

Introduction

Professionals' podcasts from LearnEnglish help you to improve your English for your career in the workplace, and cover a large number of business and work themes. They are suitable for learners at intermediate to advanced level.

This support pack accompanies the Professionals' podcast:

Motivation at work

Listen to part of an interview with this professor of Business Studies about the subject of motivation.



To read or listen to the article online, go to:

<http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/professionals-podcasts/motivation-workplace>

This support pack contains the following materials:

- a pre-reading vocabulary activity;
- the article;
- a comprehension task
- a language task

Before you listen

Match the words and phrases in the table to their definitions.

1. motivation	2. boost	3. approval	4. recognition
5. factor	6. enrichment	7. contribution	8. a profit

Definitions:

- admiration and respect for your achievements
- something that helps produce or achieve something
- the need or reason for doing something
- a fact or situation which influences the result of something
- money earned after costs deducted
- improving something by adding something else
- to improve the amount or quality of something
- when you have a positive opinion of someone or something

Transcript: Motivation at work

Interviewer: How important is motivation for a manager?

Professor: Oh, motivation is extremely important. I'd say it's the most important aspect of a manager's job. A manager's job is to get the job done, whatever that job might be. So a manager has to motivate the workers, both as a team and also on an individual basis. Without motivation, the job just won't get done.

Interviewer: So how do managers go about doing this? It doesn't sound very easy.

Professor: No, it is a complicated issue. But managers have special tools. They are trained to use them to boost motivation and increase production to a maximum.

Interviewer: Tools?

Professor: Yes, tools like praise, approval and recognition. And then there is trust and expectation. They are all important for workers.

Interviewer: And money? What about money?

Professor: Yes, money is a factor but you might be surprised to learn that it comes out last on the list of these tools that we are talking about.

Interviewer: So, what comes before money? What sort of things are more important for workers?

Professor: Well, all of the things that I have already mentioned, and then job enrichment and good communication between the workers and the bosses.

Interviewer: And have you got any examples of real life situations to back up your claims?

Professor: One good example is the firm Western Electric. When managers started taking an interest in their workers, there was a huge increase in production. They started to talk to the workers and encouraged them to get involved in decision making. Workers began to feel that their contributions were important. And it paid off.

Interviewer: Productivity increased?

Professor: Yes, hugely. The Swedish company Kochums is another example. The company was on the verge of collapse when managers decided to try a change in motivation practice.

Interviewer: What did they do?

Professor: Well, basically it was a change in attitude towards their workers. Managers decided to stop giving orders and to try persuading them instead.

Interviewer: And it worked?

Professor: Absolutely. In just ten years they managed to turn a 15 million dollar loss into a 100 million dollar profit.

Interviewer: So, let's get this straight are you saying that workers are not interested in earning more money?

Professor: I'm saying they're not just interested in money. It is important of course. We need to enjoy a certain standard of living. But, as I mentioned before, there are other things that are just as important: praise, approval, recognition, trust and expectation, job enrichment and good communication.

Comprehension task

True or false

Listen to the interview and read these notes that a student has made.

Decide if what the student has written is true or false.

1. The most important thing for a manager is motivation.
2. Managers find motivation easy because they are trained.
3. Money is the most important factor for workers.
4. Workers at Western Electric increased productivity after management started to include them in decision making.
5. The company Kochums changed from being a failing company to a successful one after changing their motivation practice.

Language task

Fill in the gaps

After you have listened, fill in the gaps with the correct preposition.

Listen again if you don't know the answer.

1. the most important aspect ____ a manager's job
2. a manager has to motivate the workers, both as a team and also ____ an individual basis
3. increase production ____ a maximum
4. it comes ____ last on the list
5. communication ____ the workers and bosses
6. they are all important ____ workers
7. it was a change ____ attitude
8. they turned a loss ____ a profit
9. they're not just interested ____ money
10. other things that are just ____ important

Answers

Language Task: 1 - of, 2 - on, 3 - to, 4 - out, 5 - between, 6 - for, 7 - in, 8 - into, 9 - in, 10 - as

Comprehension Task: 1 - true, 2 - false, 3 - false, 4 - true, 5 - true

Before you read: 1 - c, 2 - g, 3 - h, 4 - a, 5 - d, 6 - f, 7 - b, 8 - e