Energizing Your Workplace

Here are some fun ideas to energize and “innergize” your workplace. All are simple and designed to improve morale, employee satisfaction, and create an environment of energy and fun.

Health Incentives
It has been proven that a healthy worker is a happy worker. New studies have shown that standing up can improve your health. Encouraging employees to stand and work, or providing pedometers with the company logo is a great way to get people moving. Host competitions to see who has walked the most each month. Encouraging employees to workout and stay healthy is a great way to boost energy in the company.

Hosting a “Lunch and Learn”
A great time to communicate with workers is during the lunch period. During recent surveys, 19% of employees say they do not stop for lunch and another 48% of employees say their lunch break is 30 minutes or less. Encourage workers to take a break for lunch by joining a “lunch and learn” session. These sessions can be regulated (weekly, monthly, seasonally, etc.) and include topics such as reducing work-related stress, healthy eating, or ergonomics.

The Snack Stash
Keeping a drawer or basket of tasty snacks is cheap and keeps everyone happy. This can help the busy bee from having to leave the office for a quick bite to eat. Create a suggestion box and change things up to add mystery. You might even be introduced to new foods and discover neat brands.

Office Dog
One way that many offices are keeping spirits high is with an office canine. Purina put out a video about office dogs and some rules for keeping everyone happy and healthy. An office pet keeps everyone interacting, talking, and allows people to take a break from the stress of work.

Creating a Unique Space
Not everyone likes white walls, white ceilings, and soulless lighting. Adding some color and decoration to your workspace can go a long way for lifting spirits and energizing the team. Colors can affect mood, so why not add some happy tones to your workplace? Try having something unique that cannot be found elsewhere. Whether it is monopoly-themed conference rooms, height-adjusting desks, or bird stickers on every surface like Twitter headquarters, these fun quirks give workers a sense of ownership and community.

Break Down Communication Barriers
Opening up communication within a company is the best way to build confidence and drive in a workplace. One forest products company integrated a dinner for employees. Within a year the company hosted 30 dinners, each of which included 10 employees and their spouses. The employees spent the time chatting and socializing with their bosses, followed by a question-and-answer session in which everyone openly discusses all aspects of the company. According to the company’s president, “By the end of the evening I’d often see a remarkable change in attitude on the part of even the crustiest of the union guys.”

Coffee
Keep good coffee (and tea) options for everyone. Maybe include a Keurig or Starbucks Verismo with different brands of cups. Each month have a “coffee/tea of the month” with a new flavor or brand for everyone to try. Keep a box of comments on the new flavor and see what keeps people talking. When it comes time to switch out brands, keep notes on which employees liked which flavors, and include a special box of cups just for them to give as a care package on special occasions. At Square, employees can take free classes on brewing coffee hosted by their in-house barista.

Capture the Moment
Take impromptu snapshots of associates at work, in the break room, and during celebrations or department meetings. Post the photos on a private Facebook group or on the internal website for everyone to enjoy.

Make Meeting Breaks Fun
Begin your department meetings by asking everyone to complete an open-ended sentence about having fun. For example, “Wouldn’t it be fun if we could...” or “The funniest thing that ever happened at work is...”

Create a Symbolic Award
Individual accomplishments deserve recognition. A silly momentum like a stuffed bear can represent achievement in some area of the company. The recipient keeps it for a designated period of time on their desk, allowing people to congratulate them and start conversation.
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**Put Candy in Your Staff Mailboxes**
Write notes to go along with the candy like “An extra PayDay for you!” or “You are worth 100 Grand!” Little reminders and tasty treats help boost morale and get everyone talking about their tasty treats!

**Used Book Sale**
Ask employees to donate their unwanted books for sale to other employees. Place them in common area for others to pursue. Sell them for 50 cents or a dollar and use the money to buy treats for the staff. Cookies, candy, and fruit are some simple tasty treats that will show appreciation for the employees, and raise some money.

**Recognition Open House**
Invite managers to attend and learn ways to show appreciation for their staff. Provide refreshments and let managers “shop” for thank you notes and cards. View a resource display and share ideas! Have a drawing for a book like “301 Ways to Have Fun at Work” or a popular business book.

**Make Mandatory Learning Fun**
Liven up mandated learning for state and federal agencies. Present the concepts through participatory games such as Bingo, Jeopardy, or Who Wants to Be a Millionaire. Have contests include prizes and treats for employees who get answers correct. Keeping learning light will encourage employees to get excited about the company, and increase retention rates.

**Department Newsletter**
Recognize your associates who have gone above and beyond the call of duty. Celebrate their accomplishments, birthdays, special awards, and anything that normally might not be recognized. Call it “Pat On the Back” or “Above and Beyond” with your company’s logo. Feeling appreciated for your achievements can make the world of a difference to an employee.

**Employee of the Month**
Highlight a different employee every month. Post photographs of them from the present and past to give people a laugh at childhood pictures. Include things like interests, hobbies, information about their families and pets, and length of employment. See if people can identify who the employee of the month is by hiding their current picture under the childhood photo. After a few days, remove the younger picture and see how many people were able to guess correctly.

**Visibly Communicate Progress**
Provide several visual “options” for managers to communicate scores against goals. For example, a graphic with a jogger (attired appropriately for each department) or a fish swimming upstream advancing toward 100% customer satisfaction. Designate a goal for the month. When the scores come out, position the messenger at the appropriate place. If the goal is reached, they are smiling. If the goal is not reached, they are sad. Post all customer comments on sticky notes along the path.

**Celebrate Success**
Announce customer satisfaction scores on sugar cookies delivered by the administrative and management team. Dust the current score in colored sugar or frosting to educate the staff of their success. This brightens up everyone’s day much more than memos or flyers.

**Manager’s Toolbox**
Make it easy for managers to recognize staff. Provide plastic toolboxes filled with thank you cards, gift certificates to restaurants, movie coupons, and other small gifts. Assign a committee to “refill” the tool kits once each quarter. These gifts can be handed out whenever a staff member deserves recognition for their successes and hard work! They can also be used for birthdays and special occasions.

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