



FACT SHEET

Motivation and workplace productivity in 2026



Motivation is what drives us to take action, reach our goals, and keep going even when things feel challenging. It doesn't magically appear, it is something we build over time by understanding our "why", setting clear goals, and taking small, consistent steps forward. When we recognise what truly motivates us and stay focused on it, we build the energy and determination needed to overcome obstacles and avoid burnout.

Here are some practical tips to help you stay motivated, protect your wellbeing, and support productivity at work.

Staying motivated

Start your day with positivity

Research shows that practising gratitude and positive thinking improves workplace engagement and mental wellbeing, helping people feel more connected and energised at work.

(Source: <https://positivepsychology.com/improving-motivation-at-work/>)

- Start your day by listing **one thing you are grateful for at work**.
- Take 30 seconds each morning to think of one positive.
- Think of something that makes you smile.

Celebrate small wins

- Celebrating small achievements keeps motivation high and makes progress feel real. Finishing a task, trying a new strategy, or supporting a colleague all matter.
- Offer a quick "well done," a smile, or take a moment to reflect on what went well.
- These small celebrations build a positive workplace culture and encourage everyone to keep moving forward.

Teamwork makes each day better

Communicate openly

- Share ideas, ask questions, and offer support.
- Let your team know when something works well, your success might inspire others.

Celebrate each other

- Acknowledge the great things your colleagues do.
- A simple “thank you” or shout-out can lift the whole team’s mood.

Support and share

- Swap resources, brainstorm together, and help each other during transitions and routines.
- Remember: teamwork lightens the load and makes the day smoother for everyone.
- Encourage truth telling, if you are working after hours or feeling overwhelmed, let your line manager know so support can be arranged.

Boost productivity without losing joy

Plan ahead

- Organise materials and learning spaces early where possible.
- Use quick checklists to stay on track without extra pressure.
- Planning and preparation free up energy for meaningful work with children.

Work smarter, not harder

- Prioritise tasks with the biggest impact on children’s learning and wellbeing.
- Break larger tasks into smaller chunks so progress feels achievable.

Short reset breaks

- Take time to breathe, stretch or reset your thoughts.
- Even one minute can restore focus and energy.

Avoiding burnout

- Use your personal leave **when needed**, it is there to protect your wellbeing.
- Listen to your body and mind. Rest is not a weakness; it is a strength.
- Lean on your team for motivation and support, no one is meant to do this work alone.

Goal setting

Tips for achievable goals:

- Keep them simple.
- Make them realistic.
- Track your progress.
- Celebrate milestones.

Use team time wisely

- Set goals together.
- Revisit them regularly to stay motivated and aligned.

Staying professional

- You don’t all need to be best friends, but you do need to be respectful and considerate of one another.
- Professionalism isn’t just about compliance, it’s about feeling capable, supported, and proud of the work you do as part of a strong team.
- Seek out learning opportunities that help you grow and feel confident in your role.
- Stay up to date with your qualifications, first aid, and Working with Children Check (or state equivalent).

Links to the National Quality Standard (NQS)

Quality Area 4 – Staffing arrangements

A motivated and collaborative team ensures staffing is consistent, effective, and supportive.

Relevant elements:

- 4.1.1 – Organisation of educators
- 4.2.1 – Professional collaboration
- 4.2.2 – Professional standards