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'Agile' Approach for Increasing Motivation at The Workplace

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A **high motivation level at a workplace** means happier employees and all of together these result in high-quality works. Creating motivation is the art of understanding what activates people. Employees with high motivation have a sense of ownership for the work and this increases **efficiency at the workplace.**

But is it possible to **increase motivation** within a whole company or a team, when people's expectations, characters and ways of doing things are so different from each other? Which approaches should the business world use towards motivation?



According to **American psychologist Frederick Herzberg**, one of the 'fathers' of term motivation, the first thing you have to do to **increase motivation** is that you have to eliminate the elements which upset people. Secondly, it is necessary to focus on factors such as success, approval, progress, and development. In a working environment, working for long hours is one of the first issues that upset the employees. When they cannot establish a balance between work and private life, the motivation of the employees decreases, and this is reflected in their works.

As the figures in the most recent report published by the **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)** in 2017 show that long working hours have no contribution to efficiency. According to **OECD's latest report** on work efficiency, the gross domestic product (GDP) of the countries in which employees

are working more than 40 hours a week, is very low compared to the countries in which employees are working less than 40 hours.

This is why employers and managers need to find methods to reduce the working hours in order to **increase work efficiency** and therefore **increase motivation.**

Nowadays, most of the companies which want to increase the motivation with a modern approach are turning to Agile. **The Agile approach** was originally an approach that software teams use, but thanks to the increased efficiency and motivation, it is now spreading to other departments of the companies as well.

How to Increase Motivation with Agile Approach

Researches show that **Agile projects** are more fun and more inspiring for employees. So how and why Agile approach increases the level of motivation?

First, let's look at the four principles of the Agile Manifesto Values, which have come to value:

- Individuals and interactions over processes and tools
- Working software over comprehensive documentation
- Customer collaboration over contract negotiation
- Responding to change over following a plan

The **Agile approach** focuses on human and the interaction between them. In the past, it was considered normal when a single employee undertakes all the work and becomes a shining star for the company but now companies focus on team building. Because the key to success today is to be connected and to collaborate.

The **Agile approach** also improves work efficiency with synchronized teamwork. The face-to-face communication enables the projects to be completed in a shorter time, both thanks to its speed and its ability to prevent potential communication gaps. Moreover, this interaction between the team members reduces the need for documentation and gives them more time to work on the product or project.

Another **principle of the Agile approach** is that everyone focuses on a single job at a time. Everyone knows exactly what to do and focuses on it, so that it becomes quick and easy to complete large-scale projects as they are divided into smaller jobs.

In the Agile approach, the deadlines for these small jobs are kept short, so that the person working on the job can plan his / her priorities accordingly. Since they have no other job to affect their focus, it becomes very easy for them to adapt to this deadline. Another advantage of focusing on small jobs is to reduce the risk of errors by reducing complexity.

The continuous feedback, in other words open communication starts in the early stages of an **Agile project** and continues. As a result, quality standards meet project expectations when the project or product is completed. Also, the predefined metrics are measured and assessed at each stage of the process. Thus, when the work is finished, the need to review or correct the whole process becomes less. This means that the team does not waste time on this and it provides an **increase in motivation**.

In his book Drive, Behavioral Science Specialist Daniel Pink says that the impulse of having a purpose creates a very strong energy source and that the secret of happiness is based on having the right goals. To make the work meaningful for the employees and to give them a purpose is, therefore, a very important element of the Agile approach.

Companies that have gone through **Agile transformation**, while adopting and implementing all these fundamental principles and other aspects of it, experience an increase both in the work efficiency and in the motivation of the employees.

Employees, on the other hand, **find meaning** in what they do, have a sense of ownership of their work and they constantly increase their creativity and learn new things while working in multi-disciplinary teams. So they increase the value of the company as well as their own.

Companies that experience the differences and the advantages of the Agile approach, also experience the success of achieving their highest performance.

Comment & Questions

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