

## Does more pay mean more motivation?

Many employees get to a point where quality of life is more important than standard of living.

We live in a world that revolves around the word fast – fast food, fast cars, fast living, instant gratification. We cram so much into our lives, and work such long hours, that there seems little time to stop and smell the roses. Australia is a nation of hard workers, and despite a reputation as the land of the long weekend, has one of the longest working days of any Western nation.

But while we might skite about how hard we've worked, and often measure ourselves on how many hours we've put in, it's worthwhile to stop and think – what quality of life do you or your staff have? What motivates you/them to do it? Does working long, hard, arduous hours behind the wheel or pushing a pen for 14 hours a day equate to quality of life? Better still, what motivates you to do it?

People have differing views of what

### Drivers are treated like lepers because they refuse to work every single hour that the log book permits

makes quality of life. For you it could be buying a new truck or trailer that will be more comfortable or reduce your workload. However, for the next person, it might be a picnic with the kids, being healthy and happy, or having a cold beer on a hot day.

Theorist Abraham Maslow believed that as humans we prioritised our needs, and he devised a model that subsequently became known as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Without getting too complex, he believed there were five needs that existed in every person. They were:

- A physiological need (the need to satisfy cravings for hunger, thirst, shelter, sex, etc)
- A safety need (the need to feel secure and protected from physical and emotional harm)
- A social need (the need to satisfy

longings for affection and acceptance)

- A need for self-esteem (the need for internal esteem, satisfaction and recognition)
- A self actualisation need (the need for acceptance by society).

Maslow believed that all of these needs together or separately were what motivated humans.

Are we expecting too little or too much from our employees without actually thinking that the same principles that apply in Maslow's hierarchy of needs actually apply to the company staff? Why do we regularly put work before those most basic of needs? Why do we expect drivers to operate in all sorts of climates with insufficient protection from the wind and rain, or to go weeks without seeing their families for more than a day at a time, or to keep on going with-

out even a cursory acknowledgment that they're doing a great job?

Acknowledging Maslow's hierarchy of needs means that when a driver says no to that second trip, there's a good chance he's saying that for a reason – perhaps family problems have arisen or the driver just needs a weekend off for a change. Too often, drivers are treated like lepers because they refuse to work every single hour that the log book permits.

I don't know a lot of people who work 72 hours outside road transport, but if they do, I wouldn't mind betting they're on six-figure salaries.

One of the great ironies of our workforce is that while we are happily tolerating 72 hours as the upper limit of human endurance (though some even push the envelope past this), some industries are seeking to



Darren Nolan is risk manager with Nolan's Interstate Transport, a company specialising in refrigerated transport. Nolan's is ISO 9002 accredited and a member of Natroad. Email [darren@nolanstransport.com.au](mailto:darren@nolanstransport.com.au)

cut their working hours from 38 hours per week to just 35.

So if you want the best out of your staff, know what motivates them. I know that I am on shaky ground when I suggest that money does not always increase motivation or performance. But there are those employees who are working long hours on good pay who would rather take a reduction in working hours than another pay increase. These are the people whose material needs have been met, but who are craving the sorts of things that money and work cannot provide. Sometimes, this can be something as basic as extra sleep or time spent with young children before they grow up.

Reaching a happy medium is definitely not an easy task, however if you learn to accommodate and listen to employee needs, you are well on the way to providing a happy work environment, where everyone's quality of life, including the boss's, is improved.

I want to take this brief opportunity to thank those people who supported the Craig Roseneder e-Auction. We raised \$7594.50 for the fund, which would not have been possible were it not for the support of the sponsors who donated the goods, and of course the winning bidders who donated the cash. My sincere thanks.

Until next time, stay safe.