

Covid-19: Play, Purpose and Potential for Motivation & Performance



PLAY, PURPOSE and **POTENTIAL** are three positive motivators identified by Lindsay McGregor and Neel Doshi (ex-McKinsey & Co and co-authors of *Primed to Perform*) that often lead to increased work performance but are most at risk whilst we're working remotely. We've developed nine nifty ideas for bolstering these drivers.

PLAY

- 1. Give your team an audacious goal.** *"Imagine if this time next year we could say we'd achieve X, what would have happened to get us there?"* This could kick-off as a 45 minute group brainstorming challenge over virtual afternoon tea (everyone to bake/buy own scones, jam and cream).
- 2. Have a fun problem-solving task running in the background** such as how to celebrate the return to work on a budget of £500. Invite people to add pictures, films and notes to a shared folder.
- 3. Put a playful provocation in the post** to your team. Our CEO paid her 11 year old to create an activity, part of which you see here with one of our coaches, Shiobhaun:



Remember to ask your team for ideas on how to inject playfulness – you don't have to have all the answers.

PURPOSE

- 1. Keep your clients and customers alive in your team's mind.** You might ask each team member to dig out some customer feedback they're proud of and reflect on what that customer might need now.
- 2. Keep your team connected to their why.** Be the person who reminds others of why they do their job and what they enjoy about it. Can't recall? Try thinking of a time each of your team members was particularly upbeat at work and what was happening – that should spark something.
- 3. Review (and revise) the team why.** This is about everyone in the team knowing the purpose of the team; not the activities of the team but why you do it. Depending on how your organisation is affected by Covid-19 there may be an urgent need to revise the objectives of your team – or it may simply be a good opportunity. Try this:

- Ask each team member for the 1-sentence response they'd give the CEO if they asked why the team exists.

- Invite each team member to come with a revised sentence of why the team exists (it's purpose) in the light of where the world is now. (They might not want to revise the first, that's fine, but you've provoked thinking).

- Invite everyone to list what they believe to be the three most important things to continue doing, to start doing and stop doing. This activity also forms a neat basis for a first team meeting post social distancing.



POTENTIAL

- 1. Remind each team member what you most value in them**, how those qualities are making a difference now and why they're going to continue to be important. For recent joiners, you might comment on specific qualities that made them stand out during the hiring process.
- 2. Encourage low-cost CPD the whole team can benefit from.** Two specific ideas:
 - Every team member chooses a non-fiction book relating to work/the specific work you do (even if only loosely). Agree a deadline for everyone to have read their book of choice. Read with the aim of picking up three ideas that could be useful to the team, why and how they could be applied. Everyone shares via a short film or on a live team call (3 minutes/person).
 - Every team member to identify someone (inside or outside the team) they admire for a particular technical skill/strength/characteristic. Everyone commits to approaching their 'person on a pedestal' for a 30 minute conversation to learn more about how they got good it, any useful resources and tips on how the learner can build their skill. Some beautiful team relationships could form because of it...
- 3. Invite team members to access Strengths Profile** (currently free during Covid-19). This is a tool that raises awareness of what an individual naturally finds energising. It can be the basis of conversations about how to better use the individual and collective strengths of the team – as well as identifying opportunities for growth by tapping into 'unrealised strengths.' When we use our strengths we're more engaged, perform better, feel happier and give more discretionary effort. Even in an organisation with – and perhaps because of – significant interruption to usual workflow, reduced orders/customers and financial constraints, there is opportunity for personal growth. As a leader you can choose to be a beacon of hope and optimism by sharing this idea.

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BEACON OF HOPE AND OPTIMISM.”**

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