

The Role of Positive and Negative Motivation in Improving Employee Performance: A Case Study of the Youth Support and Employment Institution, El Oued Agency.

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Abstract

This study aimed to identify the role of positive and negative motivation in improving employee performance at the Youth Support and Employment Institution - El Oued Agency. The study focuses on the impact of both positive and negative motivation strategies on employee performance and how they can be used as tools to motivate individuals and achieve maximum productivity. It also examines the effect of positive motivation on improving employee performance and the impact of negative motivation on their professional behavior. The significance of the study lies in providing an in-depth understanding of the relationship between the two types of motivation (positive and negative) on employee performance, helping organizations choose the most effective and sustainable method for motivating employees. We adopted a descriptive-analytical approach and used data collection tools such as questionnaires distributed to 32 employees of the institution. Interviews were conducted with managers and officials to evaluate motivational policies, and previous employee performance reports were reviewed. The main findings of the study demonstrated that positive incentives, such as rewards, significantly improve performance and enhance job satisfaction, encouraging employees to be creative and committed to their work. Negative motivation may lead to short-term performance improvement but causes psychological stress and negatively affects long-term job satisfaction. Therefore, a combination of positive and negative motivation can be effective if applied wisely.

Keywords: Motivation, Positive Motivation, Negative Motivation, Employee Performance Improvement.

Introduction

Motivation is one of the key elements that directly affect employee performance in organizations. It is not only a means to enhance productivity but also contributes to job satisfaction and emotional engagement between employees and their workplaces. With the increasing challenges that organizations face in a dynamic and demanding work environment, focusing on developing motivational strategies has become essential for ensuring continuity and achieving strategic objectives. Despite its importance, organizations encounter numerous issues in effectively implementing motivation. Among the most prominent problems are the absence of clear strategies for motivating employees and the failure to differentiate between their various needs, leading to low performance and productivity levels.

Research Problem

This study originates from the central question: Does motivation contribute to improving employee performance?

Hypotheses of the Study

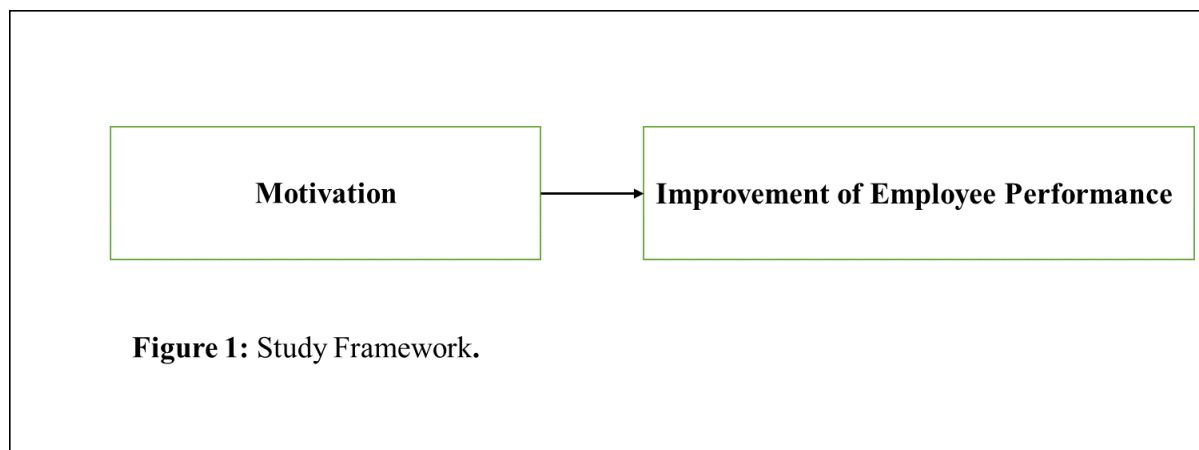
We propose the following hypothesis: Motivation contributes to improving employee performance.

1. Positive motivation contributes to improving employee performance.
2. Negative motivation contributes to improving employee performance.

Study Objectives:

- **Theoretical Importance:** The study enriches the literature in the field of human resource management, especially regarding the impact of positive and negative motivation on job performance.
- **Practical Importance:** It provides practical solutions for organizations to improve motivational strategies in Algeria, which contributes to enhancing productivity and achieving organizational goals.

This study is a step towards a deeper understanding of the role of negative motivation in improving employee performance and provides actionable recommendations to help Algerian organizations boost their productivity.



Section One: Motivation

Motivation is one of the fundamental factors that affect human behavior in various fields, whether in work, study, or personal life. It is a key driver for achieving goals and progress, relying on a combination of internal and external factors that influence individuals' willingness to exert greater effort and achieve success.

Definition of Motivation: Motivation is the process through which an individual or group is encouraged to exert effort and achieve specific goals, by stimulating internal or external drive. Motivation represents an internal force that pushes a person to work or continue working to meet their needs, whether material, moral, or psychological. The most important definitions are:

- **Frederick Herzberg (1959):** In the framework of the Two-Factor Theory, Herzberg defined motivation as "factors that contribute to enhancing an employee's sense of satisfaction and productivity, such as achievement, recognition, and personal growth."
- **Abraham Maslow (1943):** In his hierarchy of needs, Maslow considered motivation "a process of achieving goals that seeks to meet human needs according to a hierarchical order, starting from basic physiological needs to self-actualization."
- **Daniel Pink (2009):** In his book *Drive*, Pink mentioned that motivation depends on "autonomy, mastery, and purpose."
- **David McClelland (1961):** In the theory of the need for achievement, McClelland viewed motivation as arising from an innate need to achieve success.

- **Edward Deci and Richard Ryan:** In the framework of the Self-Determination Theory, they emphasized that intrinsic motivation is the most effective.

Therefore, it can be said that motivation is an ongoing process aimed at stimulating the internal or external drives of individuals to encourage them to engage in certain behaviors or achieve specific goals by leveraging available needs, desires, and stimuli. Motivation is considered the primary driver of human behavior and plays a pivotal role in determining the direction, energy, and perseverance exerted by individuals to achieve their personal or organizational goals.

Second: Characteristics of Motivation: Motivation is a fundamental factor in driving individuals towards achieving their goals and improving their performance across various fields. The characteristics of motivation vary depending on its type (internal or external), but it remains the element that drives behaviors and productivity.

1. Internal and External Motivation:

- **Internal Motivation:** This refers to drives that arise from within a person, such as the desire for achievement or self-improvement.
 - **External Motivation:** This is related to external incentives like financial rewards or social recognition (Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M., 1985).
2. **Motivation as a Driver for Achievement:** Motivation pushes individuals to achieve their goals, especially when they feel the need to excel or stand out in their field.
 3. **Expectations and Outcomes:** Motivation depends on an individual's expectations of the outcome. If the desired result is sufficiently appealing, the person's drive to achieve the goal increases (Vroom, V. H., 1964).
 4. **Impact of Environment and Surroundings:** The work environment and social surroundings have a direct impact on motivation. An encouraging and supportive environment can increase individual motivation (Herzberg, F., 1959).
 5. **Balance Between Rewards and Challenges:** Challenges that match an individual's skills are more motivating than tasks that are too easy or too difficult. Rewards that correspond to achievements help maintain a high level of motivation (Pink, D. H., 2009).
 6. **Relationship Between Motivation and Personal Satisfaction:** Individuals who receive rewards or internal recognition experience higher motivation compared to those who do not receive such rewards (Maslow, A. H., 1943).

Third: Positive Motivation Positive motivation relies on encouraging individuals to perform well through rewards and moral incentives. It aims to boost self-confidence, motivate employees to achieve goals, and increase drive.

1. Methods of Positive Motivation:

- **Financial Rewards:** Financial rewards are one of the most common forms of positive motivation. These include bonuses, annual rewards, and gifts (Al-Sayed, M., 2020). They lead to increased drive and job commitment (Al-Khalidi, A., 2018).
- **Recognition of Achievements:** Recognizing achievements includes publicly praising good work in front of colleagues. It boosts morale and increases self-confidence (Al-Otaibi, 2019).
- **Professional Development Opportunities:** Providing training programs and opportunities for professional growth can motivate employees to develop their skills, enhance commitment, and encourage better performance (Al-Namri, 2021).
- **Work Flexibility:** Allowing flexibility in work hours or remote work is a motivational method that helps maintain a balance between personal and professional life, improving employee satisfaction and productivity (Al-Dosari, 2022).

Fourth: Negative Motivation Negative motivation relies on threats or punishments to achieve the desired performance. It aims to impose pressure on employees to push them towards achieving required goals, but it may have negative effects in the long run.

1. Methods of Negative Motivation:

- **Financial Penalties:** Financial penalties, such as salary deductions or withholding rewards for not meeting targets, can drive employees to work faster but may lead to stress and frustration (Al-Jubouri, R., 2019).
- **Threat of Punishment:** Threatening employees with penalties like demotion or dismissal if performance does not improve can temporarily raise performance levels but negatively affect the employee-management relationship (Al-Sharif, M., 2020).
- **Time Pressure:** Placing employees under tight deadlines to meet certain goals can increase productivity but may result in fatigue or reduced quality (Al-Zahrani, 2021).
- **Reduced Recognition:** Reducing appreciation for employees when goals are not met can lead to negative outcomes like lowered morale, decreased motivation, and reduced productivity (Al-Qit, A., 2018).

Fifth: Comparison Between Positive and Negative Motivation

- **Short-term Results:** Negative motivation may quickly improve performance but often at the expense of work quality or employee commitment. Positive motivation, on the other hand, encourages employees to deliver high performance in more sustainable and effective ways.
- **Long-term Results:** Positive motivation strengthens relationships between employees and management and fosters innovation. Negative motivation may lead to decreased employee morale and increased stress, impacting long-term productivity.

Therefore, it can be said that positive motivation is the most effective method for achieving sustainable performance, and organizations should primarily rely on it. While negative motivation can be useful in certain situations, it should be used cautiously to avoid its negative effects on employees.

Section Two: Enhancing Employee Performance

Enhancing employee performance is one of the fundamental strategic goals organizations pursue in their quest for excellence and innovation. This involves a series of actions aimed at increasing efficiency and effectiveness in employee performance, thereby contributing to the overall productivity of the organization. This article presents the definition of enhancing employee performance through key studies on the subject, along with references and page numbers.

First: Definition of Enhancing Employee Performance

Enhancing employee performance refers to improving work efficiency and effectiveness by increasing motivation, enhancing skills, and developing work methods within the organization. This improvement aims to achieve high levels of productivity and quality and includes enhancing job understanding, fostering employee relationships, and encouraging creativity and professional development. Key researchers who have addressed this topic include:

- **David A. Coleman (2018, p. 147):** Developed a performance improvement model emphasizing continuous training and appropriate motivation. Coleman believes that improving employee performance primarily depends on providing an environment that encourages continuous learning and self-development.
- **Barry B. Homan (2019, p. 92):** Explored the relationship between internal and external motivation in the workplace, emphasizing that internal motivation (such as a sense of achievement and creativity) is the most important factor for long-term performance improvement.
- **Philip Kotler (2020, p. 57):** Highlighted the close connection between performance improvement and leadership skill development within organizations. Effective leadership, according to Kotler, enhances employee performance by fostering clear communication and setting specific goals.

- **Marcus Smith (2021, p. 53):** Focused on the importance of continuous performance evaluation. Smith asserted that regular reviews help identify areas needing improvement and guide necessary training.

In general, enhancing employee performance is a systematic process aimed at increasing individual efficiency and effectiveness within the work environment by enhancing their skills, developing their capabilities, and motivating them to achieve organizational goals more efficiently. This involves providing a supportive work environment, offering continuous training, clarifying goals and expectations, and strengthening both internal and external motivations to ensure optimal performance.

Second: Dimensions of Performance Improvement

Key aspects discussed by researchers include:

1. **Training and Development:** Performance improvement is closely linked to providing training and development opportunities for employees. Studies have shown that employees who receive regular training are more capable of improving their performance (Coleman, 2018, p. 154).
2. **Motivation and Leadership:** Kotler's studies indicate that motivation and effective leadership are key factors contributing to performance improvement. This requires leader support and recognition of achievements (Kotler, 2020, p. 61).
3. **Continuous Evaluation:** Continuous evaluation of employee performance is an effective tool for identifying areas needing improvement and guiding necessary training and resources (Smith, 2021, p. 53).

Third: Positive Motivation and Its Impact on Employee Performance

Positive motivation relies on rewards, praise, and recognition of achievements. It enhances internal motivation and encourages employees to deliver better performance.

1. **David Collin (2019, p. 116):** Believes that positive motivation, such as financial or moral rewards, has the most long-term impact, increasing employee satisfaction and appreciation for their work, thus sustainably improving performance.
2. **Barry B. Homan (2020, p. 67):** Notes that positive motivation, based on internal incentives like self-appreciation and achievement, enhances innovation and creativity in the workplace, leading to improved job performance.

Fourth: Negative Motivation and Its Impact on Employee Performance

Negative motivation relies on imposing penalties or threats (such as fear of failure or financial sanctions) to encourage employees to improve performance. While this may enhance performance in the short term, it can have long-term negative effects, such as reduced morale.

1. **Philip Kotler (2020, p. 101):** Views negative motivation as potentially effective in emergency situations or when deadlines are tight but warns against its excessive use, as the fear of penalties can stifle creativity and reduce employee willingness to exert extra effort.
2. **Marcus Smith (2021, p. 119):** Believes that while negative motivation may improve short-term performance, it does not foster long-term employee motivation and can lead to negative responses like resentment or performance decline if overused.

Therefore, it can be said that negative motivation stifles intellectual creativity among employees and does not drive organizational development, keeping it in a state of stagnation.

Fifth: The Relationship Between Positive and Negative Motivation in Enhancing Employee Performance

Positive and negative motivations do not operate in isolation. They can complement each other to enhance employee performance, but a balance is required in their use.

1. **George Ferguson (2022, p. 89):** Suggests that balancing positive and negative motivation is key to improving performance. Ferguson believes that positive motivation can boost morale and innovation, while negative motivation may be necessary in specific situations.

2. **Nadia Al-Fahd (2020, p. 81):** Asserts that positive motivation is more sustainable in the long term, though some punitive incentives may be necessary in high-pressure work environments or to correct errors.

The relationship between positive and negative motivation in enhancing employee performance is complex and multifaceted. Positive motivation can sustainably enhance performance, while negative motivation may be effective in specific situations. Improving performance requires a balanced use of both types to achieve optimal organizational results.

Section First Three: Subsection: Practical Study Framework Methodology

The scientific methodology is a systematic practical approach used by students to study a phenomenon or problem, serving as a means to discover the truth. In alignment with the nature of this study and to achieve its objectives, we employed the descriptive-analytical method. This method involves examining events, phenomena, and practices as they exist without interference, allowing us to describe and analyze them in light of the problem and the accuracy of the hypotheses.

1. Study Population and Sample

The study population consists of employees of the National Agency for Youth Employment Support, which currently has 100 employees. A total of 33 questionnaires were distributed, with 32 valid responses returned. One questionnaire was excluded as it was unsuitable for the study.

2. Study Variables

To achieve the results of the practical study, a questionnaire was designed based on the study hypotheses, including two variables:

- **Independent Variable:** Motivation
- **Dependent Variable:** Employee performance improvement

Second: Data Collection Tools

Considering the study's nature, methodology, available resources, subject, and objectives, a questionnaire was designed, and questions were prepared to gather data from the study subjects about the topic under investigation.

1. Data Sources

Utilizing any scientific method necessitates the use of appropriate tools and means to collect the required data. For this study, we relied on a questionnaire as the primary tool to gather field data, distributing questionnaires to collect and compile necessary information. The data were then analyzed using the SPSS statistical program, employing suitable statistical tests to derive meaningful indicators supporting the study's subject.

2. Internal Consistency

The researcher calculated the internal consistency of the questionnaire dimensions based on a sample of 32 employees by determining the correlation coefficients between each item and the total score of the corresponding dimension, as shown in Table 1, which presents the correlation coefficients between each item's score and the total score for the first dimension.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient

Number Cronbach's Alpha	
32	0.810

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS v2 outputs, significant at 0.000 level

The table results show that the study tool's reliability coefficient is 0.810, indicating a high level of reliability, confirming the tool's validity and stability, making it a suitable and effective measurement tool for this study.

Table 2: Correlation Coefficients Between Each Item's Score and the Total Score for the First Dimension

No. Statement	Correlation Coefficient
1 The agency grants monthly productivity bonuses based on effort.	0.628
2 Annual productivity bonuses are awarded based on achieved goals.	0.648
3 Higher wages are given to employees with greater responsibilities.	0.536
4 The agency gives gifts to employees on holidays and special occasions.	0.324
5 Employee promotions are based on fair criteria.	0.588

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS v2 outputs, significant at 0.000 level

The table above indicates that the correlation coefficients for all items in the first dimension are significant at the 0.05 level, confirming that the first dimension, comprehensive exam management, has a good degree of validity.

Table 3: Correlation Coefficients Between Each Item's Score and the Total Score for the Second Dimension

No. Statement	Correlation Coefficient
1 Failure to achieve the required goals results in partial denial of monthly productivity.	0.328
2 Repeated mistakes by the employee lead to a demotion in their job rank.	0.348
3 Failure to achieve the agency's goals results in partial denial of annual productivity.	0.336
4 Lack of discipline at work results in a deduction from the employee's monthly salary.	0.319
5 Imposing penalties makes the employee more disciplined at work.	0.382

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS v2 outputs, significant at 0.000 level

The table above indicates that the correlation coefficients for all items in the second dimension are significant at the 0.05 level, confirming that the second dimension has a good degree of validity.

Table 4: Correlation Coefficients Between Each Item's Score and the Total Score for the Second Dimension

No. Statement	Correlation Coefficient
1 Understanding and grasping performance evaluation criteria motivate employees to exert more effort.	0.328
2 Your job aligns with your skills and knowledge.	0.456
3 Fairness in employee performance evaluation enhances their functional capabilities.	0.335
4 The agency works on guiding and raising awareness among employees to improve their performance.	0.422

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS v2 outputs, significant at 0.000 level

The table above shows that the correlation coefficients for all items in the second dimension are significant at the 0.05 level, confirming that the second dimension has a good degree of validity.

Table 5: Positive Motivation and Employee Performance

Significance Level	T-Test Value	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	Standard Error (SEb)	Model
0.000	4.053		0.511	2.072
0.001	3.836	0.574	0.132	0.505

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS v2 outputs, significant at 0.000 level

Based on the results in the table above, the simple linear regression equation for positive motivation and performance improvement is as follows:

$$AP=2.072+0.505MP$$

From this equation, it can be stated that in the absence of positive motivation in the agency, performance improvement is estimated at 2.072. Furthermore, for every unit increase in positive motivation, performance improvement increases by 0.132, indicating a positive relationship between the two variables. The significance level (0.001) is less than ($\alpha = 0.05$), indicating that the slope coefficient is significant.

The intercept (constant) coefficient is 2.072 with a significance level of 0.000, which is less than ($\alpha = 0.05$), indicating the importance of the variable in the model.

The T-test value for the slope of the first independent variable (positive motivation) is 3.836, with a significance level of 0.001, which is less than the adopted significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0) that positive motivation does not contribute to performance improvement is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted.

Based on the above, the first sub-hypothesis stating that:

- Positive motivation contributes to performance improvement. is accepted.

Table 6: Negative Motivation and Employee Performance

Significance Level	T-Test Value	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	Standard Error (SEb)	Model
0.000	8.207		0.429	3.524
0.250	1.174	0.210	0.116	0.136

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS v2 outputs, significant at 0.000 level

Based on the results in the table above, the simple linear regression equation for negative motivation and performance improvement is as follows:

$$AP=3.287+0.136MN$$

From this equation, it can be stated that in the absence of negative motivation in the agency, performance improvement is estimated at 3.287. Additionally, for every unit increase in negative motivation, performance improvement increases by 0.136, indicating a positive relationship between the two variables. However, the significance level (0.250) is greater than ($\alpha = 0.05$), indicating that the slope coefficient is not significant.

The intercept (constant) coefficient is 3.524 with a significance level of 0.000, which is less than ($\alpha = 0.05$), indicating the importance of the variable in the model.

The T-test value for the slope of the first independent variable (negative motivation) is 1.174, with a significance level of 0.250, which is greater than the adopted significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0) that negative motivation does not contribute to performance improvement is accepted, and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is rejected.

Based on the above, the second sub-hypothesis stating that:

- Negative motivation contributes to employee performance improvement. is rejected.

Table 7: Motivation and Employee Performance Improvement

Significance Level	T-Test Value	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	Standard Error (SEb)	Model
0.000	4.385		0.566	2.484
0.010	2.730	0.446	0.150	0.409

Source: Prepared by the researcher based on SPSS v2 outputs, significant at 0.000 level

Based on the results in the table above, the simple linear regression equation for motivation and performance improvement is as follows:

$$AP = 2.484 + 0.409M$$

From this equation, it can be stated that in the absence of motivation in the agency, performance improvement is estimated at 2.484. Additionally, for every unit increase in motivation, performance improvement increases by 0.409, indicating a positive relationship between the two variables. The significance level (0.000) is less than ($\alpha = 0.05$), indicating that the slope coefficient is significant.

The intercept (constant) coefficient is 2.484 with a significance level of 0.010, which is less than ($\alpha = 0.05$), indicating the importance of the variable in the model.

The T-test value for the slope of the independent variable (motivation) is 2.730, with a significance level of 0.010, which is less than the adopted significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H0) that motivation does not contribute to performance improvement is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted.

Based on the above, the main hypothesis stating that:

- Motivation contributes to employee performance improvement. is accepted.

Fourth: Interpretation of Study Results
 This study focused on the contribution of motivation to performance improvement by examining the effects of both positive and negative motivation. The results are interpreted as follows:

1. Interpretation of Positive Motivation's Contribution to Performance Improvement

Based on the questionnaire results, the first sub-hypothesis regarding the contribution of positive motivation to performance improvement was confirmed, with a positive correlation coefficient of 0.574. Positive motivation accounted for 32.9% of the variation in performance improvement. This indicates that positive motivation in the agency contributes to enhancing employee performance through productivity and bonuses, aiding the agency in achieving its goals by developing and directing workers in ways that serve its interests. The agency's motivation system emphasizes material incentives, while moral incentives are left to the discretion of the leader.

The leader in the agency motivates workers morally, thanking and praising them for well-done work, encouraging them to repeat positive behavior. This aligns with Bayoumi's assertion that positive incentives aim to improve performance by encouraging behaviors with positive outcomes. Positive incentives provide higher morale and long-term productivity.

2. Interpretation of Negative Motivation's Contribution to Performance Improvement

The second sub-hypothesis on the contribution of negative motivation to performance improvement was tested and found to have a positive correlation coefficient of 0.210, explaining 4.4% of the changes in performance improvement. This suggests that negative motivation does not significantly contribute to improving employee performance. The agency uses negative incentives to curb unacceptable behaviors, following legal guidelines for imposing penalties. However, negative incentives should only be used in extreme cases as they may increase short-term productivity but lead to decreased morale, increased absenteeism, job turnover, and dissatisfaction.

Conclusion

Motivation plays a pivotal role in improving employee performance. The study of the Youth Support and Employment Agency - Wadi Branch, indicates that both material and moral motivation significantly enhance productivity and

commitment. Effective motivational tools like rewards, training, and recognition foster a positive and sustainable work culture, vital for achieving institutional goals.

Findings:

1. **Increased Productivity:** Effective motivational systems led to improved productivity and work efficiency.
2. **Enhanced Job Satisfaction:** Incentive policies, such as rewards and moral recognition, boosted employee satisfaction and sense of belonging.
3. **Encouraged Creativity and Innovation:** Motivation programs stimulated new ideas and initiatives.
4. **Reduced Turnover Rates:** A supportive and motivating environment lowered job turnover rates.
5. **Skill Development:** Incentives related to training and development enhanced employee skills and performance.

Recommendations:

1. **Adopt Diverse Motivation Strategies:** Develop programs combining material (rewards, bonuses) and moral incentives (certificates, public praise).
2. **Provide Continuous Training:** Enhance employee skills through regular training programs.
3. **Set Clear, Achievable Goals:** Link specific goals with motivational rewards.
4. **Enhance Effective Communication:** Ensure clear communication between management and employees to foster positive interaction.
5. **Implement a Comprehensive Performance Evaluation System:** Monitor employee progress and provide constructive feedback.
6. **Foster a Positive Work Environment:** Create a supportive work atmosphere to ensure employee satisfaction.
7. **Involve Employees in Decision-Making:** Increase employee engagement by involving them in decisions to foster responsibility and belonging.

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