MODULE OVERVIEW

Stop demotivating your team: Three traps managers fall into

Adaptive module | ~20 min

Employee engagement is at its lowest (Gallup 2026: 20%), and managers themselves are disengaging, yet most demotivation is unintentional: it comes from our own habits, sometimes amplified by poorly integrated artificial intelligence (monitoring, dehumanizing metrics). This module turns the question around: three traps to stop falling into (treating team members as tools, as children, or as idiots) and their antidotes, adult to adult.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

01 Turn the motivation question around by spotting how you demotivate your teams without meaning to.

02 Stop treating your team members as tools by putting people before results.

03 Break out of the parent-child pattern by working adult to adult: negotiated goals, delegation, and trust.

04 Trust your team's intelligence: explain the purpose, ask for their views, delegate, and share AI tools.

WHO IT'S FOR

Managers and team leaders who want to motivate their team members without unknowingly demotivating them.

- **Prerequisite:** none

HOW THE MODULE WORKS

Self-paced, with practice tailored to each learner.

1. **Self-assessment**: on 9 dimensions, to gauge current habits and guide the practice.
2. **Expert video**: 10 minutes, with 3 pauses for reflection.
3. **Practice scenarios**: the first 2 chosen from the self-assessment, then 16 optional ones. Every answer gets feedback: what it leads to, and one way to improve.
4. **Dated commitment**: one action to try, written by the learner or picked from the suggestions.
5. **Memo to download**: key takeaways, questions, commitment, personal notes and checklists.

ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETION

Pass mark: 80%

The score takes into account your answers to the practice scenarios, your commitment and, where relevant, any additional learning activities. Passing requires a commitment and a score of at least 80%.

METHODS & MODELS

- Parent-child pattern, putting oneself above or below, and the adult-to-adult relationship – inspired by transactional analysis (Eric Berne)
- Afthonios method: the 3 traps that demotivate and their antidotes (wrenches / children / idiots)
- "Stop demotivating before you motivate" – inspired by Herzberg's two-factor theory
- Giving a sense of purpose / explaining the why – inspired by Simon Sinek (Start with Why)

SOURCES & REFERENCES

- Gallup, State of the Global Workplace 2026: global engagement at 20% in 2025, the lowest level since 2020; manager engagement down from 31% (2022) to 22% (2025)
- Bill Campbell – coach to executives at Apple, Google, and Intuit; "Trillion Dollar Coach" (Schmidt, Rosenberg & Eagle, 2019)
- Charlie Chaplin, Modern Times, 1936: the scene of the worker tightening bolts
- Deci & Ryan (2000) – autonomy, competence, and relatedness in motivation

Module created by Afthonios.com.

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