectives are set, is associated with the word ‘challenging’. The concept of ‘challenging objectives’ usually causes managers to set fewer objectives and to set them too high. Fewer objectives and harder to achieve, equals very few opportunities for positive reinforcement (any consequence that, when immediately following a positive response, increases the probability that such behaviour will be repeated) (Daniels 2000:121). If, however, the objective is set too low it increases the probability of success. If the objective is reached and success is achieved, the motivation to do even more the next time is increased. The more objectives there are, the more opportunities there will be for achieving success and consequently, the more occasions for positive reinforcement (Daniels 2000:121). It is therefore clear that if the likelihood of success is high, it can have a significant motivating effect on the worker, because it will give him or her the experience of being a winner.
- Performance increases more significantly when employees have participated in formulating the objectives, than when objectives have been set and allocated unilaterally. They will be more willing to work towards achievement of the objectives if they have been allowed to give an input into what they are supposed to achieve, the level of achievement expected of them, and when achievement is expected (Grant 1990:38).
- Breaking broad objectives into sub-objectives can be particularly helpful in stimulating employees’ sense that effort will lead to performance. Sub-objectives serve as intermediate completion points or checkpoints. Clear intermediate completion points provide relatively frequent experiences of achievement and resultant satisfaction to employees. Achievement of sub-objectives also helps employees verify that their efforts to achieve are on track and that continued efforts will ultimately result in achievement of the broad objectives (Grant 1990:46).
- Management should not keep information on objectives a secret to employees (Grensing 1991:47). They should rather help them to understand what is expected and what is an unacceptable level of performance to enable them to monitor their own performance.

### **2.3 Giving adequate and sustained feedback**

‘A lack of feedback is the biggest killer of motivation at work. Nobody wants to be overlooked’ (Hagemann 1992:57). If an employee is doing something wrong, he or she needs to know it. If an employee is doing something right, he or she also

needs to know it. Mechanisms need to be established to provide employees with information on whether they are achieving what they are supposed to. The term "feedback", however, should not be confused with general information on data. 'Feedback is information about performance that allows an individual to adjust his or her performance' (Daniels 2000:101). Feedback, in other words, shows an employee whether current performance is in relation with past performance and obviously with set objectives. Without feedback there is no learning. Learning requires specific information about how an employee's behaviour is affecting performance, right or wrong.

Although feedback on performance, whether performance is right or wrong, is necessary, Capozzoli (1997:17) points out that too often feedback is only given on what an employee is doing wrong and not what he or she is doing right. If employees are always criticised, they will soon get the impression that it does not make any difference what they do, only the things they do wrong are recognised. Too much criticism, no matter how good management's intentions are, can erode an employee's will to achieve. Positive and negative feedback also, should not be mixed, as positive and negative feedback given at the same time may confuse employees or will lead them to totally ignore the positive and focus on the negative only.

Whenever possible, it is useful to establish self-generated feedback mechanisms into jobs so that the employees do not have to wait for feedback from somebody else. Self-generated feedback is less biased and usually more rapidly forthcoming, which may enable employees to redirect their efforts rapidly should it appear that they will not achieve the set objectives as planned. Self-generated feedback mechanisms can be established by teaching employees the essential performance criteria for their jobs and by training them to assess performance levels along those criteria.

Giving adequate and sustained feedback go along with setting standards and measuring performance against such standards (Hill 1998:15). It will be difficult for employees to see a contingent relationship between rewards and performance if performance is not measured. Performance measurement therefore, should not remain a scheme of, or a suggestion by management only. Employees should rather see evidence of how and when measurement of performance takes place. If they do not see performance being measured and results communicated to them, it will be difficult for them to accept that rewards can ever legitimately depend on performance.

Where performance measurements are carried out, management should ensure that those measurements are valid and not based on personal bias. To be valid, performance measurement should be as objective as possible. Whenever possible, measurements should involve quantification of variables. Measurements should cover the right areas too – evaluating employees' characteristics, habits and customs which do not constitute duties or responsibilities should be avoided. For the measurements of performance to be valid, they should not be weighted

identically. Good performance of an important task should overshadow poor performance of a relatively unimportant task (Grant 1990:53).

Management should develop means of relatively frequent performance measurement and feedback. Biannual measurement of an employee's performance should be coupled with weekly, if not daily observations and feedback on performance (Daniels 2000:103–104). This will indicate management's seriousness about performance measurement and lead to employees realising that rewards can indeed be tied to performance.

## **2.4 Communicate effectively**

An important facet in the motivation of employees is to be aware of how to interact with them. Managers need to make sure orders or instructions to their employees are clear. They need to spell out precisely and in its simplest form what is required, and should not assume that employees know what they are talking about only because they understand it themselves very well. Managers should be as specific as they can in telling employees what is expected of them and how they are expected to behave. It would be wise if managers allow their employees time to acknowledge what they have said in order to make sure that they do understand it correctly.

Managers should also not create the impression that they would be irritated or annoyed if their employees ask them questions. By allowing them to ask questions not only increases their involvement and participation; it also reduces the risk of misunderstanding and develops an opportunity for clarification.

When they talk to their employees, managers should use words that are uplifting; words that make people feel good about themselves. When areas of improvement or poor performance, for instance, are discussed, managers should choose words that will constructively turn the corrective session into a motivational one where the employee leaves with feeling of worth and wanting to improve.

A manager should also learn to actively listen to the employee with whom he or she is communicating by focusing solely on that person and excluding everything else. He or she should show an interest in communicating with the particular person.

Evenson (1998:4) emphasises the following points that can be valuable to managers when communicating with their employees in a motivational fashion:

'Maintain a cheerful and enthusiastic attitude ... Think before you speak and ask yourself how will what I say sound to my listener? Be aware of your body language and maintain an open, relaxed and confident demeanor. Be a positive role model. Be the kind of person other people like to be around ... spend time with them. Be available to answer questions, to talk to your employees, to laugh with them, to make them feel good about coming to work. Even if you have a

hectic schedule set aside time each day to spend with your employees. It isn't the quantity of time you spend with them, it's the quality of time.'

To communicate effectively, managers should be aware of racial, ethnic, cultural and social factors unique to each individual. In particular they should be aware that these factors may vary among different cultural groups. For instance, persons in certain cultural groups amplify the volume of their voice when talking, while others lower their voice. A manager who correlates loudness with anger may misinterpret what is perceived as a normal communication pattern. A manager who associates a soft voice with timidity, indecisiveness, lack of assertiveness and incompetency, may likewise misinterpret such an employee's real abilities which may have a negative effect on his or her motivation to perform well.

## **2.5 Allowing employees to participate in decision making**

Employees should be given the authority to deal with a situation that requires their discretion. If employees do not have the autonomy to plan their own work and to solve their own work problems, it is unlikely that they will be motivated (Mol 1991:22). When they are allowed to use their own judgement, they are usually highly committed to make their plans succeed for no other reason than that they are *their* plans on how to achieve *their* objective; in other words, a feeling of belonging exists. Their commitment to make their plans succeed stems from the fact that their judgement and pride is at stake.

Stimulating employees to increase performance by allowing them to participate in decision making will not be that effective if managers fail to properly delegate responsibilities to employees. Therefore it can be valuable for managers to consider the following requirements for effective delegation (Nelson 1988:165–172):

- Managers need to plan delegation of responsibilities carefully to avoid inappropriate division of work which may mean that the work is being done by the wrong people, which implies that responsibilities may be delegated to inappropriate people.
- Managers should guard against keeping the pleasant jobs for themselves and delegating the unpleasant 'difficult' jobs that require much effort to their subordinates. They need to maintain a balance between pleasant and less pleasant duties when delegating.
- Adequate and appropriate powers need to be delegated to subordinates together with the delegated task, so that they will be able to perform the task properly.
- Managers should explain the task delegated to subordinates and should pass on all information that they may need to do the job.
- Managers should guard against being too prescriptive on how to do the delegated task. They should encourage subordinates to take the initiative.

- When delegating, managers should take into account the workload that subordinates will be able to cope with and should not overload them.
- Once a task has been delegated to subordinates, managers should continue giving support wherever necessary and should not withdraw completely from the task.
- Managers should continually monitor and evaluate the progress of a task that has been delegated.
- Information on mistakes made by subordinates should not be withheld from them for any reason, but should be brought to their attention at the earliest opportunity to avoid repetition of mistakes.
- Managers should not neglect giving recognition for a job well done. Even if there have been some mistakes in performing the job, managers should at least thank their subordinates for their efforts.

Robbins (1995:305–306) points out that participation in decision making should be at the option of the employee. No one should feel compelled to participate in decision making. Although participation can lead to increasing commitment and motivation among employees, managers should realise that some people may prefer to waive their rights to participate in decisions that affect them. Such preferences should be respected and rather other strategies should be sought to ensure that employees will still be motivated.

## 2.6 Rewarding good performance

Giving someone a reward means giving him or her something *without obligation* and in *recognition* for good performance (Mol 1991:24). What is important here, is the fact that all rewards must be linked to performance. If this is not the case, rewards can easily be interpreted as a 'right' which will have no motivating impact. Employees should have no right to claim a reward; it should be given by management without any obligation. The element of recognition, in other words, must be present. A benefit such as a pay increase or an office party, is seen as a 'right' and not a reward, because it is given to all employees where no distinction is made between the good and not-so-good performers; in other words, the element of recognition is missing.

When employees are rewarded for good performance, there are some crucial factors that managers should take into account, namely:

- Rewards should be appropriate and meaningful for the recipient and the giver. Different individuals, however, will consider different things to be important. For rewards to be appropriate, managers therefore need to take into account what those achieving employees will consider important.
- If employees are of the opinion that there is no balance between the amount of effort required and the size or significance of the reward, it may affect their motivation negatively. Irrespective of management's view, if employees feel

that the relative value of the reward does not warrant the amount of input they require, it may have a negative impact on their motivation. On the one hand, managers should be mindful of the importance of a fair reward in inspiring their employees. On the other hand, they have to realise that decisions about the fairness of rewards should not be viewed in isolation but should take into account the rewards received by others for similar achievements in similar circumstances. 'Recognition programmes must provide equal treatment for equal accomplishments' (Milas 1995:140).

- Managers should be aware that exceptional performers, compared to those whose performance is not as good, expect to receive more recognition and to progress more rapidly. Lisoski (1999:9) points out: 'Small improvements have small rewards and large improvements have large rewards. Trying to reward all successes in the same way will quickly prove counterproductive, as employees will soon begin to wonder why they should even bother'. Consequently, managers who make no distinction between the relative contributions of their employees may generate a negative attitude among employees and run the risk of undermining their own ability to motivate personnel.
- Rewards should be given intermittently (Milas 1995:141). Managers should guard against rewarding all positive actions of employees. Rewards that are given with predictable regularity will lose their impact and may even cause employees to stop producing the desired behaviour immediately after their performance has been rewarded. Instead of serving as an incentive, employees may eventually come to regard rewards as part of the compensation to which they are entitled.
- Achievements should be rewarded as soon as possible. Providing a reward immediately after achievement will leave no confusion in the mind of the recipient about what the reward is for.
- Managers should spell the performance objectives clearly out; in other words, the actions or behaviour expected of employees in order to be rewarded. Managers must make sure that employees understand what is being rewarded, why it is being rewarded and how the reward is determined (Lisoski 1999:7).
- Employees should receive feedback on their performance so that they can be aware of any shortcomings. Shortcomings brought to their attention may also serve as reasons for withholding rewards.
- Rewards and reward procedures should be monitored and modified regularly to ensure its motivational value (Milas 1995:142).

## **2.7 Build friendship with employees**

Managers who are cold, unfriendly and demanding often creates fear or resentment in people. Such managers should not expect to get the cooperation from their employees that they really want. Subordinates are more likely to listen to their superior who is a friend, to accept directions from such a superior and to

be motivated, because of the friendship (Grant 1990:80). Friendship builds trust and respect. No one likes to disappoint a friend. If a manager is a friend of his or her employees, those employees are likely to perform well, otherwise they may feel they have let him or her down. If they know the accomplishment of a task is important to the manager, who is a friend, employees tend to value what they achieve more highly (Grant 1990:80). Managers can develop friendship with their employees, for instance, by treating them as equals on and off the job, by sharing interests with them, by inviting them to engage in social activities, by showing that they enjoy being with them in both on- and off-the job situations and by helping them with personal problems and concerns.

## **2.8 Use employees to train others**

Perhaps there is no finer form of recognition of quality performance than to show faith in an employee's abilities by asking him or her to provide help in training someone else on the job. When employees realise that management are willing to use them as role models and to entrust the development of others to them, they are likely to perceive their ability levels to be high. The person being trained will often identify with a fellow worker more readily than with the superior. This can contribute to reduce tension, stimulate more open discussion of problems during the training and provide the trainee with greater certainty that the appropriate skills will be developed.

## **2.9 Performing self-scrutiny**

Managers should also make a point of scrutinising their own conduct before blaming employees for poor performance. Management may have a decisive effect on the performance of employees, for example, when an employee is unable to perform, management may consider moving him or her to a different position or redesigning the position in order to encourage improved performance. It is nevertheless extremely important for managers to scrutinise their own behaviour in order to gain insight which will enable them to see the effect of their leadership on employees in perspective. In performing self-scrutiny, managers should realise the following as pointed out by McIlroy (1997:44): 'When you (management) don't show your enthusiasm to them (subordinates), they show less enthusiasm to you and your ideas. When they don't think that you are being fair and just, they don't see why they should be either. When they think you don't trust them, they start to distrust you. If they don't think you care for them, they stop caring for you and sometimes stop caring altogether'.

## **2.10 Improving the self-image of employees**

For individuals to be able to perform exceptionally well, it is important that they

are self-confident and believe that they have the ability to render such performance (Grant 1990:70). However, for any individual to display these characteristics, he or she must have a positive self-image. The extent to which managers will succeed in inspiring employees to increase their performance will depend to an important degree on their ability to create a positive self-image among the employees. Managers may find the following guidelines useful in influencing the self-image of employees:

- If employees experience success in carrying out their activities and also accept that they will be successful in this regard, it will have a positive influence on their self-image. They will be able to experience success only if it is possible to measure their performance against specific criteria laid down by management.
- The aim of providing employees with feedback on their performance is to make them aware of their strengths and weaknesses. Employees who know what their strengths are will have a better chance to succeed, because they are more able to identify and utilise conditions or circumstances that favour their strengths. In addition, being aware of their weaknesses may enable them to work on eliminating them.
- When employees are uncertain or anxious, for example, because they don't know what is expected of them or how management will treat them or if they are afraid of being punished or even dismissed, it may reflect negatively in their work performance. It is the responsibility of management to eliminate uncertainty or anxiety as far as possible and to promote realistic expectations.

## **CONCLUSION**

To be successful in using the various strategies to enhance personnel motivation, managers should keep in mind that a given strategy may well have a different motivational impact on different people. This is mainly due to individual differences and perceptions which are highly personalised. Managers have to realise that people have many different qualities which differ from one person to the next and have to be managed as such. Understanding a transcultural staff, for instance, requires recognising each individual's unique cultural values, beliefs and practices. Different employees will perceive the nature and impact of a given strategy in different ways. Likewise, a given strategy may affect an employee in different ways at different points in time because conditions, needs and personal objectives are not static and change over time. A given strategy may increase motivation in some ways and diminish it in others. To be sure which strategies will be the most effective – considering the uniqueness of the circumstances and the diversity of the group involved – will take considerable thought, patience, time and effort. What is certain from the outset, however, is that managers who want to heighten employee motivation, need to be tolerant of individual

differences and need to show an understanding for the reactions of individuals towards certain strategies.

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