



NORTHGATE

ACTIVITIES FOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Motivate!

A unique training activity that enables participants to consider and test their motivational techniques in a simulated workplace.

MAIN SKILLS

- Motivation
- Leadership
- Handling people
- Teamwork
- Time management
- Communication
- Problem solving

“One of the few activities that gets participants actually motivating each other, not just learning the theory.”

TIMING	2 hours
PARTICIPANTS	Three groups of 4-7 participants
COST	£250 plus delivery (plus VAT in UK)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Training on the subject of motivation tends to concentrate on the theoretical, probably because it can be difficult to examine the practical side of motivation and how to motivate.

This activity fills that gap by providing you with an exercise that focuses directly on the ‘how to’ aspects of motivation and answers questions such as ‘What is it that motivates staff?’ and ‘How can a manager maintain a high level of motivation within the staff?’

SCENARIO

‘Kellys’, ‘Robsons’ and ‘McClarens’ are three companies that manufacture and distribute a range of toiletries. Each day the companies receive order enquiries from supermarkets, pharmacies and other buyers. They respond by sending out a quotation for the goods. If the quote is accepted they receive a firm order.

All three companies have the same products and pricing structure, so competition is keen. How can one company ensure that their quotes will be accepted - and so gain sales over its competitors?

THE TASK

Participants are arranged in three groups each representing the **Sales Processing Department** for one of the above companies. Each has a manager who, at the start of the exercise, is separate from them - ideally in another room, or at a distance within the same room.

Each manager has a **Briefing Sheet** which contains sales targets to aim for and they can have up to three, 10-minute organisational meetings with their respective teams, to discuss progress or plan strategy. Any further communications between manager and team must be by post only.

As the group task - preparing sales quotations - is intrinsically tedious and unrewarding – but competition for sales is strong - managers will need to think of real, practical ways to motivate their group. Possibilities within the exercise include:

- **setting high targets**
- **job rotation**
- **changing responsibility within groups**
- **giving recognition**
- **communicating at a high level**
- **sharing information, particularly objectives**
- **giving control to the workers**
- **praising and thanking**

During the course of each 'day' managers have time to consider these issues and prepare for their meetings.

Successful groups are led by managers who give lots of feedback and share information. Often this is in the form of graphs and charts – particularly relating to orders achieved and targets to be met.

One interesting issue is the **leadership style** of managers. Do they insist on teams working in a way they dictate or do they encourage groups to participate in the planning of how they work best?

THE WINNING TEAM

This is normally the group that wins the greatest amount (in **revenue**) of orders - but this is by no means the only measure of success to use. **Morale** at the end of the exercise is just as important.

Each team is working on a deliberately boring and repetitive task. It may be that the team is self-motivated but more likely - just as in real life – they will find it difficult to get too enthusiastic.

With a self-motivated team managers may apparently have little or no work to do though – but even good teams need managing and perhaps even higher targets can be attained. There is always the danger that managers with a good team will sit back, become complacent and in due course problems arise.

With a poor group there is obviously a lot of work to do. How then will the managers cope? Is there **evidence** of their having made a difference to the way the teams worked?

DEBRIEF

Groups should be asked to comment on their levels of motivation. Did they feel that an effective leader was in charge? How did this help? Were any of the motivational techniques (listed above) adopted by the groups?

Winning the highest amount of orders in one week is a great, but what about subsequent weeks? Motivation is a long-term affair. Managers need staff who will work consistently at an efficient level. There's no point in achieving a high level one week but alienating staff so that they work at a lower level in subsequent weeks. All these points can be examined.

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WHAT TO DO

1. Put participants in three groups to represent the companies, Kellys, Robsons, McClarens.
2. Select a manager from each; position away from their group.
3. Issue appropriate **Briefing Sheets** to teams and managers - and **Quotation Pads** and the **Monday Enquiries** to the teams.
4. Ensure managers and teams do not communicate unless a meeting is arranged through you. Managers can 'post' material to their teams.
5. After 30 minutes collect in the quotations. Note: there can be immense differences. We have received only eight from one group while their competitors achieved 40! Announce the beginning of a 'rest period'.
6. Process the quotations and deliver confirmation of the orders to the 'successful' company. This takes about 10 minutes.
7. Issue the **Enquiries for Tuesday** to each team.
8. Repeat the process for as many 'days' as you wish to run the activity.
9. Announce the revenue for each team. Lead a discussion by asking how groups felt about the process. Focus on how managers attempted to motivate, how teams reacted and the different approaches that were adopted. Full Trainer's Notes in the pack.

A variation on this exercise is to set up telephones (or intercoms) between managers and groups. The seeming advantage of this constant line of communication can be nullified by the amount of time spent on the line.

TRAINER'S QUOTE

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