

Motivating

Center for Student Involvement Resources

Motivation comes from inner needs, drives and goals. As a leader, your task in motivating others is to tap into these to supply a channel for their fulfillment. The most direct method in learning how to motivate others is to know them. By becoming better acquainted with your members, you will be able to better determine effective motivational strategies. However, remember that the individual members must do the rest.

As a leader, you must understand your own motivations as well as those of your group members. Are they participating in your organization to become more knowledgeable about a specific academic or professional field? Is their participation a recreational or entertainment outlet - a relief from the rigors of studying? If you can determine the source of an individual's motivation, you can begin to unleash his or her energies and ideas and maximize that member's potential for both you and the organization (see CSI Resources on Recruiting: Why People Join). As a leader, learn to look beyond a person's current abilities and identify any potential that needs developing.

Create an environment in which your members feel free to raise questions. You can achieve this by giving your members an accurate view of the situation. Be honest. Listen and respond to the questions they raise.

Give members an opportunity to use individual talents to the benefit of the organization. If someone is a marketing major, ask him or her to coordinate your publicity campaigns.

Be positive. Be appreciative of suggestions made by members. If you seem indifferent to members' opinions, they may lose interest.

Start delegating small tasks to your members. As they are successful in carrying out these tasks, give them more responsibility (see CSI Resources on Delegating). Encourage them to make their needs known to you.

“Universal” Motivators

- Use people's names often
- Build prestige into jobs by giving titles
- Be courteous and respectful
- Give individual attention and demonstrate that you understand members and accept their strengths and weaknesses
- Keep members informed -- what they're not up on, they're likely to be down on
- Be fair, honest, and consistent -- show no favoritism
- Provide honest feedback -- praise their successes publicly, and privately give constructive criticism to help them learn from their mistakes (see CSI Resources on Effective Feedback)
- Involve members in goal-setting and decision-making (see CSI Resources on Goal

Adapted from the NJIT Lisa A. Pierce Center for Student Leadership

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Setting)

- Clarify your expectations of members and their expectations of you
- Occasionally serve food at your meetings
- Have a contest and give a small prize to the person who designs the best program, etc.
- Use teambuilding activities to re-energize the group and strengthen loyalty and commitment (see CSI Resources on Teambuilding). People will work harder for other people than for an impersonal entity called an organization

Motivators

Achievement

- Solving a problem
- Seeing the results of your efforts
- Reaching the goals you've established
- Having a recommendation accepted
- Completing a difficult task
- Creating a "whole" tangible product
- Having a meaningful responsibility

Recognition

- Being promoted for good work performance
- Receiving praise for specific achievements
- Knowing you have accomplished a meaningful task
- Receiving feedback on your performance
- Receiving a merit award
- Acknowledgement from top leaders
- Respect from peers
- Being listened to by the leaders

Participation

- Planning and scheduling your own work
- Establishing your own work goals
- Controlling your own work activities
- Being allowed to make important decisions
- Being a part of organizational decision making and problem solving teams

Growth

- Being able to increase your skills and competencies
- Getting new, more complicated assignments
- Applying new learning to tasks
- Participating in leadership training programs

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