

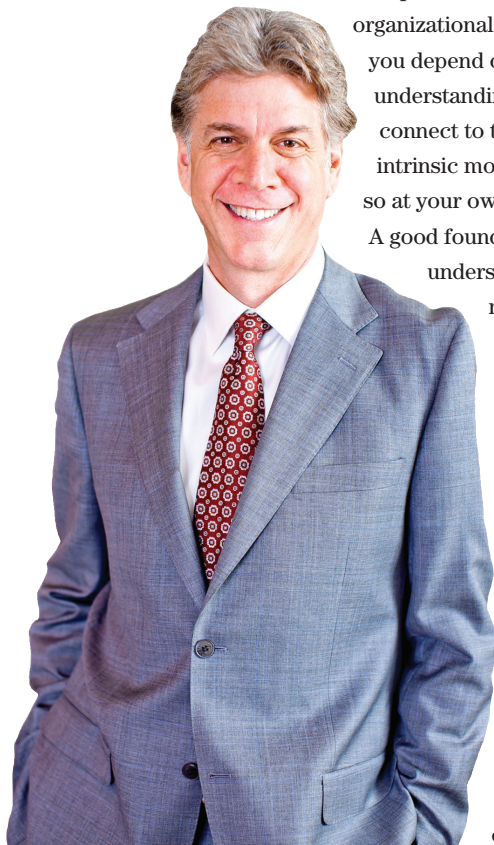
# KEEPING THEM HUNGRY

How to really keep your people engaged in their work

## Motivation

is commonly viewed in two ways: external motivation and internal motivation. External motivational tactics should only be seen as reinforcement of employees' natural inclinations or intrinsic motivators. For example, compensation programs, rewards and recognition programs, professional development efforts, performance reviews and other extrinsic motivators should not be seen as primary ways to motivate employees. Unquestionably, these are indispensable aspects of organizational life. However, if you depend on them without understanding how they connect to the nature of intrinsic motivation, you do so at your own peril.

A good foundation to understanding intrinsic motivation needs to take into account both motivational factors that all employees share as well as factors that differ in influence for each person. Let's focus on factors that people have in common.



In his book, "Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us," Daniel Pink proposes three key principles that are components of intrinsic motivation: autonomy, mastery and purpose.

### Autonomy

Who among us likes to be micromanaged? Few would answer yes. Does unnecessary interference inspire us to greater heights of accomplishment? Is it uplifting and inspiring? For most of us, even when interference is well-intentioned, it misses the mark for a variety of reasons. Having an appropriate level of control and self-direction for a given task or role is key to employee motivation.

### Mastery

Who wants to be known for doing a job poorly? We all want to do our jobs well. Continuous improvement is built into our nature. If we're doing something we believe to be important, we want to get better at it. And Pink reminds us that mastery requires sacrifice and determination.

### Purpose

Intrinsic motivation requires that we believe in what we're doing. Nonprofit organizations

understand this better than most. Attract people who believe in what you're doing and carrots and sticks become less important in your toolbox of management tactics. Just make sure you don't get in the way of your employees. Don't build barriers to your potential success, and employees' natural motivations to work toward a shared purpose will be a powerful engine for achievement.

### What are some lessons to be learned from these motivators?

Find people who are passionate about your organization's purpose and have proven to be persistent in the face of adversity. Ensure that the degree of autonomy you provide is a good fit for your employees. Ensure your employees have the resources they need to get continuously better.

Best-selling author and professor of psychology and behavioral economics Dan Ariely states that, "People don't just care about money. We care about competition and completion, and we care about self-fulfillment and friendship and obligation — all kinds of things." <<

**ANDY KANEFIELD** is the founder of Dialect Inc. and co-author of "Uncommon Sense: One CEO's Tale of Getting in Sync." Dialect helps organizations improve alignment and translation of organizational identity by discovering and using the unique strengths of the organization and its people. He can be reached at (314) 863-4400 and [andy@dialect.com](mailto:andy@dialect.com).