

Tips for motivation within your law firm

The success and profitability of your legal practice largely depends on the performance of your attorneys and staff members. If they are not working with optimal productivity and efficiency, the firm's bottom line is negatively affected.

Remember that employees are people. People respond to motivation and incentives. Here are some tips from [Inc. Magazine](#) on how to motivate your employees for optimal performance.

- **Break projects into smaller tasks** – This especially holds true for large matters with multiple tasks. Sometimes, the enormity of a case can make employees feel less confident in their abilities or just uncomfortable about where to start. Breaking the case into smaller, less-intimidating tasks can serve as great motivation, helping your employees feel more confident about the project as a whole.
- **Transparency** – The debate over law firm transparency is a contentious one and it's probably as old as the very first law firm. Some legal experts argue that full disclosure can hurt the firm in times of financial difficulty, causing partners and senior attorneys to seek employment elsewhere. Other experts take the stance that transparency creates a financial incentive for partners, associates, and staff members. This is especially true under profit sharing business models. Sharing the highs and lows of the practice creates a sense of personal and professional responsibility, which drives employees to their optimal level of performance.
- **Reward positive reviews** – Did a client call to compliment the courtroom skills of an associate? Don't keep that information to yourself. Let your attorneys and staff members know when they receive positive reviews. You may even create a reward system that recognizes

good work. People respond to positive reinforcement and a pat on the back goes a long way towards motivation.

- **Promote a healthy work/life balance** – Show me a burnt out attorney, and I will show you a practice with decreased profitability. Your staff needs to maintain a healthy work/life balance. It not only benefits the individual, but it also adds to the well-being of the practice as a whole. Promote a healthy living by educating your staff. Provide tips and strategies for the achieving a well balanced life. Establish telecommuting options and offer flexible work schedules. A healthy work/life balance starts at the top, so set a tone that benefits the entire firm.
- **Let leaders lead** – For some members of your firm, leadership is a trait that comes easily and these individuals thrive in leadership positions. Motivate these workers by allowing them to take supervisory roles within the practice. This may involve taking the lead on a specific project or heading up a team initiative. By allowing people to shine in their strengths, you make them feel appreciated, which motivates them to optimal performance.

A motivated workforce is a productive workforce. Implement some of these tips to encourage your attorneys and staff members towards a more profitable law practice.

About Erika Winston:

Erika Winston is a Virginia based writer with a passion for all things legal. As a former domestic relations attorney, she understands the challenge of determining the best fee structure for your practice. Erika is a regular contributor to [TimeSolv](#) and a variety of other publications.