Your ability to lead and motivate people is critical to your success as a manager. When people work well together, there is energy and enthusiasm.

When they don’t work well together, employees can become dissatisfied or bored with their jobs and then productivity declines.

As a manager, you play a big role in building team motivation.

**Find out what motivates your employees**

In your conversations with your employees, find out what is most important to them. Is it time off with their family? Recognition from you?

**Help your employees prioritize work to focus on the most important tasks**

This means that your employee’s goals need to line up with your departments goals and the university values and priorities.

For example, make sure employees understand why customer service is a priority. To achieve maximum performance, try to include some tasks employees especially like to do or excel at.

**Train and explain**

Make sure your employees have the skills and knowledge to do their work effectively. If they don’t, teach them or arrange for them to get the training they need.

Explain tasks carefully so that employees know what is expected.

**Let people work**

Your job is to explain the “what” and the “why” of the work, and to see that your employees have the skills, tools and support to do the work.

Their job is to get the work done in the way they find most efficient. Keep track of people’s progress. However, avoid micromanaging or second-guessing employee’s work.

Be patient when employees make mistakes – it’s how people learn.

**Expect excellence**

People will put their hearts into work if they think the team, the department and the university is striving for excellence.

**Treat employees with respect**

Rudeness and a lack of respect for employees are big de-motivators. Show respect by listening and responding to your employee’s thoughts, ideas and concerns.
Be generous with praise and recognition
They are the most powerful motivators, as well as the least costly or complex, and yet many managers underuse them.

Look for and reward progress, not just big accomplishments.

Say “thank you” and “great work” often. Be specific in your acknowledgements.

Catch people doing something right. Recognize it immediately with a compliment and a thank you.

Use your creativity to think of surprising, fun and meaningful rewards. A special recognition for a job well done can be more motivating than a “standard” reward.

Encourage your leader to offer positive feedback big effect on morale.

A note from the Dean or Vice President, for example, to team members when a goal is reached or exceeded can have a big effect on morale.

Care about your employees and show that you care
A positive relationship with their manager is a strong motivator for most people.

• Make time to talk with your staff about things beyond the immediate tasks.
• Ask people how they are doing.
• Ask what they think of their work.
• Ask if there are things that are getting in the way of their doing good work.
• Don’t open your e-mail or look at papers on your desk when someone is talking with you.
• Your employees are much more likely to care about work if they know that you listen and care about them.

Remember the shadow you cast and lead by example
Motivate yourself first. Be energetic and positive, and your energy will be contagious. Show what it means to focus on the customer and deliver excellent results. Work hard to model important and healthy values.