

Force them

Motivate them

From the biggest go-getter to the person who just seems to be putting in time, the people who work for you are all motivated by three strong forces that get them up in the morning.

1. The need to achieve
2. The burn to learn
3. The craving to contribute

This shouldn't be too big a surprise; these are the same three things that motivate you.

Let's look at each one in turn.

1. **The need to achieve.** To feed that need to achieve, empty praise is just empty calories. Mastery comes from what you can do, not what people say about what you can do. You achieve mastery; nobody can give it to you. Help your

employees master new skills. Keep them striving to reach the next level.

2. **The burn to learn.** If your purpose is to motivate learning, “grading” (or any external evaluation) has never worked and never will. In fact, rewards and punishments often do more harm than good. Beyond paychecks and performance reviews, beyond any external motivation you could ever create, the burn to learn makes learning inevitable—if you create an atmosphere where learning can happen.
3. **The craving to contribute.** Give your employees real work that matters, and give them what they need to get it done. Let them know how their efforts fit into the big picture, especially if their work is only part of the effort going into a large project.

Here are three simple techniques for challenging your employees:

Let them do the job: When you assign them a goal, also assign them the responsibility for doing it and give them the means to do it right.

Match the worker to the task: Plan for success, not failure. Match their skills and aptitudes with the jobs.

Focus on process as well as product: The journey is often as important as the destination. Help

employees work through the steps, gaining mastery as they go.

“Put a challenge, the necessary resources, and workers together with a clearly defined goal and stand back. You won’t need to teach—but they’ll sure learn!”