

Massachusetts Highway Department's Enablement of Intrinsic Rewards

Bernard McCourt recognized the speaker on his voice mail but was still surprised. Governor Mitt Romney rang to thank the Massachusetts Highway Department manager for a job well done. A resident had called the governor's office, praising McCourt's crew for fixing a culvert, so Romney telephoned McCourt directly to express his compliments. "It certainly is appreciated when you hear from the person at the top," said McCourt, who has replayed Romney's voice mail message for his wife and some skeptical coworkers. Governor Mitt Romney and other organizational leaders are discovering that one of the best ways to motivate employees is good old-fashioned praise and recognition. Stock options have evaporated and incentive plans often backfire. But for most employees, a few words of appreciation create a warm glow of satisfaction and a renewed energy.

Companies can learn from the state agency to enhance valence. Intrinsic rewards are a contributing factor to enhance the three components of expectancy theory: effort-to-performance ($E \rightarrow P$) expectancy, performance-to-outcome ($P \rightarrow O$) expectancy, and outcome valences (V).

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