

RAMP: A MODEL OF INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

A motivated employee is an engaged employee. To motivate employees, some leaders may look to extrinsic rewards (“carrots and sticks”) to inspire certain behaviors. Yet as research shows, external motivators such as performance bonuses, grades, or disciplinary action can deplete motivation when overused or exhausted. This leaves leaders constantly searching for new ways to motivate, with the same results in the end.

Instead, inspiring motivation using internal needs can be more powerful and longer-lasting. Humans have an internal drive to connect with others, be self-directed, be competent and work on something meaningful. These intrinsic motivators provide a constant fuel that simply needs the right environment to be unleashed. Workplace cultures that appeal to intrinsic motivation will lead to employees feeling more fulfilled, motivated and engaged.

In 2018, the Office of Financial Management, State Human Resources developed the RAMP model. This human-centered framework was inspired by Self-Determination Theory, Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, and decades of other motivation research, as summarized in the book *Drive*, by Daniel Pink. The four components of RAMP are: relationships, autonomy, mastery and purpose.

RELATIONSHIPS — *The drive to feel respected and connected.*



The drive to connect with others has been with us from the early stages of human history. In our own lives, from the moment we were born, we relied on healthy social connections to survive. As we grow older, our social connections increase our physical and emotional well-being. In the workplace, relationships provide a sense of value, support, and encouragement. The model starts with relationships because they provide the foundation to our engagement in the workplace.

AUTONOMY — *The drive for freedom and discretion.*



In our lives, we value the ability to influence our direction. To have no freedom or voice results in stress and aggravation. Autonomy with our work gives us the space to use diverse methods to getting the job done. This enables us to find creative solutions to complex problems. Many tend to confuse autonomy with “going it alone” or having no boundaries. Rather it is about having a choice within a framework of clear expectations. Once the foundation of expectations are laid out, leaders can then provide an autonomous environment that is welcoming to input and new ideas.

MASTERY — *The drive to learn and grow.*



You are reading this handout because you hopefully want to gain knowledge. This is the heart of mastery. It speaks to the internal motivation of curiosity, to face a new challenge, or to be worthy of praise. This motivation is what drives growth in our lives. A sense of progress, not just in our work, but also in our capabilities, drives us to succeed. It can also increase our productivity, innovation, and sense of accomplishment. Our workplace cultures must encourage continuous feedback, skill development and provide realistic challenges.

PURPOSE — *The drive for meaning.*



Knowing our “why” centers us. Knowing that the actions we take serve a greater outcome restores our faith when times get tough. Purpose provides clarity when disruptions occur. In the workplace, our purpose is much more than a mission statement. It is believing the work we do matters and knowing how success is measured. It is also critical that communication, especially in times of change, is transparent and comes from a respected voice. Unlocking and channeling this intrinsic drive for purpose can lead to the highest levels of motivation.

2018 STATE OF WASHINGTON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

An organization that has engaged employees will likely have less turnover, less conflict, increased production, and higher performing teams. To fully engage employees, we have to channel the intrinsic motivation everyone has from healthy relationships, empowerment, progression, and purpose. Results in 2018 reinforce that a strong foundation of relationships in the workplace is built on feeling valued, fairness, encouragement, and communication.

RELATIONSHIPS

- (Q7) My supervisor treats me with **dignity and respect**. 87%
- (Q13) My agency consistently demonstrates **support for a diverse** workforce. 74%
- (Q17) People are **treated fairly** in my work group. 72%
- (Q11) A spirit of **cooperation and teamwork** exists in my work group. 72%
- (Q19) At my workplace, **I feel valued** for who I am as a person. 66%

Feeling valued and positive perceptions of fairness in the work group are likely indicators of job satisfaction.

AUTONOMY

- (Q4) **I know what is expected** of me at work. 87%
- (Q1) I have the **opportunity to give input on decisions** affecting my work. 60%
- (Q15) I am **encouraged to come up with better ways** of doing things. 56%

Employees want to feel their voice is trusted and respected, at all levels and locations.

MASTERY

Feedback

- (Q2) I **receive the information** I need to do my job effectively. 71%
- (Q8) My supervisor gives me **ongoing feedback** that helps me improve my performance. 68%
- (Q9) I **receive recognition** for a job well done. 55%
- (Q16) We **use customer feedback to improve** our work processes. 46%

Development

- (Q18) At my job, I have the **opportunity to make good use of my skills**. 71%
- (Q6) I have the **tools and resources** I need to do my job effectively. 70%
- (Q5) I have **opportunities at work to learn and grow**. 61%

Invest in employees and potentially be rewarded with higher employee job satisfaction.

Ensure that learning and growth opportunities are provided to all employees, at all stages of tenure.

PURPOSE

- (Q3) I know how **my work contributes** to the goals of my agency. 81%
- (Q10) We are **making improvements** to make things better for our customers. 65%
- (Q12) I know **how my agency measures its success**. 55%
- (Q14) I **receive clear information about changes** being made within the agency. 48%

Purpose is more than a mission statement. Make sure to value each employee's contribution to the success of the goals and purpose of the organization.

SUMMARY

- R** – Job satisfaction is strongly connected to feeling valued. Prioritize inclusive workplaces.
- A** – We all want to feel our voice is heard and respected – no matter the position or location.
- M** – Learning and growth opportunities are increasingly in demand, especially beyond the first year.
- P** – Clearly communicate how employee contributions play a role in the success of the agency.

A Model of Intrinsic Motivators

RAMP