

# How to incentivise staff in 2017

It's a new year and organisations across the globe are asking the same question. How can we better incentivise our staff? For many, 2016 was a difficult year. A good success strategy for 2017 would not be complete without guidelines on motivating staff to perform better, be happier in the workplace and increase productivity and profits.



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According to Kim Currin, Currin't Events Account Director, the starting point in planning staff incentives is to determine specific objectives: "These can range from increased sales targets, to more motivated staff, friendly competition within the workplace, a healthy challenge and improved team communications. A well-planned and executed incentive will include regular teasers to build excitement, and frequent progress updates to maintain momentum."

When determining the objectives, be realistic. "Focus on setting reasonable targets that are achievable," advises Currin. "Put an inviting package together that involves staff from the onset."

## What do they want?

The key to any incentive is to ask what the staff want. Liane McGowan, Founder of Happy Monday CC, suggests a motivational drive. "There is value in giving staff something to work towards, so brainstorm and identify what staff really want. An incentive will only work if it is enticing to the employees. A full campaign teases staff throughout the process," says McGowan. "It motivates internal conversations, builds team cohesion and improves achievement."



Kim Currin

## Critical mistakes

Currin and McGowan offer two critical errors that companies often make when planning incentives. Firstly, companies often don't involve staff in the process, which means there is no buy-in, and inevitably leads to failure. Secondly, although hiring a professional agency is advisable, check credentials. Many agencies do not have the experience in logistics and planning that is essential for these types of events. "Specialised incentive companies have the know-how and support to manage unique incentives and offer a full solution," adds McGowan.

## Was it worth it?



Liane McGowan

Once the incentive has run its course, the next step is determining the return on investment – have the objectives set been achieved? “If staff are more motivated and their stories and experiences stimulate other staff to do better, you know you are on the right track,” confirms Currin. “ROI is absolutely measurable; it is based on financial targets, and the costs of incentives should be built into the targets.”

Currin concludes with some suggestions for incentives to implement in 2017. “A year-long incentive plan, with a long term, high value prize will motivate staff throughout the year. Add to this shorter-term (maybe quarterly) prizes, and staff who achieve these qualify for the major prize. An incentive planner is essential to help with roll out, and avoid the incentive stalling after the first quarter.”

“Let staff know they are important by communicating with them and constantly encouraging them,” concludes McGowan. Send leader boards so that staff know how far they are from the top. Make sure you allow enough time from implementation to ‘take off’, giving staff the time to make the necessary arrangements in their personal lives – and if your prizes include travel, make sure all participating members have a valid passport.”

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