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The following sample includes lecture sections from a psychology course written for DeVry University Online. The course focuses on leadership and motivation.

Look at the photo to the right. What does the carrot on a string mean to you? I'm sure you've all heard the saying about a carrot dangling in front of your face, but have you thought about what that carrot represents to you? What could your boss or your employer dangle in front of you that would motivate you to work harder or enjoy coming to work every day? This week, we'll focus on motivation concepts and how to apply them to the workplace.

Last week, we learned about Google and why it's considered the best place to work in America in 2007. It seems the powers that be at Google have caught on to theories of motivation and have put them to work. Are any of you considering putting an application in to Google? I know I did when I read their list of perks.

I know of a company that proclaimed its number one goal was to be *the* best employer in its industry. They didn't specify exactly how they were going to accomplish that goal, but it got people excited. Employees were given a survey about what it would take to meet this goal. Management never shared the results of the survey, but I imagine they were all over the board. Just as every individual is unique, the things that motivate them are as well.

Motivation at work is very closely tied to job satisfaction. Now that you have taken the job satisfaction assessment, you have a good understanding about what motivates you in your career. But do you understand what motivates others? If you had to lead a team, would you know how to keep your team excited, positive, and cohesive? By the end of this week, you will know more about the theories of motivation and how to make them work for you in your organization. Think about what the dangling carrot might be for the people you work with. If you were a manager or a team lead, how would you motivate the people on your team?

Motivation Theories

This week, you will learn that there are many different theories of motivation. An early and popular theory is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. A.H. Maslow, the mind behind this theory, asserted that there is a hierarchy of needs, starting with the most basic needs of food and shelter and ending with self-actualization. Your text will go into greater detail than I will, but I wanted to use this example to illustrate a point. In any organization, even when employees have similar education and job experiences, they will likely be at different places in the Hierarchy of Needs pyramid. Because of this, they will have different needs and will not be motivated in the same way or by the same set of rewards or punishments as their peers. A successful manager understands these differences and knows how to motivate people regardless of their needs or desires. Think of an advertising campaign that caught your attention. Did it make you want to

buy the product or pay for the service? Why? Great advertisers and marketers have similar skills as the best leaders do--they understand individual needs and how to capture the attention and interest of a wide range of people. Look at the picture on the left. Notice that some people in the group are smiling and look happy, while others seem frustrated or bored. A great leader would see that and know how to generate excitement and encourage all team members to feel important and valued.

When you read about the theories of motivation, which ones stuck with you? Did you see yourself in any of the examples?

Conflict and Negotiation

Part of what you'll learn this week is how to deal with conflict and negotiation. As you know, there is conflict in any organization. Though the word conflict often has negative connotations, it is not always a bad thing. Conflict, if dealt with effectively, can lead to growth and learning. Communication is a key to conflict resolution. Your communication style affects every interaction you have, and if you learn to communicate effectively, you will be able to deftly handle almost any conflict. It's an art, and I am confident you can all master it.

Another art that is closely tied to communication is negotiation. Maybe you've heard people say "the art of negotiation." It's a common saying, and the reasons are clear. Negotiation is like a dance. You have to give and take, and an artful negotiator will persuade people to see things his or her way without any strong arming. Have you ever been sold something you didn't need or even want, and during the process, you didn't even realize you were being sold? How did that person convince you? Most people are turned off by abrasive and pushy sales people. It's those who excel at communication and negotiation who are most likely to win you over. Negotiation is uncomfortable for many people--even great communicators--but with practice, you can become good at it. You may even become an artful negotiator. Wouldn't that be nice?

This week, your assignment is to take a communication inventory. You will learn a bit about your communication style and your personality through the exercise and the short essay you will write. When you're finished, think about how you could change or improve your communication style to make you better at handling conflict or negotiating a deal. Even if you're very good, there's always room for improvement. Consider it a challenge. Wouldn't it be great to come out on top whenever you have to handle conflict or negotiate a contract or deal?

Enjoy this week! It's our last week of course work, so try to pull it all together. How can you become a great leader? What have you learned in this class that will make you better every day? Thanks for being an integral part of this class. It's been a wonderful journey, and I hope you'll take away some ideas that will help you as you move forward in your career and upward (should you want to) in your organization. Good luck!