



Increasing Motivation and Performance

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Emmet Ore:

Welcome, everyone, hope you're doing well today. My name is Emmet, I'm a marketing specialist over here at Vensure, and I'll be your host for the next hour. Today, our panel host, Robin Paggi will be discussing increasing motivation and performance. But first, I will quickly run through a bit of housekeeping. So, there will be a Q&A session today at the end of the presentation and we'll do our best to answer all the questions you have for us. But if we run out of time, we'll respond to those on an individual basis after the session. And just a reminder, this is being recorded and we'll share that recording along with the slide deck with you after we're done here. This webinar is brought to you, as always, by Vensure Employer Services. Vensure is the leader of 20-plus PEO partners with clients in all 50 states. Today's agenda includes creating a motivating environment, how to diagnose work performance problems, enhancing employee's abilities, and fostering a motivating working environment. And then we'll have our Q&A at the end. So, if you hear a topic you need a little bit more clarity on, feel free to submit a question in the question box. So, when you logged in, you should have seen a control panel open. There's a dropdown section in there for questions—it's labeled questions. Just type your questions and comments into that section and hit enter. And if you are a client, please put "clients" in there so we can track that later. All questions are private so you won't see the questions or comments of others. And we'll try to get to everything in the time that we have. But if we don't, just reach out to us at webinarHRhelp@vensure.com. And as always, we are thrilled to have Robin Paggi joining us as our panelists today. She's a seasoned human resource practitioner specializing in training on topics such as harassment prevention, communication, team building, and supervisory skills. And now, I will hand it over to Robin.

Robin Paggi:

Thank you, Emmet. A lot of employers think that a paycheck should be all that's needed to motivate employees to perform and here is some info on that before we get started. Findings from 92 studies on whether money motivates employees

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revealed the connection between pay and job satisfaction is actually very weak. Money is highly motivational to some people, but it only usually takes people a couple of months after they get a pay increase to think that they still need more money. So, while it's highly motivational, it's also a short-term motivator. Saying money is the only thing that motivates people is just inaccurate. And companies probably think way too much about the fact that they can increase people's pay when that's not what they need to do. There are other motivators, so let's take a look at them.

First, I want to tell you about Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, and if you're looking at this, you might have recognized it. Maslow was a psychologist and he developed a theory in the 1940s that suggests we're motivated to satisfy these five basic needs, listed here, and they are arranged in a hierarchy. Physiological need is actually at the bottom of the hierarchy. And Maslow suggests that we are seeking to satisfy these needs and once a need is satisfied, then we try to work to satisfy another need. So again, this was created in the 1940s and people come along and they said Maslow's theory is not the end all be all that it once was. However, it does remain an important and simple motivational tool. And I like it and that's why we're talking about it. So, let me walk you through it. This should be in reverse order. And so we're start at the bottom with physiological needs.

Now, what are our physiological needs? We need to eat. We need to breathe. We need to sleep—that kind of stuff. So, does that mean that employers should allow employees to sleep on the job? That's not what I'm saying. What I'm saying is that the first priority of people and employees is their survival. And it's hard for them to be motivated if they feel they're not being paid fairly. If they feel that they're in jeopardy of being fired at any moment because then that's all they're worried about. And if people are worried about their basic needs, it's hard for them to worry about anything else. So, therefore, that's why it's really important. Yes, pay is important, but just continuing to throw money at people is not going to keep them motivated. But, they do need to feel that they are being paid at a competitive wage and that they're not constantly in fear of losing their jobs. So, those are important things that managers need to ensure.

Next, after their physiological needs are met, they start worrying about their safety and security needs. And this includes a stable, physical environment. And so, that's one of the reasons that we need to make sure that we are following safety precautions. Now, I was talking to a potential client this morning. He was talking to me about coming in and doing a training workshop for him in person. And I'm in California and things are loosening up here. We're in the orange tier, if you know what that means, and he said, "Okay, so we'd like this to be in person. You know, we've got a big warehouse so we can have you come in and everybody can be physically distanced from each other and all that kind of stupid stuff we're doing." And I thought, "Okay, it's not stupid stuff." And so I am in fear when a manager is telling me that following the state's safety precautions, the Centers for Disease Control safety precautions, following those is stupid stuff. And so, that's one of the things there are a lot of people who are fearful of going back to work. And if their employer and manager implies that safety precautions are stupid, then that's not going to make people feel very secure. So, not only the stable physical environment, but the emotional environment is important as well. And so, you might have all the doors locked and everybody's got their passkey to get in places and all of that. But if they feel that it's a volatile environment, that any moment their manager or employer is going to be upset, or angry, or there's lots of tension around, or that kind of thing, then that makes them feel unsafe also. So, security needs can also be met with benefits. And I'll tell you, one of the things that we're really going to have to be concerned about after the pandemic is finally over, and people are all back at work, is mental health benefits. People's mental health has suffered tremendously during this whole thing. It was suffering before then, especially our youngest generation in the workplace, as I talked about previously. And so, mental health benefits help people feel safer. Pensions, their work practices, all of those types of things. If people do not feel safe, it is difficult for them to perform, especially to perform at a higher level.

Now, once those needs are met, employees will need a sense of belonging and it says love and belonging needs. And while as an HR professional, I usually discourage actions of love or people dating each other, especially supervisors dating subordinates, it is important for people to feel that they are loved and there is an HR-appropriate way to demonstrate that you love your employees without getting sued. So, love and belonging go hand in hand. And also, another thing on there is social needs. So, when people feel that they belong, it's because their social needs are being met. And there are various ways that employers can do that. Now, the level of social interaction that an employee desires is based in large part upon their personality style, whether they're very task-focused or people-focused, whether they're extroverts or introverts. And so, one size does not fit all. The key point is that employees desire to work in an environment where they are accepted and feel they belong and some interaction with employees, or other, employees is important. And I will tell you something that I read is that if an employee feels that they have one person at work who is kind of their work friend, that one person who really cares about whether they show up or not, then they are more than likely going to be motivated to stay at the organization, which is in large part what you want employees to do. And so, that's one of the reasons that it is important for employers and managers to allow social opportunities. Now, I was doing some training a while ago, in person, and I was in the training room waiting for the participants to file in. And there were a couple of employees right outside of the training room and they were having a conversation about something that they liked. It was not work-related whatsoever and it went on for probably five minutes, or so. Their supervisor came into the training room and we were talking about the conversation the employees had. And he said, "Yeah, I almost shut that conversation down. It was going a little too long for my taste." And I said, "I understand. However, I'm really glad you didn't, because if you shut that conversation down," and again, it was only about five minutes long, "If you shut it down, then you are preventing people from building these social connections that make them feel more connected at work and help them feel better about their job and to stay at work." Now, I once temped, while I was in grad school, and the boss came into the supply room and caught me having a conversation with an employee. That was a personal conversation, and this was a temp job. And I was told at the end of that day that I did not need to come back the next day. The boss thought I was goofing off because I was having just a very brief conversation with another employee. That's bad management. Employees need to have these conversations. Now, of course, if they go on, and on, and on, and on, it's interfering with work getting done, that's a separate conversation. But you want employees to be able to connect. Just because you don't need to have those conversations doesn't mean that they are not a good use of your employees' time. Here's another thing, managerial communication about what's going on in the workplace is an important component of meeting employees' social needs, and a lot of times people in management think I don't need to be telling people what's going on. It's none of their business. Well, I've said this before, and I'll say it a lot of times again, if you don't tell people what's going on, they will make it up. And usually, the story they make up about what's going on is way worse than what's actually going on. And so, employees who are kept in the dark about operational matters or future plans for the organization feel that they're an outsider and outsiders usually leave. So, they become really outside. And this last point is especially important for virtual employees, whose absence from the office puts an extra obligation on managers to make sure that they stay in the loop about everything that's going on. Now, when love and belonging needs are met, then people need their esteem needs met and esteem needs are tied to an employee's self-image and desire for respect and recognition of others.

We all need to feel respected and we all need some form of recognition. But how you recognize people depends upon the employee that you're recognizing. But here are some things that usually help to meet this need. Cross-training so employees learn additional skills; job enrichment, same thing that they have more tasks that are not just more busy work for them to do, but that is increasing their skills and capabilities; special assignments are also methods that make work more rewarding for people; allowing employees to participate in decision-making and operational matters is also really powerful. And symbols of accomplishment such as, and this is mostly for baby boomers, their job title. Yes, my job title is important to me. The size of my office is important to me, job perks, awards, awards with stuff with the company's name on it (usually not important to me), but it is to other people, business cards, their workspace, all of these types of things

that, as I indicated, one size does not fit all. And so, what people normally do is they think if I like it, other people will like it. And that's just not necessarily the case. And so, how do you meet employees' esteem needs in a way that's meaningful for them? You need to ask them. And then self-actualization. Now, this is being all that you can be or striving to be more. And when these other needs are met, then people are thinking, what else? What else can I do? How can I take it up a notch? So, employees at this stage are interested in growth and individual development usually, and they need to be skilled to do their jobs. They might want a more challenging job. So, that means they might need more training, more education, increased freedom from supervision. Just let them do their jobs—they don't need to be supervised. Whatever floats their boat, basically. And so, at this highest level, managers focus on promoting this environment where employees can meet their own self-actualization needs. And so, ask them, "What's next for you?" And, "How can we help in that endeavor?" Now, it doesn't mean that employees necessarily want to move into management. And so, that's one of the things people are figuring out, that being continuously going up the food chain is not necessarily a good thing. And again, before the pandemic, I spent most of my time providing supervisory training to people who had been promoted into supervisory positions. And then their employer went, "Oh, actually, we should probably provide some training for these people," or, "There had been a big blunder and, well, maybe training will help us fix the situation." I like to train people before they become a supervisor and tell them what the job will entail, like having to motivate employees. And sometimes they decide that they don't want to move into a supervisory position because it's just not worth the extra pay that they're being offered to do so, and there's nothing wrong with that. Being a supervisor is not for everybody, trust me, but they still want to be able to move up the food chain somehow. And so, self-actualization needs can help with that. Letting them be on a project team for a really important project that they want to be involved in can help. Completing a special task that they really want to be involved in can help with those self-actualization needs. So, it is challenging them and giving them an opportunity to grow without necessarily growing into a management position. So, the important consideration for managers here, hopefully, as you see, is that what you give your employee to meet these needs is dependent upon the employee. And the other thing about Maslow's is that our needs are constantly changing. So, it's not a one-and-done kind of deal. For example, will the raise you receive three years ago be enough to motivate you until you retire? I doubt it. Will the challenging job began five years ago still be challenging to you five years from now? Probably not. Will the performance award you received last year satisfy your need to receive performance awards forever? Probably not. So, that's one of the things about Maslow's and people, we're needy people constantly having changing needs and needing those needs to be met. So, as you keep Maslow's in mind, remember that this is an ongoing thing. Resist the urge to think, "Hey, I gave you that raise or I gave you that recognition and then you're done for forever." Employee needs do change with time, just like everything else. Alright. Let's go on to our next slide and talk about how to diagnose work performance problems.

Now, what does that have to do with motivation? One of the things is that sometimes people think they need to motivate employees because the employees are not performing as well as they should. And so, they throw all sorts of motivational techniques at them when that doesn't work. So, before you deal with underperformance, you need to understand whether it comes from a lack of ability or a lack of motivation. If you diagnose this incorrectly, it can lead to some problems for you later on. If you think that an employee is not making enough of an effort and so you're trying to inspire them to perform, you might put pressure on them that is going to cause even more problems. So, here's an example. A supervisor asked me recently to coach an employee who is underperforming. And during our discussion about the employee, the supervisor admitted that the employee really didn't need the skill or really didn't have the skill that he needed to do his job. Now, what concerns me is that the supervisor said that they were going to write up the employee, they were going to discipline the employee, and on that write-up, let the employee know that they needed to receive coaching from me. And that's not a great idea because the supervisor told me the employee doesn't know how to do his job—he doesn't have the skill. But yet, the supervisor was going to discipline the employee. I advised against that. Discipline can be a great motivator, trust me, I'll talk about that in a minute. But disciplining employees when they don't have the skills they need to perform their job is not the correct action. If poor performers feel that management is insensitive to their problems, in other words, "I

don't have the skill I need," then they may respond in a counterproductive manner and you don't want that. So, low ability may be associated with low aptitude. They just don't have the knowledge, skills, or ability to do the job. The job might be too difficult. There might be that they are trying and you can see they're trying. They're just not improving. So, you need to consider that people who have low ability might be poorly matched with a job in the first place. And so, that's one of the things that you need to do is make sure ability and job match. Now, here's an example of that. Many, many years ago, at a job far, far away, I was hired to be the trainer. I am going to create and deliver training programs and I was housed in the human resources department. But, we went from a hiring freeze to a hiring frenzy and the CEO decided that I wasn't going to train, I was going to get people hired. And so, I tried to learn the computer program on what I needed to do for the hiring process. All sorts of things that I needed to do in my job totally shifted. Can employers do that to employees? Of course, they can. What if you don't like it? You quit. That's what I was told when I asked those questions. And so, I tried to learn the new job and I just was miserable at it. And it just did not suit my knowledge, skills, and abilities. Well, I know how to learn things. I'm learning things all the time. It just, I couldn't learn the technical things. I wasn't organized the way I needed to be. I just didn't have what it took in order to do this job. And I remember talking to my supervisor about it and she said, "Robin, you're very bright. I don't know why you can't get this role." Now, I know based upon all of my studies of personality styles, the job was not suited for my personality style. And so, that's one of the things that you need to consider, is that maybe people aren't performing, not because they're not motivated, not because they're not bright, but because the job is just not a good match for them. One of the things that happens too, with supervisors, they are promoted into positions of supervisor because they're really good at their job, but now supervising is a whole different job and they've received no training for it. I'm amazed at how many people get promoted into supervisory positions that are not good supervisors because it's a totally different skill set and sometimes no amount of training is going to help them. So, one of the things that you can do is ask some questions to determine about the difficulty of the task. Look at how difficult the tasks are assigned to the employee. Now, here's one of the things that happens sometimes: supervisors think, "Well, if I can do it, they can do it." And I have to remind them. But that's why you're the supervisor. And so, you shouldn't be assessing people's ability to do the job or the difficulty of the task based upon what you can do. It's based upon what the standard is at your organization or in the industry. How capable is the employee? How hard is the employee trying to succeed? Sometimes poor performance has its roots in low motivation, and it's not ability. But if that's the case, you need to work closely with the employee to determine what does motivate them. And I'll talk about that in just a few minutes. But again, remember that if the employee does not have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to do the job, if the employee is not well suited for the job, if the employee is trying and just is not making an effort or an improvement, then motivational efforts will backfire on you. And you might end up driving that employee out of the workplace when that's not what you want. So, let's go to the next slide and see how to enhance employees' abilities.

Now remember you've assessed whether underperformance is based upon lack of abilities or lack of motivation, if it's lack of abilities, here's how to enhance their abilities. There are five main ways, and we want to start with the least intrusive. And so, one of the things we need to do also is make sure that we're working with the employee on these things, not just making decisions about them. So, what is re-supply mean? This method involves focusing on the resources employees need to do their job. Has the job grown since they first took it and now they haven't grown with it? Do they have what they need to be able to do the job? Do they have the tools that they need? How many times have you seen someone leave a job because they couldn't cope with the demands of the job, and then they end up getting replaced with two people because people figured out, "Oh, my gosh, we actually need two people to do the job." Okay, so that's your first clue that maybe the employee doesn't have the resources. So, ask the employee what additional resources they need. Listen to what they're really frustrated about, what they're complaining about, and then look into those claims to see if it's true. Now, people often blame external sources. It's not my fault. It's somebody else's fault or it's something else's fault. However, sometimes they actually don't have the resources they need to do the job. And so, if you simply provide them with those supplies, then you've taken care of the problem. So, this is a very effective first step. And addressing performance, that's where you

should start. And it signals to employees that you're interested in their perspective and you're willing to make the changes needed in order to help them succeed. Now, if it's not a supply issue, you might need to retrain. And so, ask the employee whether they feel that they need additional training in order to fulfill the job expectations. A lot of times the employees don't want to admit that they aren't up to speed on things, but things change constantly—especially technology. And so, make it easier for them to admit that they need some additional training by letting them know that, you know that things are constantly changing and you want to ensure that you're helping them make the necessary changes in order to succeed. So, you can provide training, seminars, computer-based training. Maybe they can go take a class at the local college and the employer pays for it. Coaching one-on-one is what I typically do. And that's one of the things to determine whether somebody needs to go to a workshop, or attend a webinar, or get one-on-one coaching. That's one of the things that typically happens, is that people will ask me, "Do you have any training workshops going on, on communication?" Okay, well, yeah, okay. Because I need to send an employee to that because they're having trouble communicating. And I asked him, "Wouldn't maybe it be better for the employee to have some one-on-one sessions?" So, we're addressing specifically what's going on with that employee. So, training is not always the answer to help people improve their skills and certainly sending them to a workshop when there are specific things they need to do. They might not hear about those things in that workshop. So, it's really important to make sure they are getting the education they need in order to meet the expectations you have of them. And then refit.

So, after trying the first two methods that might not work, they have the supplies they need. They have the training they need. If you value the person's strengths and you want them to stay within the organization, maybe the job needs to be tweaked a little bit for them. So, it's a better fit. Now, most of us want challenging, rewarding jobs, but one of the things that happens, sometimes, is that our job becomes stale. We've been doing it for a long time. And so, if you have an employee who has been doing their job for a long time and they were really good at their job, but now not so much, then chances are the job needs to be refit for them. Even fulfilling jobs become stale after a while. And so, ask yourself and ask the employee, "What might we be able to do to enhance your job so that you are feeling challenged and having a sense of purpose?" And then reassign. Maybe the job is not a good fit for that person, or maybe who they're assigned to is not a good fit. Now I had this happen when I was HR manager at a law firm once upon a time and I had a couple of attorneys who told me that I needed to fire their secretary. She just was no good whatsoever. She needs to be fired. And so, instead of firing her, I moved her to a different set of attorneys and those set of attorneys thought she was fabulous and everyone loved her. And so, I was really glad that I didn't fire her. I didn't believe that the attorney said she was nearly as bad as they said she was. These attorneys were particularly critical of people and the things that they were saying about her. I thought there's no way that she could get a job anywhere if she were that bad. And so, fortunately, we had a position open, moved her into the other position. Those attorneys loved her. She loved the new position. It all worked out great. And so, sometimes reassigning is what you can do. Now, if you use this option, make sure that the reassigned job is still challenging and stimulating to the employee, and beware of demoting because that could be a reassign. And I've seen that happen. People promoted into supervisory positions, they mess up, and then they're demoted, and that might not be the best thing. Sometimes employees want to be demoted, and if they want it, then that's great. But be careful that in reassigning, it's not necessarily a punishment. And then finally releasing the employee.

Sometimes there are no opportunities for reassignment. Refitting isn't appropriate. They don't need retraining. They don't need supplies. They're just not going to be able to do the job. And there's no other job available for them. And so, for those of you who really hate to terminate employees, releasing can be the best thing for them as well as for the organization. Now, for the organization, think of these things. If you have an employee who is not performing and you have done everything that you can for that employee to succeed and they just can't do it, and you keep that employee around because you just hate to terminate people, here are some things that can happen. You'll annoy other members of your team who have to work harder to carry the poor performer. You might promote a belief in others that they don't

need to perform. You might waste precious time and resources that could be used elsewhere. You might signal that some employees deserve preferential treatment and you might undermine the whole idea of finding the best person for the job. So, that's why sometimes you need to release the employee so the organization doesn't suffer. But, I am a firm believer in the fact that people want to do a good job and most of the time they know that they are not doing a good job, but they are not going to cut the tie themselves. And so, sometimes terminating their employment so that they are forced to move someplace else, perhaps better for them, I think is the most compassionate thing to do. Alright, let's move on and talk about how to foster a motivating environment.

During the pandemic, I watched the biography about basketball player Michael Jordan called, "The Last Dance," and it was really good. Of course, it included information about Michael's coach, Phil Jackson, and how he was able to lead the Bulls, and then later on the Lakers, to numerous NBA championships. And Jackson said this about motivating his players, "I don't motivate my players. You cannot motivate someone. All you can do is provide a motivating environment and the players will motivate themselves." Alright. Well, since he's so successful, I pay attention to people when they say things like that. And so, let's determine how can you create that motivating environment or foster this motivating environment where essentially the same thing. Alright. First of all, establishing moderately difficult goals that are understood and accepted. So, why are goals important? And some of us are much more goal-driven than other people. But for the most part, goals are important in order for people to achieve things. Setting goals helps trigger new behavior, and so I've got to have this new behavior in order to meet this goal. It helps guide your focus, keeps you focused on that goal, and helps you sustain momentum. Now, I'll give you an example of that. I'm very goal-driven and I constantly have goals in front of me in order to keep that momentum going and feel like I'm achieving things. And once I achieve that goal, then I set a new goal. And so, that's just a regular part of my life in order for me to achieve what I like to achieve. And I have a high need to achieve. So, there you go. Alright. So my story, I was approaching 40 years old and I was weighing more than I wanted to. And so, I made a little goal for myself that I was going to hit 140 by 40. And so, I started probably about three or four months ahead of my 40th birthday. And any time I didn't want to go to the gym, I would say to myself, "140 by 40." While I was on the treadmill and I wanted to stop, I would say to myself, "140 by 40," that was constantly what I was going after. And did I achieve 140 by my 40th birthday? I did. And then I rewarded myself with probably a hot fudge sundae. So the thing is, is that when you have these goals in mind, it keeps you focused. It triggers new behavior like going to the gym and staying on the treadmill. And it helps you sustain momentum, that you keep moving forward because you want to get there. So, that's reason the goals are beneficial, and also, they help promote a sense of self-mastery. Once you achieve that goal, you feel really good about yourself and then you're motivated to do other things, to feel good about yourself because it feels good to feel good. So in the end, the whole goal-setting stuff, and we talked about smart goals before, so those are really important. But you can't manage what you don't measure and you can't improve upon something unless you can manage it. And so, that's why goals are so important. Now, as far as establishing moderately difficult goals, you want to make sure goals that you have for your employees are attainable. And so, moderately difficult goals are attainable. Now, if they're too easy, then that's no good. And if they're too difficult, then that's no good. So, we're talking about the Goldilocks of goals. So, here are some things to ask yourself when it comes to that. Do employees understand and accept performance expectations? Now, you might think that they understand what's expected of them, but if they're not performing, that's the first thing to determine. Do they understand what is expected of them? And I've talked before about how difficult it is to have mutual understanding of anything, especially performance expectations. So, again, if employees aren't performing, it's critical to determine whether they know what's expected of them. Next, you want to remove personal and organizational obstacles to performance. Sometimes things are getting in the way of them being able to perform. You want to be able to identify those things. So, some questions to ask are, do employees feel it's possible to achieve this goal or expectation, or are there obstacles? And there might be people and their way of achieving what they need to achieve. It might be that where they're sitting is preventing them from achieving. So, whatever obstacle they think is getting in their way, try to determine if it is and if there's something that you can do about it. Next is use rewards and discipline appropriately to extinguish unacceptable behavior and encourage exceptional performance. Now the theory long-standing that says that people who don't want to be disciplined or don't want bad consequences to happen to them will improve

their behavior. And so, if there are bad consequences to inappropriate behavior or not meeting goals or whatever it is, then they will try to avoid those, and that they are motivated by rewards. But there's a little bit more to that. So, let's talk about the discipline stuff that I talked about a while ago.

Discipline is a motivator if employees have done something they knew they shouldn't do and that they were capable of not doing. Now, I don't know if you've ever been disciplined before. I have. I remember it very well. A long time ago in a land far, far away, I was called into my supervisor's office and the firm administrator was in his office when I went in there and I knew something was up. And my supervisor said that he'd had a complaint about me from a client and then began to read the complaint. So, my supervisor said, "This cannot happen again, we cannot receive any kind of complaints like this again, because we have talked about these issues before and I have let you know that you need to not engage in this behavior," which was true. And so he said, "So, we can't have this conversation again. Got it?" And I got it. And I was so, so motivated to never go through that conversation again and to keep my job. Now, again, the things that I was being disciplined for were things that he had coached me on before, where I was perfectly capable of not engaging in. It took a lot of thought and energy to not engage in them, but I was capable of doing it. And so, that's how discipline can be a great motivator for people to perform. But remember, they need to know that they shouldn't do whatever they've done, or they need to do something that they're not doing and they have the power to correct the behavior. Those are very important. Now, let's talk about the rewards part.

You want to reward people when they are performing because that is a motivator. But here are some things to consider. You don't just reward everybody for showing up. You reward high performance. And so, you need to ask, "Do employees feel that being a high performer is more rewarding than just being an average performer?" Because if there's no reward in being a high performer, then they might think, "Why do it? If I can just be an average performer and I still get all the same stuff, then why kick it up a notch?" The other thing is to provide salient internal and external incentives. Salient means important. So, you've got a new vocabulary word today. An internal incentive is something that motivates a person without any external reward, such as just the enjoyment of doing something. So, an internal incentive could be that employees will work extra hard, or extra long hours, or whatever on some tasks, some job task, because they just really enjoy the work. And you don't have to throw money at them for doing it. You just give them the opportunity to do it. And then external incentives are the recognition and rewards, the perks, the bonuses, the raises, the nice office, the business cards, all of those types of things. And so, those are things that, yes, they can motivate employees. Again, you need to know what is motivating to them. Distribute rewards equitably and timely. And so, those two things are very important. So, you need to ask do employees feel that work-related benefits are being distributed fairly, or do some employees get all the benefits and other employees get overlooked? If that's the case, that's very demotivating. And are we getting the most out of our rewards by administering them on a timely basis? Now, here's one of the things, a lot of times people get rewarded at an annual performance evaluation. And for some people, that's just not enough. A whole year from now, the motivation goes out the window. I am a big proponent of quarterly bonuses because, or even monthly bonuses, because they're right there in front of people's faces and you work harder and you get that reward. And so, we are very, we expect quick returns on any of our investments where you have a fast society. We're used to fast food, and ATMs, and all of those types of things that we expect quick results. And so, just having an annual performance bonus is a whole year away, the people lose interest. And then provide specific, accurate, and honest feedback. And how does that foster a motivating environment? Was talking about this in training yesterday where I had some people who were saying, you know, "I really like it when people are honest with me about my performance and they don't sugarcoat things or tell me I'm doing a good job when I'm really not doing a good job. Because if they tell me honestly what I need to improve upon, then that's really motivating for me." And that's what we're talking about right there. Of course, when you're being honest, don't be brutally honest, deliver feedback in an honest, compassionate way. And it's specific so that people know exactly what they need to improve upon, and it's accurate—you've got your facts straight so they can trust that the feedback that you're giving them is factual. So, all of this stuff takes time, takes effort, might take some money. Is it worth it? While motivational speaker Zig Ziglar said, "People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing. That's why we recommend it daily." Alright, that's all I have for you, do you have any questions for me?

Emmet Ore:

Alright, thank you, Robin. Does Vensure have any tools in place to ask employees and accomplish these employee needs? I think that's referring to the first slide.

Robin Paggi:

Right. Oh, and so for internal employees, at Vensure?

Emmet Ore:

Maybe I'll repeat it again, does Vensure have any tools in place to ask employees and accomplish these employee needs, as in, what do we use for our...

Robin Paggi:

Employee needs well, once again, I don't work for Vensure, I work for Worklogic HR, which is a business partner of Vensure. So, unfortunately, I am not familiar with what Vensure has in place. However, some tools that you can use, whether they are in place or not, is again just talking to your employees, surveying your employees yourself. Survey Monkey is a great tool for that as well so that employees can provide confidential feedback, those types of things. So, unfortunately, I'm not a fountain of information on that one, but that's something that all managers, supervisors can do, regardless of where they work, is to find out what their employees' needs are. And whether those needs are being met is to talk to them.

Emmet Ore:

Excellent. Yeah, and feel free to reach out to webinarHRhelp@vensure.com, and someone can give you some more information on that. Do you consider business cards a reward?

Robin Paggi:

That's funny you should ask, because many years ago, again, when I was HR manager at a law firm, we had people who just graduated from law school and they were hired with us, but they were not yet full-fledged attorneys—hadn't passed the bar. And one of those almost attorneys asked me to get him business cards. And I did not get him business cards because he was not yet an attorney. He still had to pass the bar and we had to wait for that. And he was very upset with me because we would not buy him business cards. And that was not a Robin decision. That was a firm decision. Why spend money when this person's not yet an attorney? And so, the business cards were critical for him to be happy, I guess, because of how unhappy he was with me. And so, are business cards a reward, I think, for some people they definitely are, and for some people, maybe not so much.

Emmet Ore:

Okay, how can employers inexpensively and meaningfully recognize employees?

Robin Paggi:

Well, it's one of the things a lot of times people think that they have to spend money in order to recognize employees and they don't. So, here are some of the things that employers can do. Relaxed dress code, especially after the pandemic. Probably people got pretty used to dressing really relaxed for work. And so, some of us really like to dress up. And that's one of the perks of going to work. But some people, not so much. And so, maybe relaxing the dress code for a while, at least for a while. Flex time. And so, that's another thing, too. And going back to work, some of us really like working from home, and having to go into the office and complete work that we can easily do at home might be a demotivator. And so, having some flex time or that employees are able to have one Friday afternoon off a month as recognition, or reward,

or something like that. Sending a handwritten thank-you note, those have really gone by the wayside. And that is really meaningful when people take the time to write something. Letting employees use work time to go volunteer at their kid's school, or volunteer somewhere else. Now, not every single day, but maybe every once in a while. So, there are a lot of different things that employers can do to reward employees without spending a dime. And as a matter of fact, if you Google, "How to reward employees without spending money," you'll find a lot of ideas that can help you with that.

Emmet Ore:

What could you do if the bosses don't necessarily agree with the rewards or want to invest in their employees?

Robin Paggi:

Well, in order to inspire people to spend money, you usually have to build a business case for doing it. And again, like with the previous question, sometimes it doesn't take money in order to do it. But when you provide a business case for someone you want to look at, this is the return on your investment. And so, if you invest in any kind of rewards or recognition, this is the return that you will get on that investment. And if you can actually have some data that you can demonstrate, then that's very helpful. But what you can do if you haven't, you can't get that data from your organization, is to look at other organizations and what they have done and to benchmark your organization against other organizations. And so, usually employers and managers are all about the bottom line. And if you want to disrupt that bottom line in any way by suggesting that they spend time, energy, and money on something, demonstrating the return on investment is usually the best way of doing it.

Emmet Ore:

Got it. Thank you. Okay, so, is an Employee of the Month Program a good way to recognize employees?

Robin Paggi:

I'm not a big fan of those programs for a few reasons. One is that only one person is recognized. And what if somebody else did something really great, too? They don't get to be recognized because only one person gets recognized? The other reason is because it's only once a month. And what if somebody does something really great two times in one month? So, I think that when you have a formal obligated program, here's another thing, what if somebody didn't do anything great that month, but you've got to recognize somebody because we've got to have an employee of the month? So, it's when you have something that is so structured that way, I think that it prevents you from utilizing it so that it's really effective. Now, the reason you want to recognize people is because that fulfills their self-esteem need and inspires them to perform. But if the recognition program isn't doing that, then it's not a good recognition program. So, you want to recognize people for doing a good job, above and beyond the call of duty when it happens. So, not just once a month and not just one person, once a month. And so, the other thing is that a lot of times Employee of the Month Programs, they've got the employee's picture hanging up in the lobby and the employee never sees it or something like that. And so, there's no reward in being Employee of the Month other than just being able to say that you were. And for some people, that's just not enough. So, the whole thing about recognizing and rewarding people is to do it in a way that inspires them to perform. And as I've said a couple of times, everybody's different. And so, you need to find out what works for that employee or your employees in general in order to get the return on investment that you want.

Emmet Ore:

Okay, it looks like that's all the questions for today. If you guys do have any other questions, if you think of something later, reach out to us at webinarHRhelp@vensure.com. Thank you all for tuning in. As always, thanks Robin, for the great presentation today. And we will see you all next week.