



Summer Renewal

*“Until you value yourself, you won't value your time.
Until you value your time, you will not do anything with it.”*
M. Scott Peck

Summer is the time for renewal, to charge your batteries and assess your own development. It's a time to reflect, plan for the future, and take a vacation. The definition of vacation is not “managing work from your fishing boat.” In this electronic age, resisting the temptation of a “working vacation” is a big challenge. “The 2007 Orbitz survey finds 27 percent of Americans skipped a vacation altogether in the past year.” 1)

For many years, Chrysler President, Lee Iacocca, would not take a vacation because he believed the company could not run without him. Over time, what he discovered was the company could not run *with* him unless he took a vacation. He changed his vacation practice when he realized he was not allowing himself the time for renewal nor was he allowing his organization the opportunity for empowerment and motivation.

Use your time away as an opportunity for self renewal. Try something new to open new perspectives. Re-experience what it is like to be a novice swimmer, biker, etc. (That may be similar to the experience of a new employee on your team.) Read a book to explore new ideas. Be a customer and notice what makes good customer service. Spend time with a teenager to learn the newest technology and communication tools.

Bring those insights back to the office and consider new ways to renew, motivate and empower your organization. Many people point to money as a primary motivator, but studies by the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) and the American Management Association (AMA) reveal that financial incentives tend to provide only short-term motivational surges.

What Motivates. Note where salary and stock options fall on the list.	
People and work environment	66%
Good relationship with management	33%
Challenging and exciting job	33%
Flexibility	24%
Salary	19%
Autonomy and creative freedom	16%
Training and learning opportunities	13%
Stock options	9%
Source: GoalManager Employee Motivation Survey 2000. Percentages are based on multiple responses to each question so the total will not add up to 100%	



3 Motivational Truths

Many theories and books about motivation can be distilled to three basic truths:

- Nobody motivates another person. On the other hand, managers can create a climate that either encourages or discourages employees from motivating themselves toward a desired outcome.
- Motivation is unique. The thing that motivates you as a supervisor may not be inspiring to everyone on your team.
- Successful leaders inspire others. When a person gets a motivated spark or idea, the leader will either fuel it or drown it. 3)

Going hand in hand with motivation is empowerment. Think about how your engagement increases when you are “empowered” to take initiative and make choices about your work. To promote empowerment throughout all levels of your organization, you can use the three principal strategies of Delegation, Development and Direction.

- Delegating or assigning specific project elements to employees allows employees to increase their competency, understanding of the organization and self-confidence to match the requirements of the new responsibility.
- Developing or building employees’ knowledge and skills increases the organization’s capacity to create better processes, save time, reduce waste, and increase quality.
- Directing work with clear reference to the purpose, the success measures, and the value contributed to the overall purpose of the organization moves employees from being supervisor-directed to self-directed.

This summer, listen to Lee Iacocca’s advice – take a vacation to renew yourself. You will not only provide the organization the opportunity for increased motivation, empowerment and growth, but you will come back with increased creativity, clarity on priorities and better health!

- 1) Cheryl Russell, American Consumers Newsletter, 26-July-2007, Retrieved 6-5-07
http://www.newstrategist.com/newsletterdetail.cfm?newsletter_id=32
- 2) GoalManager employee motivation survey, 2000.
- 3) Applied Leadership: Lead Great People.