

The Mind Tools Expert Voices Podcast:

Episode 1

Rachel Salaman 00:06

Hello, and welcome to The Mind Tools Expert Voices Podcast. I'm Rachel Salaman, and I've presented the Expert Interviews in the Mind Tools Club for the last 16 years. So I've talked to hundreds of experts on a wide range of workplace topics.

Jonathan Hancock 00:23

And I'm Jonathan Hancock, a writer and editor at Mind Tools. Millions of people use our free site every year, which runs alongside our library of premium resources, like Rachel's interviews. We help people to strengthen every aspect of their performance at work, and their success and wellbeing in general. And I've been helping to put together our expert conversations for, not 16, but for the last four years. And I've also got used to dipping into this huge archive of interviews that we've built up. But what are we going to do with this brand-new podcast, Rachel?

Rachel Salaman 00:53

Well, we decided that we're going to tackle a different work-related issue each episode, and see what we can learn from the expert voices that we've collected over the years. So what we decided, Jonathan, didn't we, was that you and I will each take a slightly different angle on the topic that we're looking at – we would both go back into the archives and pick some clips to share, and see how they sound today.

Jonathan Hancock 01:19

And I think it's going to be so interesting to hear what themes come up between the two of us. Maybe views will have changed over the years; maybe things will sound different in the light of current events. And I wonder where the experts will agree and disagree when we bring them all together like this. And we want to hear listeners' views, too. I think that's a really exciting part of this. So get ready to share your reactions and personal experiences. And Rachel, I'm dying to ask you a few behind-the-scenes questions as well, from when you met these eminent people the first time around. So let's get started then! What's our first topic?

Rachel Salaman 01:51

Right! So Episode One is about, "Can I ask for more pay?" When is the right time to discuss a raise or a promotion? How would you go about it? And what do **both** people in the conversation need to consider?

Jonathan Hancock 02:06

Yes, I think things might look quite different for employers and employees. And we're obviously living through some really turbulent and financially challenging times at the moment. But I do think it sounds a very timeless question.

Rachel Salaman 02:19

Yes. Who hasn't asked that question? And it's one that's come up in quite a few of the conversations over the years in our Expert Interview podcasts. So I've been exploring this from the point of view of organizations, leaders and managers. But let's start with what you found, Jonathan, because you went into the archives with employees in mind.

Jonathan Hancock 02:39

I did. And I thought this was such an interesting question with lots of different bits to it. Do I need more money? Am I worth a raise or a promotion? But also, what's the right time to ask? And then, how do you go about it? It can be a really daunting question for people.

But you know me, Rachel. I'm a positive guy! I wanted to start off with a positive approach to this. And I found Annie McKee was very good at this. She was a senior fellow at the University of Pennsylvania when you spoke to her. She'd also experienced periods of poverty when she was supporting her young family, but was really clear about the importance of being positive. She said, that's how you start the journey to getting the rewards that you deserve.

Annie McKee 03:17

There's a difference between a focus on positivity and fantasy. You know, life has its ups and downs. Work has its ups and downs, we have to deal with challenges, obstacles, pressures, all sorts of things. But in order to deal with those challenges and obstacles, we need resilience, we need optimism, we need hope. And when we feel that way, we're better able to take on challenges or deal with setbacks.

So my answer to people who say, "Well, a relentless focus on positivity is going to cause us to overlook the real challenges"... I don't think we're in any danger of overlooking any real challenges in the workplace – in fact, they usually drag us down. Instead, we need to take charge and really make an effort to be **more** optimistic, more positive,

Jonathan Hancock 04:07

Annie McKee, who knows from experience how hard it can be when you're not getting enough money. And she says that making things better begins with a positive mindset. Are you with her on that, Rachel, as the right starting point?

Rachel Salaman 04:17

Absolutely. But particularly her version of it, which I thought was reassuringly solid, wasn't it? What you might call a "full-fat" positive mindset, with resilience and taking charge and being realistic. So it's really different from that kind of airy-fairy, Pollyanna-ism that sometimes gets people into trouble, isn't it?

Jonathan Hancock 04:38

Yes, and I'm always on the lookout for a patronizing tone, and I didn't get that from her at all. She's not saying forget about the daily challenges. She's saying, fair enough, you might be struggling, but look to the future and that will give you some hope that might then give you ideas for how to deal with the

problems – and it'll give you something to aim for. So yes, I think like you I did sense a real practical positivity there from her.

And Dorie Clark also makes a similar point. She's one of the top 50 business thinkers in the world. And she says we need to think about our challenges now and be realistic. But also look beyond them. And she calls that the “long game” career future.

Dorie Clark 05:11

For most of us, we do have ambitions about where we want to go and what we want our lives and our careers to look like. And it is really hard to get there if we are constantly in reactive mode, just responding to what's in front of us.

Jonathan Hancock 05:27

And I really loved the way she explained that long-term thinking can actually make you more proactive about your career now – and again, it's that theme of looking to the future, but do something now to try and make a difference, so you can be moving towards things like raises and promotions.

Dorie Clark 05:41

We have to get a little bit more proactive about setting the vision so that we can begin to take the steps that move us in that direction. That's not to say there won't be interruptions or detours along the way. But we need to know where we're going. So we can actually strive to be directionally correct in getting there.

Jonathan Hancock 06:04

How was she to speak to you? She pops up on my social media all the time, and she's obviously very influential at the moment. What would she like to talk to?

Rachel Salaman 06:09

She was very, very professional, and very insightful. Clearly someone who plans – as you would expect with that topic of that particular book. Yeah, it was a fascinating interview.

Jonathan Hancock 06:22

And what she said there reminded me of something that Robert Kaplan said, that actually made me laugh when I first heard it. He's from Harvard Business School, and you talked to him about his book, “What You're Really Meant to Do.” He said this about why you need to say something.

Robert Kaplan 06:36

Because shockingly, your boss is not psychic. And I think a lot of us think that if I work at a company, and I've been there for many years and they know me, then they know what I'm interested in. And if a big promotion or big opportunity comes, they're going to think of me. Well, the reality is, they're thinking about lots of people, especially if it's a big company. They're going to be thinking about a whole lot of people, and they're actually expecting you to speak up a bit and tell them what you love and what you're interested in. And you're making their job easier!

Now, in order to do that, you have to actually know what are your strengths and weaknesses. What are your passions? And is there a job in this place that actually, “Boy, I’d love to do that someday!” Because the reality is, you might be able to do it, if you speak up.

Now, also, a lot of people don’t speak up because they don’t want to offend their current boss. You have to use your judgment. But I’ve seen this over and over again, where somebody gets picked for a job and people are devastated that they weren’t asked. And as they think it through, they realize they weren’t asked because they never talked to the boss, because they thought that wasn’t their job to do that. And I think it is.

Jonathan Hancock 07:45

And I think we’re all guilty of that at times, aren’t we, in all sorts of situations – just assuming that other people are mind readers.

Rachel Salaman 07:52

Absolutely. I mean, it’s such a common thing, we’re all starring in the movies of our own lives, aren’t we? And we sometimes forget that we may not even be a “bit part” in the movies of other people’s lives, which actually can be a comforting thought, in a way. But it does mean that, in certain situations, we do need to spell things out more than we might naturally do, especially when we need people to be aware of our value or our worth, in a situation like asking for a raise.

Jonathan Hancock 08:19

And I’ve seen that play out in the workplace. But I’ve seen it in two different ways. I’ve seen a boss who assumed that somebody was happy when they were actually really unhappy, and they were actively looking for work. So the boss missed the opportunity to do things to help that person stay. But I’ve also seen a boss who assumed that somebody was unhappy and wanting to leave, but actually that person was just looking for more opportunities, and maybe a bit more credit at work, and they could have stayed. So from both sides I guess the point is don’t assume telepathy. Make sure you have the conversation, find out what’s going on. But how do you get the bravery to do that? It can be really nerve-racking.

And Melanie Katzman has some good advice about getting up that courage. She’s a psychologist and business consultant, and she told you some really good advice from her book “Connect First.”

Melanie Katzman 09:04

First of all, I don’t think that we need to adopt an apologetic attitude. Too often people go in saying, “I’m so sorry. But I need to ask for this.” It’s like, no, if you are asking for what you’re worth, be direct about it. If the compensation on a monetary basis isn’t what you wanted, or even if it is, there’s still an opportunity to ask for inclusion in certain distribution lists and a seat at certain tables... an opportunity to perhaps have meetings with the press... a chance to have introductions to people both within and outside of the company. I ask people to write down what they want ahead of time, so when you go in, you’re not suddenly flustered, you know what the number is.

Jonathan Hancock 09:48

Melanie Katzman with good advice, I thought, for anyone who's nervous about self-promotion, because it just feels too much like showing off!

Rachel Salaman 09:54

Oh, that really resonated with me. And I think culture really comes into play here, Jonathan, doesn't it? I mean, especially for us Brits talking about our achievements can feel really, really uncomfortable!

Jonathan Hancock 10:05

We've been very brave talking about money at all I think today, being British!

Rachel Salaman 10:09

Yes, absolutely. But we really do need to find a way. And I think that Melanie had some really great advice there, especially that thing about jotting down things before you go in. I mean, it's just that little safety net to help you through and find the words.

Jonathan Hancock 10:24

And let me also bring in Californian entrepreneur Bonnie Marcus. She says that when you're getting prepared for these sorts of conversations, focus on your value to the business.

Bonnie Marcus 10:33

Self-promotion is really challenging, because of all the baggage that we have. There has to be a way where we can talk about our accomplishments, and not turn people off, and at the same time feel really comfortable doing it. And that's by identifying and using your value proposition – how your work leads to successful business outcomes. And once you identify that, then you're in the position where you can offer to help others reach their objectives based on your work. And that creates credibility and visibility for you – what you need to really get ahead in the workplace.

Jonathan Hancock 11:17

So I thought some good advice from Bonnie Marcus there about getting that confidence and focusing on your value when you go into these meetings.

And Alexandra Carter. Now, there's another interesting person! (You've got to speak to some brilliant people over the years, haven't you?!). A negotiation trainer with the United Nations, professional mediator at Columbia Law School... and Alexandra explained how this focus on value that we're talking about now is at the heart of any negotiation you might have about your pay.

Alexandra Carter 11:41

I teach that negotiation is steering relationships. What that means is, it's not just the money conversation; it means that you are teaching somebody how to value you, how to think about your business, or how to think about you personally, and it means that you're continuing to steer that relationship long after the contract or the deal.

Jonathan Hancock 12:05

I really liked that phrase "steering relationships."

Rachel Salaman 12:08

Yes. And that was something particularly unusual about that interview. And about Alexandra's definitions, because she used the word "negotiate," like a canoeist negotiating the rocks in a river. So that's where the idea of steering comes through. It's a slightly different... well, it's like a double meaning really, isn't it? The usual meaning of negotiation... but then if you think of that other one – a canoeist on a river – you can see that there is a steering element to it.

Jonathan Hancock 12:36

And it's not just that one-shot conversation with your boss; it's a more-complex, longer-term process. There might be some rocks in the river along the way. But she also said you have to know what the problem is that you're trying to solve. So be specific – is it that you're feeling undervalued or held back from promotion or losing motivation? What is it that you're trying to negotiate around?

Alexandra Carter 12:56

You're looking to do, let's say, a home renovation, you know, you're trying to renovate your bathroom in your home, and you sit down with your contractor to start talking about the project. People say to me, "Well, shouldn't I just start, you know, talking numbers?" No! What's the problem you're trying to solve? If you're trying to renovate your bathroom so that you can sell your home, maybe then your strategy is going to be to design a bathroom that's roughly comparable to the homes in the neighborhood that have sold well. If you're renovating because you're going to live in that home for 30 years, well, you have a whole other set of priorities and choices. And I find that it's the same thing, whether you were going in to ask about, you know, a salary or a promotion... whether you're approaching potential clients... The place you want to start is thinking about what problem you want to solve.

Jonathan Hancock 13:49

And so you're a negotiator in these situations. And actually, several of your guests talked about negotiation strategies that could be helpful in pay conversations, didn't they?

Rachel Salaman 13:59

Yes, I've talked to quite a few professional negotiators, actually, for the Expert Interviews collection of podcasts. Alexandra is a negotiator at the U.N., but we also talked to Corey Kupfer who's a lawyer and a business negotiator, and a couple of FBI hostage negotiators, Chris Voss and Mark Goulston, who brings the psychological expertise as well because he's a professional psychiatrist.

Jonathan Hancock 14:24

And Mind Tools has a range of articles and videos and infographics to back all of that up, as well. We look at all the different aspects in negotiating. So I think they're definitely worth looking into when it comes to these discussions about pay and promotion.

For example, we've got some really good stuff on controlling your emotions when you're going into difficult conversations. And you mentioned Corey Kupfer there. He was really strong on this. You talk to him about his book, "Authentic Negotiating."

Corey Kupfer 14:45

Most negotiations go off the rails: people don't get what they want. Not because they don't know some tactics and countertactics; it's because **they** get upset, their emotions get engaged. Or they're not clear on what they want and then they don't get there. It's all of this work that we need to do, the hard work, the internal work, not the surface-level tactics that cause negotiations to go bad. People's egos get engaged or their fear comes up or any of these things happen. So this is real, practical advice. It may sound soft, but this is really the key to true negotiating success.

Jonathan Hancock 15:24

Does that ring true with you, Rachel – the idea of the theory of negotiation versus the real-world, real-time emotions that people go through?

Rachel Salaman 15:29

Oh, it's such a difficult thing to do, isn't it? I mean, I think I'd be surprised if anyone really can enter into this kind of negotiation without feeling a little fearful and a little emotional.

Jonathan Hancock 15:40

It's good to know that other people have those emotions as well, isn't it, even if they're covering them up, or they've found clever ways to control them, like our negotiators have talked about. Yes: most people, if not everybody, probably feels nervous going into these kinds of conversations.

And there were actually a few hard truths in some of your interviews, I thought. This is something that came up in your chat with Cal Newport from Georgetown University.

Cal Newport 16:03

People don't like to give up their money unless they're really getting value for it in exchange. If people are offering you book contracts or job offers in a particular field, then you're valuable enough to make a go in that field, for example. And if they're not, you probably don't have enough skill or value there yet.

Jonathan Hancock 16:20

Fair enough, do you think? As things stand, you just might not be worth anything?

Rachel Salaman 16:23

Yes. I mean, hearing Cal say that... it just makes perfect sense, doesn't it? It's really hard to justify asking for more if you're not actually bringing any more value to the company or the organization. So you really need to think that through, I guess, before one of these conversations. Are you asking for more money because you just want more money, or because you're worth more and need your pay adjusted accordingly?

Jonathan Hancock 16:45

Yes. And of course, the key way to boost your value is to keep learning. And Kurt Mortensen from the Persuasion Institute said you can't get lazy about your self-development, if you expect to increase your pay.

Kurt Mortensen 16:55

There's a one-to-one relationship between your personal development and your income. Because there's two ways to learn in life: you can learn by trial and error, or you can learn from somebody else. Everything you need to master to be more successful, someone else has already figured it out. And they can teach you in a CD or a book or a seminar, you can find mentors out there. And even the bigger thing, we noticed, is that a Harvard study shows that those who are learning and growing every day, they're more optimistic about life, they're more enthusiastic about where they're going, what they're going to accomplish. But those who aren't learning and growing everyday become negative, pessimistic, doubtful about themselves and the future. So, A, it's a great motivator; and, B, contrary to popular belief, what you don't know will hurt you! There's a skill that we need to learn and master: you find an expert, get the book, the CD, the seminar, mentor, whatever you need... and you're going to learn it 100 times faster – and save yourself a lot of money, and make a lot more money.

Rachel Salaman 17:53

I'd love it if it was really that easy! You could just buy a book, read it, and then suddenly you'd be this expert! But it's good to be hopeful, and some people who put in the work will get very far that way. But I have a feeling it's not quite as easy as he was saying!

Jonathan Hancock 18:07

Yeah, if it was all in one book, wouldn't that be wonderful?!

Emma Seppala from Stanford, I thought, had a really positive take on that self-development side of things in terms of improving your career and your standing at work and your rewards. She warned against getting bogged down in things you can't do, but spotting opportunities to learn new things that you'll then get rewarded for. So it's quite similar to what Kurt was saying, but maybe a more rounded take on self-development.

Emma Seppala 18:34

I would say don't let a belief in your strengths hold you back. So if you want to apply for a promotion, but it involves a lot of public speaking and that's something you don't feel comfortable with, don't let that hold you back. Public speaking is something you can learn; it's a skill you can do well at. Let's say that every other part of the job is your dream job, but it involves public speaking. So, still apply, because you can learn it and you can expand your skills and you can become a good public speaker. The problem is when people hold themselves back in that situation.

The other problem is when people make a mistake or fail at something and then they beat themselves up about it and they think, "There's no way I can do a good job at this. I'm not made for this, etc." And again, you're creating a situation where you're not allowing yourself to learn to build new skills that require new knowledge.

Jonathan Hancock 19:20

That was Emma Seppala. She sounded like a really interesting positive person to talk to.

Rachel Salaman 19:25

Oh, definitely. Yeah, that was a great interview. She's one of the leading lights, I think it's fair to say, of the positive psychology movement. And she has a lot of useful practical tips as well as, you know, more general points.

Jonathan Hancock 19:37

But then I suppose that however much you learn, however much you steer the relationships and negotiate like a pro, it just might not work. And Dorie Clark: I thought she had a really refreshing take on what you might have to decide to do in that case.

Dorie Clark 19:50

You know, if you are not thriving at a particular company, that doesn't mean you're not good. It just means if you are legitimately a high caliber person, it is possible that you have found yourself in an inopportune circumstance where people do not appreciate your talents.

Jonathan Hancock 20:07

I love that. It just seemed to follow on well from what those other experts told you: have a positive mindset, get help, talk to the boss, be clear about your value, keep working on yourself and learning and buying the books and CDs... but if it's not paying off, don't just keep flogging that dead horse! You might have to move on to get what you deserve.

But I guess for many people, what she was saying there would mean weighing up the benefits of their current role before saying goodbye to it. The challenge that the job gives them, the satisfaction, great people to work with, decent work-life balance, all those good things. Lots of your guests talk about how much those things are worth. It's not just about the paycheck, is it?

Rachel Salaman 20:40

Yes. And from the employer's point of view, it's something they'll be thinking about too. And I think we'll hear a few interesting comments from that point of view in a bit.

Jonathan Hancock 20:50

One final clip from me, and it's happiness-at-work expert Annie McKee again. She says, keep your eyes on the future, have a career plan, but also do those things **now** that can make your current job enjoyable, and meaningful. She says that will get you through the short-term issues, but you'll keep growing your career, and you **will** get all those different types of rewards that you might be looking for.

Annie McKee 21:20

I really encourage people to look to the future and craft a personal vision that may indeed and should probably include the career and maybe even that job. It's surprising that when we look beyond the day-to-day turmoil and difficulties that we may be having in the workplace and focus on the future, focus on a vision of a personal future that's meaningful to us, it's amazing how much resilience we can draw on to get through those challenges.

Jonathan Hancock 21:39

And through these decisions that people might be making as well, having that resilience, which it sounds like leads to positivity, which leads to that positive change!

So that is my collection of clips, Rachel. Lots to think about from the employee's point of view. I should say with my Mind Tools hat on, we've got loads of resources in our toolkit to help you get better at all the things the experts have talked about, like self-confidence, negotiation, job crafting... and – if you join the Mind Tools Club – all the full-length Expert Interviews. Have a look at mindtools.com.

Right, Rachel, your turn now! We also support managers and employers with every aspect of their roles. So what do the experts have to say to them, when people come to them asking for more?

Rachel Salaman 22:20

Yes, it's interesting, Jonathan, hearing those clips and the whole range, the spectrum of situations that people might find themselves in when they want more money, more compensation. They might just want more money for what they're doing already; they might just want a pay raise; they might want to do a job that gets them more money with more responsibility – that might be within their company, it might be outside their company. So from the employee's point of view, it's a very wide spectrum. From the employer's point of view, it's a little bit narrower, I would say.

But as I was delving through the archives, a couple of things did begin to emerge. One is how an employer actually deals with a request for more pay. Anna Wildman is an expert in performance conversations. In her book, which is called “Now You're Talking!”, she really gets into the “nitty gritty” of what you should cover, in all sorts of conversations. And here's her advice for how to think about pay conversations.

Anna Wildman 23:23

The biggest tip is to hold conversations not just at year end, or cycle end, but throughout the year. Begin at the beginning of the year by making the process as transparent as you are allowed by your organization. And of course that varies. But explain why your organization pays the way it does, explain the approach it takes (in terms of whether they give particular bonuses, how those bonuses can be influenced, any particular pressures that the organization is under at the moment...). And then people are clear about what's happening, and it manages their expectations. So you might think, “Well, let's not start on a downer too much in a tough economic environment.” But if that's the case for your organization, people will trust you more if you're realistic with them throughout.

Rachel Salaman 24:19

So it's really about bringing people along with you, I thought, Jonathan. And that advice was quite similar to what Beverly Kaye told me. She's an expert on so-called “stay interviews.” Have you heard of those “stay interviews,” Jonathan?

Jonathan Hancock 24:35

No, I guess... is that where it's designed to persuade somebody to stay in their job and give them more, maybe?

Rachel Salaman 24:44

Yes, that's exactly it. Why spend money recruiting new people when you can just retain the good people that you already have? And when I talked to Beverly Kaye, we talked about those tricky conversations when a colleague asks for more money. Here's her advice, and a quick warning that this is phone quality – but I think it's worth it for what she says.

Beverly Kaye 25:03

Number one: acknowledge, like, “I understand that that's what you want. And I can understand how that would be important to you.” And, you know, share with them what you just heard them say. And then I really think it's telling the truth. It's saying, “I hear that you want that salary raise. And right now, I cannot deliver on it. But I'm so motivated to keep you on my team that I want to know what else, what else really matters to you. Because I want to find something that I have a degree of control over and see if I can make sure that I deliver that.” And you know what's interesting? I think if a manager asks the “what else?” question, like three times, they will get a plethora of ideas from the individual they're interviewing that they never were aware of. And some of what individuals want sometimes can be easy to make happen. But the problem is we never ask!

Rachel Salaman 26:19

Simple, isn't it, Jonathan? Just ask and listen. That's what she says.

Jonathan Hancock 26:21

It's interesting, isn't it? Because some of that did come through on my side in the clips, about employees being brave enough to ask and to get those pay conversations started. And I think that does take trust on both sides, because those conversations can be daunting for everyone.

Rachel Salaman 26:35

Yes. And what other ways are there to build trust? Well, there are quite a few ways, but being honest is one of the most important ways to build trust, I would have thought. Another really interesting idea that came out of Beverly Kaye's interview from her book about stay interviews was what she called “blinking words.” Any idea what those are?

Jonathan Hancock 26:58

Blinking words... I tend to blink a bit when I'm nervous. Is it when you betray your nerves about something?

Rachel Salaman 27:03

No, it's really... it's a nice abstract idea but it's very visual. So, the idea is that you ask a person a question, for example, what else matters to them, and out comes this word cloud. And in the word cloud, these blinking words kind of emerge in front of the person while they're talking. And...

Jonathan Hancock 27:23

The important words?

Rachel Salaman 27:24

The important words, yes, and you need to listen out for them if you're the manager, or the team leader, and you need to find those blinking words and then you need to probe them, because they're the ones that will get you to what matters to that person. And then once you **really** understand what matters to that person, you may be able to think of ways to use that to make their work day, or their job, better in general. And it's not more money, but it might be more of what's important to that person.

Anna Wildman, who we heard earlier – she also thinks that there are other ways to compensate people. And she says that should be part of any conversation about a pay rise (which definitely chimes with... I think it was Melanie Katzman that you played us). She had a great personal anecdote too.

Anna Wildman 28:11

Include in your conversation non-tangible rewards. By that I mean, things that are not to do with financial gain, but they are to do with intrinsic motivators, things like rewards to do with having more autonomy, development opportunities... I had a super boss, when I was working for Cathay Pacific Airways: he would give us so many development opportunities. Of course, we were lucky because we could travel places on the "company bus"! But he would allow us to go and do that. And that was worth such a lot to me in that role; it was a huge part of my overall compensation.

Rachel Salaman 28:53

I don't know if you noticed, but Anna slipped in a buzzword there: intrinsic motivator. The psychologist Adrian Furnham had some interesting things to say about this. He related intrinsic and extrinsic motivators directly to pay. Interestingly, he mentions Hertzberg, in this clip, by the way. Frederick Hertzberg was a psychologist who developed a theory of job satisfaction. There's an article about this on the Mind Tools site, in case you're interested. So here's Adrian Furnham, about motivation and money.

Adrian Furnham 29:23

If a supervisor ever comes to you and says, "If you pay people peanuts, you get monkeys," you must sack him immediately because he has no idea about motivating staff! Money is not a motivator, Hertzberg pointed out very clearly. It prevents dissatisfaction. You know, people say, "It's different in the public sector and the private sector." And I say, "Yes, but there's one other sector, and it's called the voluntary sector." Now in the voluntary sector you have to manage without carrots and sticks. And you want to learn something about motivating people? Well, you don't have the ability... Well, I suppose you have the ability to sack them, but you certainly don't have the ability to reward them in the usual sense of the word. So how do managers work in the voluntary sector, how do they motivate their people? And I think what you need to do is... of course, it's easier said than done... but (you need) to find out the aspects of the job that are intrinsically satisfying; in other words, that are fun to do. And to make it much more of a fun exercise. I was watching... in fact, I'm thinking I'm going to write another article on how to motivate sniffer dogs. Now, sniffer dogs are extremely effective. And of course, it's all **fun**, it's based on fun, they get it, they get a fun reward. Now, the extent to which a manager or a leader can understand what part of the jobs are most fun and turn it into... and give people an opportunity to have some choice... You can empower them with some choice. And you can understand the difference between an extrinsic motivator (something that is given in compensation for an unpleasant task) as opposed to that which was pleasant – then you begin to understand the issues around motivation.

Rachel Salaman 30:59

How do we feel about being compared to dogs?

Jonathan Hancock 31:06

I'm not sure: how do you feel?! Probably not the best approach for employees! But I guess there are some basic animal instincts when it comes to these conversations, especially when people get rewards that just make them feel good. So actually, maybe it's like that dog running across the fields, off the leash, having choices, being empowered... When the work you're doing generates good feelings intrinsically. And so it's not about being rewarded because something's unpleasant – the job is good enough to feel good. So I do think we have to look beyond tangible, extrinsic rewards. But I would also say employers have to be careful how they **sell** intrinsic benefits to people, and they can't use them as excuses not to pay people more or promote them. They've got to give them the right tangible rewards, too.

Rachel Salaman 31:47

I think so. And I don't know if you noticed that Adrian mentioned carrots and sticks there. We featured a few books by Chester Elton, and his collaborator Adrian Gostick. They're big fans of recognition, and particularly gratitude, as a way of enhancing the work experience. So, it's not money, but it might make a difference to how you feel about your job. I love this bit from our expert interview with Chester. He was telling me all the excuses that managers give him for why they don't say "thank you" often enough.

Chester Elton 32:18

They say, "Well, if I do it too often, it'll become trite. You can say thank you too much." And I say, "Really?" You know, there's one gentleman I was talking to. I said, "Are you married?" He said, "Yeah." I said, "Are you happily married?" He said, "Yeah." I said, "For how long?" He said, "About 20 years, it's great!" "How often did he tell your wife that you love her?" He goes, "Oh, every day?" I say, "Isn't that interesting? It must become trite." He goes, "Well, no, but that's my wife." I said, "Yes. But take that to the workplace." "I love you" in your personal life is "thank you" in the workplace. Of course, don't get that mixed up, that can cause a lot of problems, you know, with Human Resources... ! But the difference in the workplace is this specificity; is you just can't say, "Love ya, love ya, love ya" or "Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you..." You have to say, "Thank you for staying late, and getting the reports in on time." "Thank you for taking the extra time with that upset customer, and making sure all the details were ironed out." You see what I'm saying? So we're talking about frequency, specificity, and then be timely – do it right away. Don't wait till the end of the quarter, the end of the year. Important things get done now. And it conveys that it's valuable. I did it now. I didn't wait.

Jonathan Hancock 33:19

He's such an interesting guy. I found him very entertaining. It also sounded like you were quite close. He was whispering there. Where were you when you recorded that?

Rachel Salaman 33:27

Yes, we were actually in the corner of a large conference hall, because Chester was in London to attend an event. He'd kindly given me 30 minutes during a break. So that's why there was a slightly intimate feel to it!

Jonathan Hancock 33:41

No it sounded great! Nice to get that proper one-on-one time with the experts when you can! But going back to what you were saying there about gratitude... I'm just thinking, in practice, how do you know the boss is sincere, and they're not just distracting you from not paying you any more money?

Rachel Salaman 33:55

Yes. Well, Margaret Greenberg, who is the author of "Profit From The Positive," she told me that sincerity is very important. And that's real sincerity, not fake sincerity, just to tie us in knots a bit! But she had a really unusual tip for giving recognition. Listen to this.

Margaret Greenberg 34:11

One of the guys that we interviewed for "Profit From The Positive," he was the co-founder of a company here in the States called EVERFI. He had a term that we just loved, called "praise to the back." We often say, you know, we stab people in the back, you know, when we're being nasty. But he coined a term called praise to the back. Meaning, you can praise people, you know, directly, of course, and that's important. But we can also praise people to the back, meaning when they're not around, and you happen to be meeting with someone else, you know, and you recognize this other person when they're not in the room. That will get back to them. Just like a negative thing gets back to people, right? So praise to the back can be just as powerful as praising someone face-to-face.

Rachel Salaman 35:05

Just as powerful? I wonder. Which would have more meaning for you do you think, Jonathan? Face-to-face praise or praise to the back?

Jonathan Hancock 35:11

I think they're both powerful. It feels nice to get that immediate face-to-face feedback from your boss. But I think also it can be really significant if you hear back on the grapevine that they've been saying nice things about you to other people. Bosses, I think, should make sure there's a good chance of it getting back to the person, and doesn't just get lost in the ether. So I would say praise to the back is good, but make sure you back it up, if you like, with face-to-face feedback – to make sure that message really does get across.

Rachel Salaman 35:36

And I'll tell you what, some people would find it a lot easier, wouldn't they? Some managers would find it a lot easier to praise to the back, I think, but a bit of both, like you say. So I just wanted to finish with an expert who seems to bring all this together in a really inspiring way. He's Paul Facella; he's the author of "Everything I Know About Business I Learned At McDonald's." He was an executive at McDonald's and worked there for 34 years. He's, I think it would be fair to say, evangelical about the things that he thinks worked well at the company. He said that there were short-term financial incentives that McDonald's had – like, you'd get time-and-a-half if you had record sales in an hour or in

a day. But it's the non-financial incentives that were so powerful for him. Listen to this clip about how McDonald's goes to town on awards, or at least did when Paul was there.

Paul Facella 36:31

Actually, the company tracks 23 different awards that it gives out on an annual basis, to vendors, to franchisees, to store managers, to suppliers... 23 different awards, which I think is incredible. And some of these are very prestigious: there's a President's Award, as an example, that's given to the top one percent of all company employees each year. A secretary can get nominated for that award and (it) goes all the way up and the president of the company finally signs off on that – I actually averaged almost one President's Award winner every year, we had a tremendous team. And then we have the Freddy, which is kind of taken from the Oscars, and the Emmys... the Freddy, in recognition of Fred Turner, which is given to individuals that possess, you know, some of the strong traits of our chairman and co-founder of McDonald's. So it's always done with fanfare, it's always done first class, it's taken very seriously, we always try and invite the spouse, or the significant other; we try and make it special. And recognition, in a lot of ways, is the glue that keeps people together.

Rachel Salaman 37:45

You could probably hear that this idea works hand-in-glove with opportunity, because as you seize the opportunities at McDonald's, in this case, you rise up through the ranks. And that's how you get more pay.

Jonathan Hancock 37:56

I'm sure that is a very powerful way of giving people that visibility and empowering them and doing all those important things, and giving them chances to increase their pay – chances to move on. So there's a real practical element to it, as well as all the good feelings about being rewarded and celebrated, with your family there.

Rachel Salaman 38:15

Yes. And Paul told me, Jonathan, that, at least at the time of that interview, that all the CEOs of McDonald's developed **within** the company. So there really was the sense of being able to rise from flipping burgers to running the whole company! And that just creates a sense of motivation. And you remember this sniffer dog who we heard about earlier, who enjoys his work? Well, Paul doesn't talk about dogs... ! But he does talk about fun. And this is what he said when I asked him about what keeps people at McDonald's.

Paul Facella 38:45

Well, I think just that idea of opportunity, no question about it. You know that that is very, very powerful: to know that you can do that. But I also think we underestimate something that we hear little about in business: McDonald's is a fun place. It's a social organization, if you're in the stores; it's very social when you're up in mid-management ranks. We had a lot of fun accomplishing. And that sense of achievement is very, very powerful. And people are treated fairly. We enjoy each other's company. And few, you know, few organizations you can talk about, where you actually enjoy going to work. So I think that's an awful lot that has to do with it as well.

Rachel Salaman 39:25

So what I take from that case study of McDonald's is the importance of clear communication and understanding of the situation on all sides. So people know when and why they can ask for a raise, and when they would be wasting their time if they did. And importantly, and this is something you mentioned earlier, Jonathan: you get to choose. So you can accept the pay you have and enjoy that level of responsibility. Or, you can shoot for more responsibility and more pay according to a very clear path of progression that everyone understands.

Jonathan Hancock 39:59

And you can see why that's worked so well at McDonald's. But it sounds like there could be some good tips there for other companies to try to bring that sort of clarity to people's career progression, and give them some smaller wins along the way, and a sense of achievement, and just some good fun when they come to work.

Rachel Salaman 40:15

And in fact, when we look at all the clips that we've heard today, Jonathan, it's quite gratifying that there doesn't seem to be any tension between the two sides in terms of the right way forward. So if you're an employee, you need to know your value, you need to express it in the right way at the right time. And if you're an employer, you need to be open to hearing that and discussing it and finding out what matters to that person. If it really is pay, then perhaps to identify promotion opportunities, or if there are other ways to compensate that person more richly to find out what those ways are.

Jonathan Hancock 40:53

I think you're right. I hope we've done our bit to bring the two sides together – to kind of create that extra understanding – because it does seem like there's a very fertile middle ground there, if both sides are approaching it in a certain way, and there's honesty and there's openness. So let's hope that we've helped make more of that happen out there in the world!

Rachel Salaman 41:09

Yeah, absolutely. And we'll be back soon with our next episode of The Mind Tools Expert Voices Podcast, where we'll be talking about psychological safety at work. What is it? And how did you get it? But before that, Jonathan, don't you think it'd be great to hear what our listeners think about what they've heard today?

Jonathan Hancock 41:27

It really would. So which bits of advice ring true? And are there any that don't sound right anymore? It really would be good to hear people's own experiences of asking for a pay raise, or being asked for one. And what additional advice can we gather to tackle the questions that we've discussed today?

Rachel Salaman 41:43

And email is the best way to get in touch. We're at expertvoicespodcast@mindtools.com. And you can leave a voice note there, too, which we might even play in a future episode!

Jonathan Hancock 41:55

If you've enjoyed our chat today, you can subscribe to make sure you don't miss any of our podcasts in the future. Please give us a rating, too, where you can, and spread the word about us. So that's expertvoicespodcast@mindtools.com to get in touch. And why not check out everything else that Mind Tools has to offer, to help you grow your career and get properly rewarded for it? Just go to mindtools.com to see all of our free resources, plus information about joining the Mind Tools Club and getting everything we've got, including the full-length Expert Interviews. And we've put some useful links for you in the description of this podcast.

Rachel Salaman 42:27

For now, thanks for listening. And see you next time, Jonathan, for The Mind Tools Expert Voices Podcast.

Jonathan Hancock 42:33

Absolutely. And I'm off to "back praise" you now to somebody, Rachel, you can be sure of that...

Rachel Salaman 42:37

Thanks!