

# Myth of Motivation

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*"All motivating is demotivating." – Reinhard K. Sprenger*

## Abstract

Reinhard K. Sprenger wrote an insightful book on motivating employees. His central statement: Stop it! Everyone has intrinsic motivation. This must be developed independently and individually to contribute to the success of the company. All external motivation attempts will fail.

I recommend acquiring and reading his book [German]: Mythos Motivation, Wege aus einer Sackgasse.

## The Key Points from Sprenger's Book

- The system of motivation is methodical distrust.
- Employees are trapped by threats, punishments, bribery, rewards, and bonuses.
- All motivation destroys motivation. "And how did you manage to break him? - Through praise..." [Ephraim Kishon]
- The bonus practice in companies is the disease it believes it can cure.
- Motivation is like doping in sports: You no longer feel the pain.
- Relying on self-regulating incentive systems is the leader's confession of failure.
- Willingness to perform can only be hindered.
- Leading is primarily avoiding demotivation.
- If you consider employees to be incapable, they will be so.
- Over time, every manager gets the employees they deserve.
- When we no longer saw the meaning of our work, we started talking about motivation.

- All people want is to be able to choose.
- Motivation is undeniably an individual matter. Giving them the freedom to do so is the leader's responsibility.
- The most common offense in business life is the fundamental disrespect for human dignity.