

Motivating Maintenance Workers shouldn't be a mystery

I've heard many maintenance professionals talking about how they can't motivate their workers. "Give me more money," they quote a worker, "and I'll give you more work." PM is a particularly tough area for motivation, because the periodic checks, cleaning, greasing and other activities are pretty boring.

Motivation is not something you 'do' to employees. It's a feeling you facilitate in them. There are many ways to create a motivated feeling in your workers. The things that motivate maintenance people probably motivate you, too. The following story, courtesy of Frank Seaman at GE Plastics in Burkeville, Alabama, has several motivators.

"We were having a hard time getting our high-voltage electrical PM program off the ground," Frank reports. "We called in outside engineers for help and discussions about this problem. Management clearly did not want to spend the kind of money it would take for the engineers to do this work. Bringing in the engineers already caused a problem with our own electrical people. The program was turned over to our own electrical people to come up with a PM program that was effective and feasible. They did it, and did a fine job. Now they can hardly wait to get started with the nitty-gritty PM tasks."

What a change ownership of the new PM program makes to a workgroup. Added motivators at GE were the growth afforded by the challenge of building a new system and the feeling of satisfaction in showing management that they were as good as any outsiders at setting up effective programs.

When you have felt motivated, think about what was going on. Apply the understanding about yourself to your maintenance workers and be prepared for a new attitude.

Executive Summary

I've heard quite a few maintenance professionals complaining that they find it very hard to motivate their workers. To quote a worker \\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\"Give me more money, and I'll give you more work." PM is an extremely challenging area for motivation, for the reason that periodic checks, cleaning, greasing and other activities are pretty boring. Also, motivation is not something you do to employees. It's a feeling you bring out in them. There are a number of ways to create a motivated feeling in your workers. The thing that motivates maintenance people quite possibly motivates you, as well. When you have felt motivated, give some thought to what was going on. Apply the information to your maintenance workers and be ready for a brand new attitude.

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