



### “Values series” Part 3

# “Motivate me please!”

It's the end of the year. Letters stuffed with bonuses are handed out to employees or a firm handshake is given as thanks for all the hard work and success achieved. But what is really needed to ensure that an employee comes to work with love, passion, and enthusiasm for the job? Is the promise of a bonus what spurs employees on to achieve excellence or is there more to it? And, if it's the manager's job to motivate employees, then who motivates the manager?

by Sabine Grebien and Bruno Geiger

#### “Enthusiasm, knowledge, and competence are the driving forces behind company performance”

Of course, markets, the economy, financial circumstances, global politics, and global health are important factors influencing how well a company performs. However, every company success, every business idea, and every good product is now more dependent than ever on the enthusiasm, knowledge, and competence of managers and employees. These determine whether employees strive with joy and passion to achieve their best as opposed to just “doing their job”. If the interactions between the people responsible for planning and implementation aren't working, then everything else becomes secondary. What's the point of having a mission and strategy if these aren't conceived and implemented with passion? Where's the value in having a good product if it isn't made, marketed, and sold by engaged and enthusiastic employees and bought and recommended by satisfied customers? Precisely – none at all!

A company needs people to act as brand ambassadors, who identify with the organization and its values. This applies equally to employees, managers, and customers. Managers need to embody an abundance mindset and to create a culture of mutual trust and honesty. But who is responsible for ensuring that employees come to work with sufficient energy to make everything “fly”?

#### “Motivation comes from within”

Motivation is, in summary, all of the motives (reasons) behind a person's desire to perform an action. It also involves an individual's drive – based on emotional and neurobiological activity – to achieve desirable goals.<sup>1</sup>

From this brief definition of motivation, it's obvious that other people are not responsible for motivating us. The desire to satisfy our “core needs” plays a large part in driving our motivation and desire to achieve something. In other words, a large degree of personal responsibility and self-motivation is involved.

Why would you want your own positive emotions and actions to be dependent on the motivation coming from other people? This would put you in the role of a passive “victim”. You would have no power or strength to drive yourself on to live your life with passion and achieve your full potential.

#### Meeting our core needs, our motivations

In addition to our individual desires to find a meaning in life, as well as our physical and mental health, we believe that three core needs create the foundation for our motivation. These are the needs to achieve:

- Security and direction
- Connection and belonging
- Recognition and purpose

These needs are what drive us, and the effort we are prepared to make depends on the degree to which these needs are met. In addition to the intrinsic, self-motivation of an employee, we firmly believe that a manager has a vital role to play in the employee's journey towards self-fulfillment.

#### You reap what you sow

Imagine for a moment a farmer who allows spring to slip by while doing nothing at all. Then, at the very last minute in autumn, he plows the field, sows his seeds, and waters the ground in the hope that he can achieve a crop of the highest quality overnight. And, to make matters worse, he hasn't even sown the right seeds for the crop he wants to harvest. What should he have done to ensure that his seeds grow into an impressive, flourishing crop? It's obvious, right? He should have done the necessary preparatory work and ensured the right conditions:

- fertile, tilled soil
- the right seeds
- fertilizer/food
- the right amount of water
- light and sun
- care and attention

And it's no different with motivation! Managers are well advised to be of service to employees, to create the right conditions and establish the structures within which all players can activate their motivations and grow to their full potential.

In our article published in the October issue of personalSCHWEIZ, we set out the 6 Cs, a winning combination of managerial qualities to help managers “till the soil” for employees. These qualities will ensure that the core needs of psychological security, recognition, and belonging are met.



## THE "MAGICAL" 6 Cs

- Credibility
- Conviction
- Consistency
- Compassion
- Connection
- Commitment

### Credibility

Credibility is the cornerstone of management. People will only follow a leader unconditionally and with conviction if they have trust and confidence in them. Leadership must be credible. Instructions, arguments, and ideas need to make sense and be transparent. Employees need to feel that they matter and that they are working towards a shared goal. Confidence in a manager is quickly lost if any one of these principles is violated. However, if all three principles are interwoven and spaces are created free of fear, all three core needs will be met.

### Conviction

If a manager takes responsibility and acts as a role model, this motivates others to do the same. In this way, we teach our employees to stand up for their ideas and opinions, and we create a culture of personal responsibility that benefits all involved. Full potential is only achieved if the various stakeholders cooperate honestly and responsibly when working towards a shared goal. The result? Recognition, connection, and security.

### Consistency

"You can count on me" – that's quite a strong statement and promise to make! How often do managers say this sentence and really mean it? Or are able to back it up? Today's world is a VUCA world.

Full of volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. And yet, consistency remains an extremely important element of cooperation. If I know I am consistently reliable, then I can also let go, relax, and allow others to take responsibility too. Always in the knowledge that things will be done well and efficiently.

### Compassion

Managers need to really understand a situation and people – how individuals behave and their motivations for doing so. That means having a sympathetic ear, listening, not judging or rating, and making time for the other person. All this requires a certain "closeness", genuine interest, thoughtfulness, and a value-based culture of communication. We strongly believe that face-to-face meetings are essential.

### Connection

These days, managers and employees need to be available and contactable – at all times! Or do they? In fact, we believe the opposite is true. Employees and managers alike need space – breathing space and thinking space. And managers aren't better people just because they get to the office before everyone else in the morning and are last to leave in the evening. By connection, we mean the ability to be "mentally present". That means focusing your full attention and awareness on employees when interacting with them. The desire to participate, to feel, to hear – to really be "there"!

### Commitment

It seems that a commitment to non-commitment has taken hold in society. Complexity, new ways of working, and the need for speed are often used as excuses for this attitude. But it's the wrong approach. Staying on track is the name of the game. Never losing sight of the finish line. Clear messages and instructions and a shared commitment to goals are essential to performance today, and also provide security and direction.

When taken in isolation, each of these 6 Cs are important qualities in shaping our thinking and behavior. However, they are much more powerful when used together. We believe that it is only by putting all 6 Cs into practice on a daily basis that you can significantly boost the level of motivation among managers and employees alike to give their very best.

### With this in mind

Motivation ultimately comes from within. But managers have an important role to

play. As service providers, they are responsible for ensuring the best possible conditions in which all employees can use their own intrinsic motivation to contribute to and participate in the company's success, and to ensure that both they and the company achieve their full potential. But, of course, we won't say no to the bonus and the firm handshake either!

Sources  
1 Wikipedia



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She enables others to achieve personal and business goals and is a pioneer for a new understanding of roles in management. She mentors individuals and organizations in the area of "values". Today, renowned companies use her expertise to develop renewal and change processes and to firmly establish a culture of values, leadership, and excellence in their organizations. She is also an author and has been published by Gabal Verlag. "Werte messen – Change erfolgreich gestalten" ("Measuring Values – Making Change Happen"), "Wertebasierter Kulturwandel im öffentlichen Dienst" ("Value-Based Culture in the Public Service").

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