

GETTING THE BEST FROM YOUR STAFF

Factsheet of 1



For an organisation to be successful and effective, it is crucial to have staff who are engaged and motivated. Although everybody has different motivations at different times, there are certain things you can do to maximise the potential for engagement.

A happy staff team is at the heart of a productive workplace, and there's a lot you can do as a leader to help support this.

1

Communication is key. Being open and honest with your employees is essential, and it's good to start by making sure they have a clear understanding of your organisation's mission, vision and plans for achieving these. Listen to their ideas and give feedback. Positive feedback can increase engagement so don't just leave it for formal appraisals. Negative feedback should be fair and focussed, and give space for a response.

2

Make sure you show your staff that they are valued. VCSE organisations are rarely in the position of being able to offer financial rewards to their staff, so find other ways of showing recognition for the work they have put in – this could be anything from verbal or email thanks and acknowledgement (shared widely!), or providing coffee and cake for your next meeting. Giving extra responsibilities can show that you trust and have confidence in them, but make sure they are comfortable with this, and have the necessary skills and training they may need.

3

Offer opportunities for training and development. There are a lot of formal training courses available, but don't feel restricted to these. Look at opportunities for networking and support sessions with people in similar roles both internally and in other organisations, or give people time to shadow or be mentored by other staff.

4

Provide clear and realistic goals, targets and objectives for staff members at all levels of the organisation. It's hard to be productive and effective if there is no guidance as to what success in a role looks like. Where possible, involve your team in setting these – and in other organisational decisions. If staff have the opportunity to contribute and feed their views in to the organisation, they are more likely to feel invested in it.

5

Try to head off any conflict at an early stage. Conflict can arise through unclear role descriptions, lack of support, or just a clash of personalities, and can have a detrimental effect on staff morale and performance. The risk of conflict can be reduced by having clear roles and responsibilities, and by good leadership and communication, but it can't always be avoided completely. Make sure you address signs of conflict as soon as they are noticed, and meet with those involved to mediate and resolve any issues.

Find out what motivates your staff, in order to give you an understanding of what is important to them as individuals. If they need flexibility in their roles and how they carry these out, look at the options you have and whether these can be taken on board. If they need more (or less) support, find a way to build this into your framework. As long as the needs of their team and / or the organisation as a whole are being met, then responding to individual needs or wishes can be one of the most effective ways to build loyal and engaged staff.

For more info see:

[How to get the most out of your staff — NCVO Knowhow](#)

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