

Q. Times are tight at my organization right now. How can I help my staff feel positive about their jobs beyond offering raises, bonuses, or more time off?

A. You're not alone; many leaders are in the same spot as you. The good news: people don't only feel good about their jobs because of money or perks. There are *so many* meaningful ways to help your staff feel good about their work.

Here are some strategies that can make a real difference:

- **Align work with strengths:** Support staff in finding tasks that match their skills. People thrive when they feel capable and confident.
- **Connect to purpose:** Help staff tap into compassion satisfaction. Compassion satisfaction is the sense of fulfillment that comes from making an impact (for example: "The way you handled that situation made a difference.")
- **Lead with support:** Simple but underrated. Ask, "What would make your day to day easier?" Then really listen. Be as accessible as your role allows, and receptive to staff needs.
- **Foster connection:** Rituals help employees cultivate a sense of belonging. Find time for team shoutouts at meetings, small celebrations, even "chips and salsa Fridays."
- **Give feedback thoughtfully:** Offer different types of positive feedback and ask people how they prefer to receive it. Remember to make your feedback concrete and specific (for example "Your calm demeanor helped de-escalate the call. Thank you." Ask each employee how they prefer to receive positive feedback (Email? One on one? Public shout out?).
- **Be transparent:** When it comes to raises or changes, clarity and honesty build trust, even when the news isn't ideal.
- **Model the culture you want:** Positivity and empathy are contagious! Set the tone as the example. If employees see you offering appreciation, they'll reflect it too!
- **Encourage well-being:** Support participation in benefit-finding and wellness activities (*ie: team puzzle in the breakroom, stretch breaks, or a short mindfulness activity at a staff meeting*)



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- **Ask for input:** Create space for feedback whether through a suggestion box, surveys, or check-ins.
- **End on a high note:** Close meetings or conversations with something uplifting or appreciative.

At its core, positivity at work is about connection, trust, and purpose. When people feel seen, supported, and part of something meaningful, job fulfillment and engagement follow.