

How to Motivate and Retain an Exceptional Team

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Good evening.

At Accomplice, our work centres strengthening and developing organisations and workforce. Inevitably team building is part of this.

So I'm delighted to be with an **audience that wants to learn more about building exceptional teams** – a practical subject dear to our hearts at Accomplice.]

Now that you have recruited your talented team– it's time to [provide some ideas for you on motivating and retaining them](#). Something that is all the more important in these [challenging and unprecedented economic times](#).

Motivation and retention are both, in their own right, vast subject areas – and still under exploration.

Know about ...

- Motivation and its place in staff retention
- Foundations for motivating exceptional teams
- Role of the team leader as team motivator

So in these precious few minutes, I'd like to

- draw from **a little of the best theory on motivation** to see its place in staff retention
- quickly check that **your foundations are secure** for building your exceptional team
- and then bring together the ideas we've collected to produce **half a dozen practical actions** you can take away with you to help motivate and retain your team members.

So first let's look at the links between motivation and staff retention

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Why's Motivation Important?

- Motivated staff
 - look for better ways to do a job
 - are more oriented towards quality.
 - are more productive
 - are happier and stay longer
- Motivate team
 - Does all, even more so: “2 + 2 = 5”

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Ever asked yourself the question: how do I get my employees or my team to

- always look for better ways to do a job

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- be more quality oriented
- be more productive
- be happier at work, stay longer with us
- contribute to higher morale and team spirit?

... then a significant part of the answer lies in how you motivate them.

And when members are built together into **high quality teams**, then **levels of motivation and productivity further increase.**

Popular Theories?

[Acquired Needs Theory](#): we seek power, achievement or affiliation.

[Affect Perseverance](#): Preference persists after disconfirmation.

[Attitude-Behavior Consistency](#): factors that align attitude and behavior.

[Attribution Theory](#): we need to attribute cause, that supports our ego.

[Cognitive Dissonance](#): non-alignment is uncomfortable.

[Cognitive Evaluation Theory](#): we select tasks based on how doable they are.

[Consistency Theory](#): we seek the comfort of internal alignment.

[Control Theory](#): we seek to control the world around us.

[Disconfirmation bias](#): Agreeing with what supports beliefs and vice versa.

[Drive Theory](#): We seek to satisfy needs.

[Endowed Progress Effect](#): Progress is motivating.

[ERG Theory](#): We seek to fulfill needs of existence, relatedness and growth.

[Escape Theory](#): We seek to escape uncomfortable realities.

[Expectancy Theory](#): We are motivated by desirable things we expect we can achieve.

[Extrinsic Motivation](#): external: tangible rewards.

[Goal-Setting Theory](#): different types of goals motivate us differently.

[Intrinsic Motivation](#): internal: value-based rewards.

[Investment Model](#): our commitment depends on what we have invested.

[Opponent-Process Theory](#): opposite emotions interact.

[Positive psychology](#): What makes us happy.

[Reactance Theory](#): discomfort when freedom is threatened.

[Self-Determination Theory](#): External and internal motivation.

[Self-Discrepancy Theory](#): we need beliefs to be consistent.

[Side Bet Theory](#): aligned side-bets increase commitment to a main bet.

[Transtheoretical Model of Change](#): Stages in changing oneself.

Look for ideas on how to motivate and you'll find a **vast array of theories** ...

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if you're looking for perfect theory around motivation – stop now!

It's complicated – but we have some valuable insights.

Key lesson? If you're looking for perfect theory around motivation – stop now!

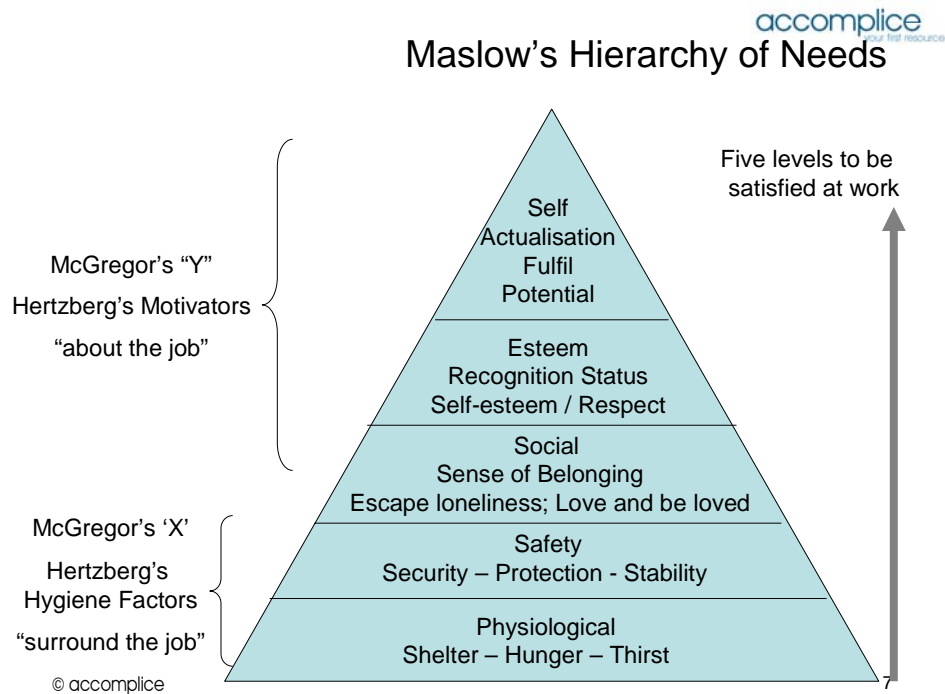
It's complicated: Understand human behaviour and you'll understand motivation... a

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pretty tall order.

However theory does lend us some valuable insights on how we can best motivate and lead our teams.

3 quick theoretical concepts around motivation - and then let's apply them to retention



1st: Maslow's hierarchy of needs is probably the **best know illustration** of motivation theory. It links nicely with early concepts of McGregor and Herzberg of the early 1900s ... and yet heralds the more contemporary and complex theories that were to follow.

For Maslow

- recognises that people are motivated by different things
- differentiates the **basic needs** which 'pay and conditions' largely secures from the **psychological** needs which the job and role itself can bring - often referred to as "job satisfaction"
- concludes that workers will generally aim to satisfy all five levels - beginning with their the basic '**physiological and safety**' needs and then their psychological needs for '**social connection, esteem and ultimately self-fulfilment**'.

As team leaders, we need to understand what needs individuals have, noting that they can change over time.

Two Types Motivation

- **Intrinsic motivation** – internal, because something either brings them pleasure, it's important or significant
e.g. the need for approval, independence, stability, power, peers relationships, social standing/importance
- **Extrinsic motivation** – external, people are compelled to do something or act a certain way because of factors outside of themselves
e.g. money, rewards, accolades, good grading ... competition, punishments, restrictions, coercion.

2nd: like most theories, Mazlow alludes to two types of motivation

- Intrinsic motivation (or internally motivated): that is, their own internal drivers and values – needs that may be conscious or unconscious at work
- and,
- extrinsic motivation: motivated or compelled to action by forces and elements that are outside the individual

As team leaders, we need to know what is within your power to influence - and how - in order to motivate your team.

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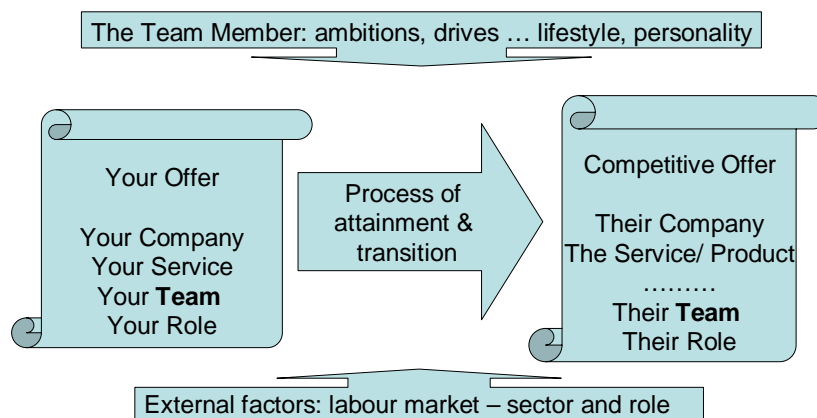
The end goal must be worth
the effort invested in getting there

3rd and perhaps my favourite ... through theories we also learn that motivation will only result when,

- the end goal appeals sufficiently to warrant
- the effort of getting to it.

Too far away, too complex or not sufficiently challenging, for example, and the individual will not strive to reach the goal. Make the journey easier and the goal more attractive, and motivation increases.

Application to Retention (it's all in the balance)



(and how you manage it)

Applying these ideas to retention, we can see that if **the balance of motivating factors offered in a new team outweigh those of the current team** and the transition or recruitment journey across to the new team is manageable, then your team member or members will be drawn away from your team into the new one. The converse is also true.

Given that **it is the individual who is motivated at the end of the day**, our goal as motivator and retainer of the team members, is to

- **learn what motivates the various members in the team (using these theories as a starting point)**
- **know which 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic' motivators you can influence** - anything from pay, rewards and praise through to job enrichment, autonomy and the like **and then to**
- **adjust the motivating factors you can to uphold and increase motivation in - and so retain - the required combination of team members.**

Foundations for Motivating Exceptional Teams

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Who doesn't want to be part of a successful team? Being part of an exceptional team is motivating in itself. So let's check out whether you have the right foundation to build one?

At Accomplice, we've identified 12 key components of top performing teams. Many, if not all, of the elements

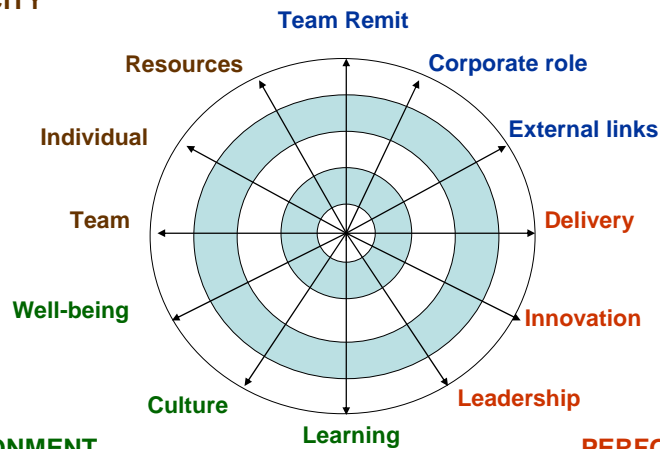
- are within the Team leader's grasp to fashion.
- act as further motivators to team and individual alike.

We'll just skim through the categories now but if you want more detail, read the leaflet and accompanying article that's in your delegate pack handouts

Foundations for Motivating Your Team

CAPACITY

POSITION



ENVIRONMENT

PERFORMANCE

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First and foremost, your job is to ensure that you

- Secure a **unique position** and identity for your team – **valued** within and without the team and organisation. The **remit or mandate** for the Team. Its service or role must be clear to all, **understood and owned** by each member of your team. And you should have an **explicit and agreed plan for its delivery**.

You need to

- Build your team's reputation for **performance**. Ensure it has **delivery measures** and that members receive **celebrate and report** on their achievements as a Team - not just to the team but the **full range of investors, customers, service users and stakeholders**. Be sure the Team draws on **best practice**, encourages **innovation** and that there is **strong leadership** to ensure its performance continues in the future.

You have

- Create a **conductive base - a sound, safe and supportive environment** - for members to return to and move out from. A place where the team members can **learn together** from theory or good practice, mishap, mistake or misadventure. A **culture** where agreed standards are adhered to; **decisions are taken, difficulties discussed and conflict is resolved in a mature way**. A place where mutual respect for abounds, stress minimised and **people 'feel good' about being and working together**.

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Finally, you must

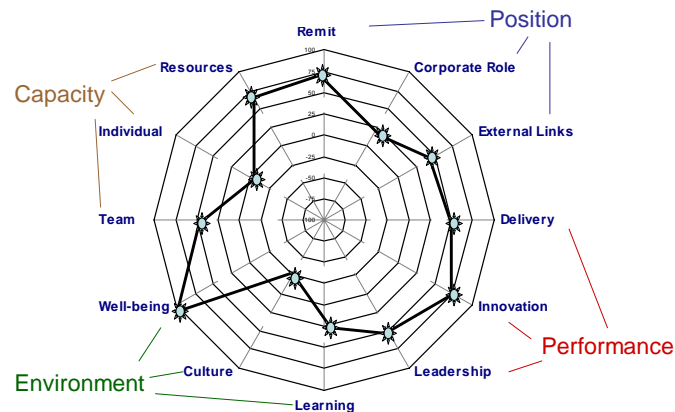
- Make sure you have the **capacity** and resources to reach your goal - and that you make the most of what you do have. Recruit the right combination of Team members
Develop or ensure the Team has access to the full range of competencies.

Every **individual** should know their contribution to the team and feel supported in making it.

Suitable and fully operational equipment, facilities and working environment.

And realise that in building and motivating your Team, you do not need to be alone.

How well is your team doing?
... build your own High Performing Team



Invite your team members to help assess your stage in development as a team. Draw in the views of others outside the team for perspective. Then engage team members in building a plan together to improve weaknesses in any of the dimensions.

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Role of the Team Leader as Team Motivator

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Amongst the Team Leader's many roles, one of the most important of which has to be motivating the Team and retaining its members.

Team Leader as Motivator

- Understand how team members are motivated
- Manage motivational factors to retain talent
- Secure the foundations of an 'exceptional' team
- Live out the Team mandate in public and private
- Encourage potential and leadership: fairness and flexibility according to each situation, task and individual

- Balance concern for people with the product or service that you must deliver.

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Bringing together our learning so far, we can see that as team leader you'll want to:

- Understand the variety of ways in which your team members - as individuals - are motivated
- Select and manage the motivational factors that you have influence over - to retain the talent you need
- Oversee and work with your team members to secure the foundations for your 'exceptional' or high performing team - further motivating your members to play and stay within that Team

To lend further motivation, you will also need to

- Live out your Team remit or mandate in practice, gaining respect by
 - demonstrating optimism for the future,
 - signing the way forward through any difficulties
 - exhibiting its values and appropriate behaviours - both in public and private
- Encourage potential and leadership within the team wherever possible: that is, be fair but flex your style to each situation, task and individual concerned... motivating each to realise their full potential

And, be cautioned to

- Balance concern for your members with the product or service that you must deliver. The best leader neither neglects nor favours one over the other but rather holds them in balance. An art in itself.

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Know about ...

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- Foundations for motivating exceptional teams
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Whether you are here as a team leader, team member or out of pure interest, I leave you with this **starter kit to inform your practice but also stimulate you to dig deeper and keep learning** about motivating and retaining your team members.

And I thank you for your time and attention.

ENDS

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Larry is talented with a great reputation within and without his team and with competitor organizations. Restructuring of his team doesn't strip Larry of his pay or job title but his esteem is damaged as he now no longer directly reports to the Team leader. What happened? He takes up a new job with the competition. Lesson: Understand what makes people tick - it's not necessarily the 'formal' titles, rewards, pay and perks that count.

No one realises that the conscientious administrator, Siobhan is a talented musician and craftswoman in love with Cornwall. She's frugal, without family ties and responsibilities and has no care for status or position - in job, home or car! Increasing work pressure leaves her little time to pursue the things she really loves. What happened? She sells her house, moves into a mobile home on the Cornwall coastline and starts her own business - crafts in the day, paid musician by night.

Stephen is motivated by seeing the impact of his efforts: people trained and educated. His current role is too remote from practice and he fails to see where he is making an impact? What happened? He is now exploring a career in teaching, considering the ease with which he can transfer to the new sector and role.