



# 3 Minute Mentor

Episode 46: Show Notes



## Episode 46: Learn from Elton Mayo's Hawthorne Studies.

This is the next episode in our series about the basics of motivation. Today we are going to learn about the Hawthorne Experiments. For more details on the Experiments [press here](#).



### 1. What were the Hawthorne Experiments?

The Hawthorne Studies were conducted from 1927-1932 at the Western Electric in Illinois. They examined the impact of work conditions in employee productivity and motivation. In one experiment six workers were removed to perform their normal work in an enclosed space. The researchers then changed the lighting. To the researchers' surprise, both more and less light created higher productivity levels. Just treating these workers differently had had an effect on productivity.

### 2. What can we learn from this?

There are many lessons from these experiments but here are three:

- ① How you treat people can be as important as what skills they have.
- ② Work-groups have 'norms' and these can affect productivity.
- ③ The workplace like everywhere else has social systems.

Just by observing workers working, they became a group and that changed their productivity.

### 3. What are the lessons for us today?

While some of the results were later questioned, I think we can take away two key lessons

- ① If you don't give people feedback on how they do, how can you expect them to do better?
- ② Letting people know how well they are doing can motivate them

**Bottom Line:** Some people have called the learning of Mayo the 'Somebody Upstairs Cares' syndrome and we all know catching someone doing good and saying thank you can be a huge motivator.