

The silent noise of demotivated workers

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Introduction:

Demotivated workers can be a “silent noise” with great potential to harm the productivity of motivated workers and the performance of entire organisations. Indeed, such workers can obstruct an organisation’s contribution towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth; and can fail an organisation from achieving its mission. Unfortunately, many organisations harbor demotivated workers yet considerable success of any organisation depends on their potential to excel (Sabir, Znaidi, & Rejeb, 2020, Vavra et al., 2021). This potential can be nurtured, suffocated or killed.

The World Economic Forum (WEF, 2021) report shows that 70% of workers worldwide are demotivated at work. This significant percentage of demotivated workers has implications in terms of employee productivity and loss of revenue. A study by Margit (2019) found that demotivated workers underperformed by 31% compared to their motivated counterparts. On revenue loss, the WEF revealed that globally, demotivated workers cost companies up to 550 billion dollars annually. Since the desire of any organisation is to have workers, whose potential can be nurtured and utilised for excellence, this chapter explores the concept of demotivation, the theoretical basis of demotivation, causes and effects of demotivation, characteristics of demotivated people, and strategies of managing demotivated people. Finally, a call is made to individuals to continually monitor their motivation levels while organisations are advised to embrace motivation strategies that cut back on numbers of demotivated workers.

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