

MOTIVATION THEORIES AND WAYS TO IMPROVE IT IN YOUR WORKPLACE

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Motivation is the word derived from the word 'motive' which means needs, desires, wants or drives within the individuals. It is the process of stimulating people to actions to accomplish the goals. In the work goal context the psychological factors stimulating the people's behaviour can be - desire for money, success recognition, job-satisfaction team work, etc.

Motivation is a state-of-mind, filled with energy and enthusiasm, which drives a person to work in a certain way to achieve desired goals. Motivation is a force which pushes a person to work with high level of commitment and focus even if things are against him. Motivation translates into a certain kind of human behaviour.

Every member of an organization – employee, manager or C-suite executive – wants to work for a company that is successful, productive, motivational and offers an enjoyable work environment. By keeping employees happy, managers motivate them to stay longer and work harder to reach company goals.

Human behavior is purposeful. Motivation induces purposeful behavior. It is through motivation that needs can be purposefully satisfied. This can be understood by understanding the hierarchy of the employees's needs. Consequently, the manager must know already known ways to influence the members of your team, to understand the importance of this knowledge and be able to apply it.

Dr. Mike Crant, the Mary Jo and Richard M. Kovacevich Professor of Excellence in Leadership Instruction at the University of Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business, believes it's a relevant issue because influencing the behavior and attitudes of others will make your work life far more productive [1].

“No matter what part of business you are in, you have to get things done through people,” Crant says [1].

With an effective motivational scheme in place, managers are much more likely to retain the most talented workers and dissuade them from leaving and going to a competitor.

Let's look up to some of the motivation theories.

1. Hertzberg's two factor theory.

Hertzberg classified the needs into two broad categories namely hygiene factors and motivating factors.

Hygiene factors are needed to make sure that an employee is not dissatisfied. Motivation factors are needed for ensuring employee's satisfaction and employee's motivation for higher performance. Mere presence of hygiene factors does not guarantee motivation, and presence of motivation factors in the absence of hygiene factors also does not work [2].

2. McClelland's theory of needs.

McClelland affirms that we all have three motivating drivers, and it does not depend

on our gender or age. One of these drives will be dominant in our behaviour. The dominant drive depends on our life experiences.

The three motivators are:

- **Achievement:** a need to accomplish and demonstrate own competence People with a high need for achievement prefer tasks that provide for personal responsibility and results based on their own efforts. They also prefer quick acknowledgement of their progress.

- **Affiliation:** a need for love, belonging and social acceptance People with a high need for affiliation are motivated by being liked and accepted by others. They tend to participate in social gatherings and may be uncomfortable with conflict.

- **Power:** a need for control own work or the work of others People with a high need for power desire situations in which they exercise power and influence over others. They aspire for positions with status and authority and tend to be more concerned about their level of influence than about effective work performance. [2].

3. McGregor's theory X and theory Y

Douglas McGregor formulated two distinct views of human being based on participation of workers. The first is basically negative, labelled as Theory X, and the other is basically positive, labelled as Theory Y. Both kinds of people exist. Based on their nature they need to be managed accordingly.

Theory X: The traditional view of the work force holds that workers are inherently lazy, self-centred, and lacking ambition. Therefore, an appropriate management style is strong, top-down control.

Theory Y: This view postulates that workers are inherently motivated and eager to accept responsibility. An appropriate management style is to focus on creating a productive work environment coupled with positive rewards and reinforcement [2].

4. Vroom's expectancy theory

This theory assumes that behavior results from conscious choices among alternatives whose purpose it is to maximize pleasure and minimize pain. Vroom realized that an employee's performance is based on individuals factors such as personality, skills, knowledge, experience and abilities.

The perception of employees as to whether they will actually get what they desire even if it has been promised by a manager. Management must ensure that promises of rewards are fulfilled and that employees are aware of that.

Vroom suggests that an employee's beliefs about Expectancy, Instrumentality, and Valence interact psychologically to create a motivational force such that the employee acts in ways that bring pleasure and avoid pain. [3]

Based on these theories let's figure out some steps to consider when bringing motivation into the workplace:

Create the right environment. The right environment in a workplace is one in which employees feel comfortable being themselves, either working autonomously or in a team. The right environment is welcoming and gives all staff members the tools they need to succeed. This kind of workplace will more immediately develop employees who have a strong desire to do their best work.

Get to know your employees. Employees know and appreciate when their manager is

taking the time to get to know them. Doing so sends the message that you care and, in turn, motivates employees to do a good job for you as their office leader. Genuine conversations go a long way. Ask them about their family, hobbies and interests. Create a conversation around topics you know they enjoy.

Establish trust. Employees operate at their best when they feel that their management team is rooting for them to succeed. You can easily establish trust by taking steps to get to know your employees and then continue working to grow your relationship in the office. Recognize that every person is different, and treat them accordingly so that all team members know you understand their motivation in the workplace.

Invest in your staff. Having staff members who perform well in their daily tasks and take the job seriously is important for the shared vision you all have of helping the company succeed. You can motivate employees by providing them with specific, goal-oriented opportunities to grow in their careers. This can include training—such as at a conference—with like-minded individuals, that will strengthen the employee's understanding of their current and potential future job responsibilities.

Create specific incentives. Everyone is motivated by something different, and motivations can change over time. Incentives should be created that are employee-specific, if possible. Consider what will drive an employee to work hard to produce quality work, collaborate with the team and consistently meet deadlines.

Create both tangible and intangible incentives that can be used based on employee, team, project or any other factor that makes sense for your office. Tangible incentives can include bonuses, raises and other items, such as a gift card to their favorite restaurant. Intangible incentives can include team recognition and praise, team awards for a job well done or new responsibilities. Find what drives your employees, and create incentives around that to both motivate them and show that you actively listen to what they care about.

These are just some of the ways in which leaders can use motivation in management. When you are able to accomplish this as a manager, you will notice an increase in the productivity of employees. Employees will also be more engaged, happier in their interactions with co-workers as well as more invested in their work and the company.

References

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