

- (i.e., twice the fastest speed in the “baseline” group) too high, thus making the goal unreachable? Alternatively, was it too low, thus making the specific goal too easy?
3. What do you think would happen if the goal was lowered, thus making it easier, or raised, thus making it more difficult?
 4. Do you think that providing feedback about goal attainment (e.g., someone counting the number of words copied and calling this out to the performers as they worked) would have helped?
 5. For what other kinds of tasks do you believe goal setting may be effective? Specifically, do you believe that goal setting can improve your own performance on something? Explain this possibility.

Practicing OB

Motivating Nurses at a Hospital

You have been hired by the director of a large suburban hospital to help resolve problems of poor morale that have been plaguing the nursing staff. Unfortunately, the nurses don't find their jobs particularly interesting. As a result, turnover and absenteeism have been high, and patient care is at an all-time low. The problem is apparent to everyone; both doctors and patients have been complaining. Answer the following questions relevant to this situation based on the material in this chapter.

1. After interviewing the nurses, you found that they believed that no one cared how well they were doing. What theories could help explain this problem?

Applying these approaches, what would you recommend the hospital should do to resolve this problem?

2. Hospital officials tell you that the nurses are well paid, adding to your surprise about the low morale. However, your interviews reveal that the nurses themselves feel otherwise. Why might this occur and why is this a problem? What could be done to help?
3. “I'm bored with my job,” one highly experienced nurse tells you, and you believe she speaks for many within the hospital. What could be done to make their jobs more interesting to those who perform them? What are the limitations of your plan? Would it work equally well for other members of the hospital staff (e.g., clerical and janitorial employees)?

Case in Point

■ Google: Searching for a Better Way to Work

Google, the immensely popular Web search engine, has been touted as “the closest thing the Web has to an ultimate answer machine.” Although this is debatable, of course, it is far more difficult to deny that the company is, in fact, the closest thing we have to an ultimate example of business success. Founded by two computer science graduate students at Stanford University in the late 1990s, Larry Page and Sergey Brin, Google has grown astronomically. In late 1998, the search engine had 10,000 queries per day, a figure that grew to 300 million by 2009. More than just a search engine, Google now has 12 product lines, including its highly regarded Android cell phone. On the heels of these accomplishments, financial success likewise has been impressive. Only four months after the initial public offering of Google stock in August 2004, its price more than doubled and has risen much higher ever since.

Although Google is in the technology business, its founders acknowledge that the company's greatest challenges lie more with people than computers. At first, Page and Brin worked with just a handful of employees out of a converted garage, but today the company has some 10,000 employees in its sprawling headquarters, known as the “Googleplex,” in Mountain View, California. With such rapid growth, how can Page and Brin ensure that their many new employees share their passion for innovation and work hard to achieve it? Brin explains his strategy quite simply: “To have a good lifestyle, we have to have a good lifestyle at work.”

Just about all the people who work at Google, from the most advanced computer engineers to the lowest level employees, are hand selected (or, at least, approved) by Page and Brin. They look for people who are inspired not by money, but by love of the work they do. After all,

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they are expected to work long hours and to achieve unparalleled levels of excellence, to come up with “the next big thing.” To make this happen, they go out of their way to make Google a great place to work. As Brin put it, “Work should be challenging, and the challenge should be fun.”

With this in mind, Page and Brin have taken strides to ensure that there’s a comfortable and friendly atmosphere at Google. For example, there is no dress code; you dress however you wish to be comfortable (as stated in the company’s philosophy, “You can be serious without a suit”). People even can bring their dogs to work, keeping them company throughout the day. To help everyone stay fit and to build a spirit of teamwork, there’s also a very strong spirit of play at Google; at noon each day there’s a volleyball game outside.

Google puts users first when it comes to online service, and it puts employees first when it comes to daily working life. Employees are treated very well. A fantastic on-site cafeteria serves gourmet meals of every kind, catering to a variety of dietary needs and preferences—all absolutely free of charge. According to CEO Eric E. Schmidt, this is just good business because it keeps people at their desks instead of leaving the building to eat. The company also invests in its employees in another interesting way. Every year, the company takes all its

employees on an all-expenses-paid ski trip. Again, this is seen as good for the business because it promotes the spirit of camaraderie that’s necessary in their work environment, in which the sharing of ideas is critical.

This is not to say that Google is lavish or wasteful. Although Page and Brin each made \$6 billion when the company went public, and 1,000 employees also became millionaires, it is not money that keeps people going at Google. Page and Brin still share a small office and live modestly, as do most of their employees. Although they have the means to be living extremely well (and surely will do so someday), right now, the thing that keeps everyone going at Google is their zeal to use computer technology to change the world. It’s all about innovation, and not getting rich quick.

Questions for Discussion

1. What does Google do to motivate its employees?
2. Based on the material in this chapter, what recommendations would you make to Google about additional things it could do to enhance motivation?
3. What particular problems or limitations do you envision in the recommendations you offered in answering the previous question? For example, under what conditions are they likely to be effective? Would they work for everyone?

■ Diversity at KPMG

According to Kathy Hannan, diversity is essential to the culture at KPMG. Hannan heads both the company’s Women’s Advisory Board and the Diversity Advisory Board. In fact, KPMG has established a number of other advisory boards, including one for African Americans, one for Latinos, and one for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender employees.

KPMG’s commitment to a more diverse workforce is also evident in its efforts to recruit and hire minorities. The company has implemented several programs designed to attract students to the firm with the expectation that they could become future hires. These programs include internships and other kinds of educational opportunities. Furthermore, KPMG believes that a diverse workforce attracts more minority workers. Nigel Franklin of KPMG’s African American Network agrees. He notes that prospective hires want to see other people like themselves in an organization so that they know that there is someone to relate to—someone who has traveled their path already.

Kathy Hannan says that the Women’s Advisory Board is actively focusing on retaining young women; to that end, she has established goals of how the firm should look from a gender perspective and created a network that

acts as a forum for women to reach out to each other. Kristen Johnston of KPMG’s Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Network believes that education is the key to a more diverse organization. Johnston says that is important to help people understand differences and accept them. She feels that there is a long road ahead, but is optimistic that, at some point in time, stereotypes and prejudices will be a thing of the past. Hannan agrees, and believes that one day there no longer will be a need for the different networks to support the various groups. Until then, though, they perform a valuable role.

Discussion Questions

1. Which of the major training approaches to diversity management as discussed in Chapter 6 is KPMG following?
2. How does Kristen Johnston of KPMG’s Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Network hope the group will help her avoid the prejudice and discrimination described in Chapter 6 that is found commonly in many organizations?
3. Which of the guidelines presented in Chapter 6 for making diversity programs successful is KPMG following?

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