

Give your team what they really want



[Return to index page](#)

You might not be able to give your team everything on their wish lists. Huge bonuses and unlimited paid time off aren't left to the discretion of most managers. But you can boost your team's morale and job satisfaction by paying attention to the little things that matter. Here are some things your employees are likely to want, even if they don't know it:

- **Meaning in their work.** Can they see where their work makes a difference for customers? For coworkers? Does their work align with their own beliefs and life goals?
- **Flexibility.** Employees don't just disappear when they're not working. They have home lives, community or school commitments and outside interests. Having the freedom to be a whole person outside work can make or break an employee's job satisfaction.
- **Autonomy.** Is there room for your team to make decisions? Suggest ideas? Your top performers especially want to leave a mark on the business and make things better for everyone.
- **Training.** Getting trained in a new area or cross-training to back up a team member can help your team feel like their careers are progressing. And getting to perform new tasks can broaden their perspectives. Giving team members the opportunity to train or support the training of others by answering questions, mentoring, etc. can also boost their job satisfaction.

- **Development opportunities.** Can your team members explore areas of interest, learn new skills and set their sights on promotions? Even lateral moves, new work groups or projects might help your team members enjoy their work more after they've mastered their current job responsibilities.
- **Recognition and appreciation.** Encourage your team members to give each other kudos on a regular basis. Share positive comments you get from customers. You can give praise too, to set an example. Just be careful not to make it seem like you're playing favorites.
- **Room for fun.** Can your team celebrate successes? Be themselves at work? Enjoy each other's company? All that adds up to a winning culture.

While many people work to make a living, being satisfied with work isn't just about the money. See if focusing on one or more of these aspects makes a difference for your team.

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