

Teacher Motivation and Employee Retention

Stef McLoughlin
stef@schwa.uk

Questions we will explore in the next 50 mins:

- ❖ What can we do/are we currently doing to keep our teachers motivated?
- ❖ Are these strategies having an effect on our staff working with us long-term and at their full potential?

We will look into:

- ❖ Our current context
- ❖ What motivates teachers
- ❖ Teachers' professional identity
- ❖ Teacher voice

Context – TEFL in the UK

- ❖ High drop out rate - “permeable” (Maley 1992: 99)
- ❖ A “fallback” career which when pursued receives social discussion on the grounds that teaching is “low in status, emotionally taxing and badly paid” (Mullock 2009: 5).
- ❖ Long-term? Short Term? Coasting along? Interested in Development?
- ❖ High/low season
- ❖ Type of contracts
- ❖ Current climate

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Long Term Goals and Planning

- ❖ “Wrong” type of motivation. We should be interested in the type of motivation needed in order for teachers to change the way they teach (Kubanyiova, 2006: 8).
- ❖ Roberts (1998: 7) calls this type of motivation “the need to change”

Discuss

What motivational strategies does your school currently have in place? Do any of these strategies deal with long term goals and planning?

Professional identity and its connection to motivation (Zhao 2008, Richards 2001)

- ❖ Low professional identity = lack of motivation
- ❖ Identity is mostly established, negotiated and developed through discourse (Tedick 2005: 58).
- ❖ Reflection

Discuss

What makes a job a profession?

(-) Types of contracts - Teachers employed on casual terms cannot be expected to offer the same type of commitment as those given a detailed contract (Richards 2001: 206).

(-) Long-term work

(-) TEFL has no clear career path

(-) Short Courses

(-) Treated “as an underclass” by people of other professions (McKnight 1992: 30 cited in Johnston 1997: 685).

Discuss

Think about your staffroom, your school and your teachers? Are they considered to be 'professionals'? Do they consider themselves to be 'professionals'?

What can we do to make our teachers feel like professionals?

❖ CPD

❖ Appraisals (acknowledging the gap, the future)

❖ Better contracts? Better conditions?

❖ Link to other professional bodies- writing, research, training, presenting, examining.

❖ A stronger **Teacher Voice**

- ❖ EFL teachers can sometimes be ‘petty and political’ This could be handled in such a way that it is beneficial to the curriculum(Brown 1995: 190).
- ❖ Managers should never take the position of the ‘expert’ and that teachers should be able to express their opinions and should be involved in developing the curriculum.

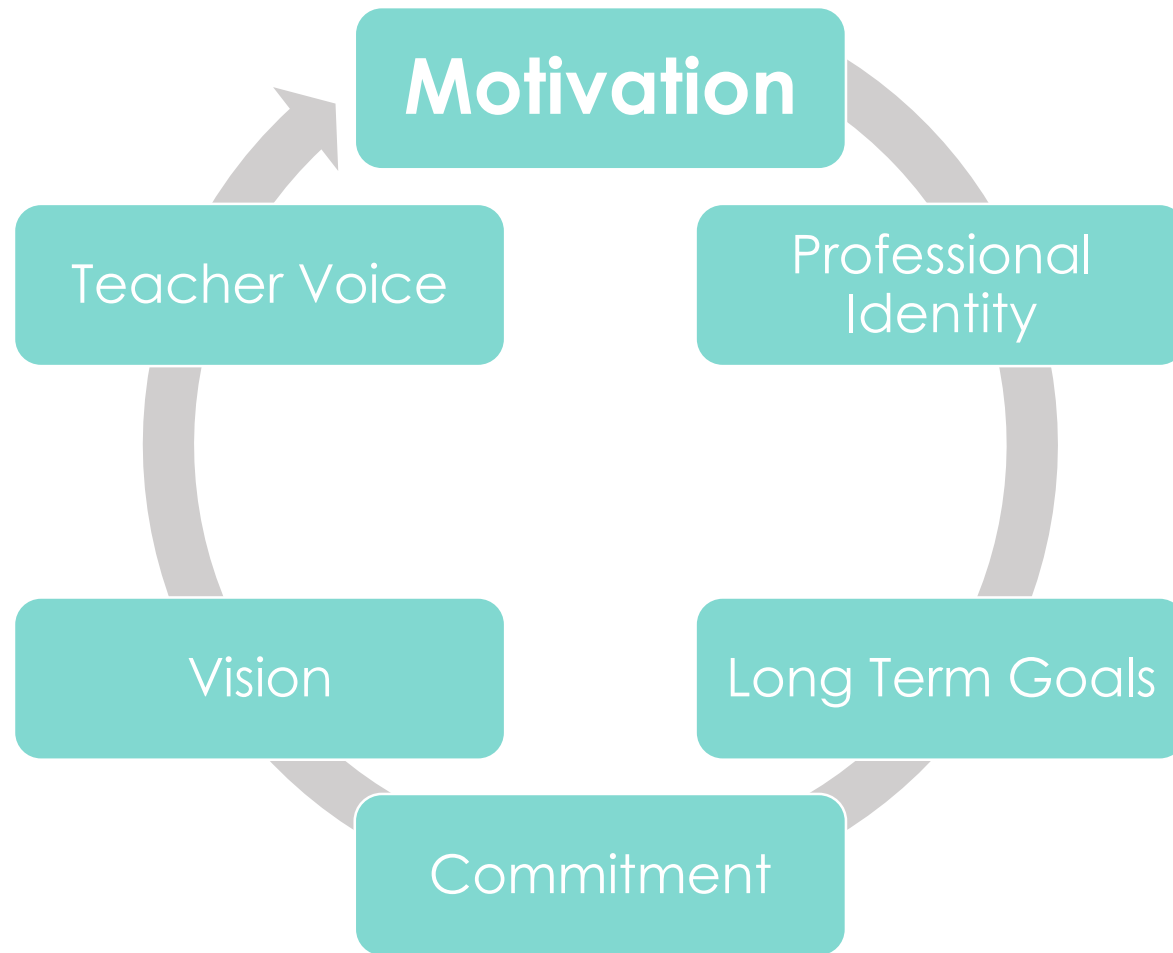
Recognising teacher knowledge has led to several successful education reforms as educational researchers have realised that 'telling' teachers what to do does not constitute change (Johnson Navarro 2011: 1). However, what seems to have an effect is 'inviting teachers' voices, experience, and knowledge' (Johnson Navarro 2011: 2).

Discuss

Realistically, how much of a teacher voice can we give our teachers? What can they be involved in and how can they be involved?

- ❖ Using them as a resource – link to professional identity
- ❖ Open communication, asking for opinions
- ❖ ‘I’m not just a teacher’
- ❖ Increase their value and worth

Summary



Thank you

Stef McLoughlin
ELT Consultant

- ❖ Academic Management
- ❖ Operations Management
- ❖ Human Resources
- ❖ Curriculum Design
- ❖ Teacher Observations
- ❖ Staff Training



stef@schwa.uk



07857107281

If you would like a copy of these slides, please let me know.