

Productive Leaders

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5 Questions Leaders Need to Ask to Increase Morale at Work



Keeping employees motivated is crucial to maintaining an effective and productive workplace. The [American Management Association](#) points out that increasing morale doesn't come from gimmicky management fads, it come from within the workplace. Sometimes asking a few simple questions can yield amazingly productive results.

Be warned: If you ask the question, and you don't do anything with the response, your lack of activity may make the workplace situation worse, as you will be perceived as being all talk and no action. If you are going to ask your people questions, then you have a responsibility to respond. Be prepared to walk the walk.

1. How Can We Help You Reach Your Full Potential?

Most employees will happily respond to this question because most people, no matter what sector they're working in, want to further their own career. This question shows that someone in the company is interested in their growth and success. Management should expect a wide range of responses. Employees will want everything from increased training and educational opportunities to mentorship, promotions, higher pay, and new and varied responsibilities.

One of the reasons many leaders don't ask this question is they are afraid of the answers. Leaders SHOULD know how to help their teams maximize their talent, and asking this question might indicate that they don't know. Ask anyway. You cannot help your people grow if you don't know what they need.

2. What Do You Like Best About This Department?

This helps employees focus on the positive aspects of their job. It also provides management with crucial information about what motivates employees to thrive in the organization. This question is particularly beneficial at companies that have several departments, and management can compare and evaluate what's working well within each department.

3. What Keeps You Motivated at Work?

People have a high need to feel needed and valued. Many employees leave their organizations because they feel no one cares about what they think or considers their input. According to [Small Business Trends](#), this question can provide in-depth information about the workplace environment. Some common answers about what employees like at work:

- My boss
- Co-workers
- Making a difference
- Our clients
- Being able to problem-solve
- The flexibility
- I feel valued

Fostering an element of belonging and focusing on what is working is an individual managers' job, but understanding what is working as a whole is imperative to building a corporate culture.

4. What Would Make Our Workplace More Enjoyable?

Many managers may see this as a fluff question. After all, we are at work to work, not to have fun. However, considering that millennials are increasingly moving into the workforce, this is a legitimate question. Millennials, and many of their bosses, are increasingly looking for a work environment that creates a well-rounded experience and a place where they can connect to others in a positive way. [Forbes](#) states that some of the fastest growing companies know how to balance work and fun.

Workplaces like Otterbox have an Otter slide that connects the 2nd floor to the lobby. And it is fast! Other companies provide free sodas, juice, snacks, and lunch, but [some companies go way beyond](#) free cola. Symphony, a workflow company, treats employees to massages and margarita machines, and company outings include paintball, karaoke, and go-karting.

5. What Do You See as Our Organization's Values/Mission?

It can be difficult for employees to get excited about a company when they really don't understand the company's mission, or the reason it even exists. Employees who cannot articulate the values or the mission statement should be educated and informed. Employees who clearly understand their contribution to a higher goal in a forward-moving company are more likely to be motivated.

A few simple questions can help managers put their finger on the pulse of their employees and make the changes necessary to provide a more effective and enjoyable work environment.

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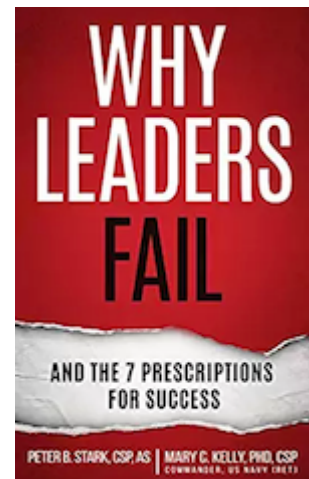
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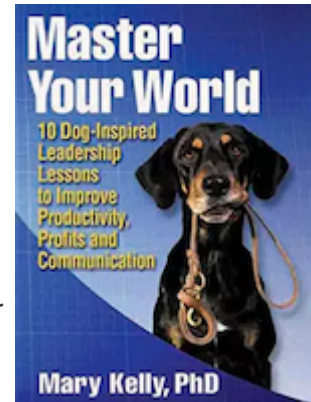
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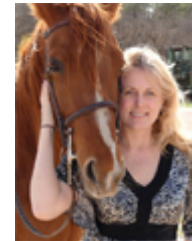
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Mary C. Kelly



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