Tips, Insights & Tactics
11 Ways to Boost Morale

Think of morale like a checking account. Every day there numerous transactions. Some are deposits and some are withdrawals. At the end of the day, the month, the year; is the account growing or is it overdrawn? Healthy morale is the result of a rewarding work experience. A place where employees feel respected, valued and appreciated. A place where an individual feels that their contribution matters.

1. Do little things make a difference? Yes and no.
Morale is the underlying way someone feels. Transient rewards such as birthday celebrations, tchotchkes and events are viewed through the lens of the individual’s current state of morale. They’re short term considerations that either complement or contrast with the way an employee feels about where they work.

2. Attitude Adjustment
Consider the value of morale. In terms of production, it affects quantity, quality, delivery and service; and the resulting company reputation. In terms of operations it affects productivity, turnover and absenteeism. The impact of morale is too important to be addressed solely with low-cost tactics. It requires a strategic plan and leadership’s support.

3. Listen for understanding.
When you listen for understanding you show that you respect, value and appreciate what the person speaking has to say. And they’ll be more open to focus on your response after they feel they’ve been heard and understood.

4. Rote or real?
Take note of how “thank you” sounds when it’s simply a polite acknowledgement or when it’s heartfelt. Sincere appreciation is confident, enthusiastic and most meaningful when it’s specific.

5. Communicate
Information can be thought of as a form of currency. When the wealth is shared it creates a sense of connection, respect and trust. But when it’s withheld or delayed it can have the opposite effect.
6. Rewarding Matters
Depending on the company and the economic climate, managers may be limited in the rewards they can deliver for good work. One option may be personal time off. Whether it’s getting off an hour early or receiving an extra paid day of vacation, personal time off is nearly always a meaningful way to boost morale.

7. Rejuvenating Opportunities
The chance to pursue new opportunities often drives people to move on. Employers who offer paid opportunities—or time off—to perform volunteer work can help their employees explore new opportunities, support their local community and reinforce morale. When volunteers return to the office, they bring a fresh perspective to their work.

8. Learning is Rewarding
Career-related training can pay long-term dividends. Besides the obvious return on investment for adding new skills and expertise to your workforce, it also shows employees they’re important and worth the company’s investment.

9. Compensating Factors
Money isn’t everything. Once our basic needs are provided for, most of us are relatively satisfied with average, or slightly above average, compensation for our work. What keeps us on the job is responsibility and purpose. The need to feel valued, respected and that our work makes a difference. We want to work in a flexible, open-minded office culture, with opportunities to grow and innovate. The more we feel we have these things, the greater our morale.

10. Connect Contribution to Result
The larger the office, the more specialized our work, and the easier it is to lose sight of how our work contributes to business results. But that connection is important. When we can see for ourselves how what we’re doing affects end results, it’s energizing.

11. Start Building Morale Now
It’s easy to think of recognition as formal recognition, like an award or a round of applause at a department meeting. Those things contribute to morale, but try thinking of recognition as a method of interaction. When we recognize value and expertise in every interaction with our colleagues and customers we build the foundations of strong morale.

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