

**WORKPLACE MOTIVATION: A KEY TO SUCCESSFUL  
ORGANIZATION**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Motivating employees is vital to any business. A motivated workforce means a highly productive staff, which in turn helps to achieve business goals and create a successful company. Because of this reason most employers today would like to have their employee's motivated, but do not understand what truly motivates a person to work. Companies could be more competent if the employees had an invested interest in the future of the company. There are important needs to be met for a person, specifically an employee, to succeed in the workplace.*

*The most important motivation theories include: Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two-factor theory. Both the theories are related in the fact that there are needs for all people to meet. Every employee is at a different stage in their lives, which requires different management techniques. It is essential that motivation must come from within the employee. When people aren't motivated, they become less productive, less creative, less of an asset to your company. It is not always that there is a plentiful amount of money to spend on motivation, so it is important to study that how managers can make their employees feel important without breaking the bank. Proper ways are needed to be executed in a strategic way to provide the best results.*

*The research paper examines different theories of motivation, how they are relevant to the workplace, how employers can execute these theories to ensure happy and motivated employees. It also focuses on the best techniques to motivate the employees and its effective implementation at their specific workplace.*

## **Introduction**

Just like any other word, there are various definitions to explain a concept. Motivation too has many different definitions, but it is important to focus on those that are related to the workplace. Understanding precisely what motivation is will help managers decide what actions to take to encourage their employees. The definition of motivation starts with the root word, motive. Webster's Dictionary defines motive as, "something that causes a person to act". Therefore, motivation can be defined as, the act of providing motive that causes someone to act. In other words, according to Nancy Shanks, motivation causes someone to act and someone else cannot make someone motivated. It is the discretion of the person to decide if they are going to be motivated or not.

With relation to the workplace, Ray Williams, who writes for Psychology Today, defines motivation as, "predisposition to behave in a purposeful manner to achieve specific, unmet needs and the will to achieve, and the inner force that drives individuals to accomplish personal organizational goals".

Gredler, Broussard and Garrison (2004) broadly define motivation as "the attribute that moves us to do or not to do something".

Guay et al. (2010) defines motivation as "the reasons underlying behaviour"

Richard Ryan and Edward Deci, from the University of Rochester, agree that motivated means that the person is moved to do a particular act. The authors describe motivation as, the "orientation of motivation concerns the underlying attitudes and goals that give rise to action".

A person becomes motivated in order to achieve their own personal goals as well as the organizational goals. The more motivated an employee is, the more likely they are to have organizational commitment and identify themselves with the organization. This will meet some of the unmet needs, and connect them with the organization. If willing, the manager is able to give the employee incentives to meet their own goals and the goals set by the organization.

Although the words of the definitions might be different, they all are describing the same concepts. Motivation is the act of getting someone to act on a situation. This definition will be important throughout the rest of the paper due to the constant use of the word.

## **Theories of Motivation**

There are many different theories that attempt and help explain motivation. Scientists have been studying the topic of motivation for over a century and have made remarkable progress for explaining motivation which can be interpreted into the workplace. The following are the major theories that have been proven and accepted by society. These include Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two-factor theory.

### **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

Abraham Maslow developed the Hierarchy of Needs model in 1940-50s in USA, and the Hierarchy of Needs theory remains valid today for understanding human motivation, management training, and personal development. Indeed, Maslow's ideas surrounding the Hierarchy of Needs concerning the responsibility of employers to provide a workplace environment that encourages and enables employees to fulfil their own unique potential (self-actualization) are today more relevant than ever.

Abraham Maslow was born in New York in 1908 and died in 1970, although various publications appear in Maslow's name in later years. Maslow's PhD in psychology in 1934 at the University of Wisconsin formed the basis of his motivational research. Maslow later moved to New York's Brooklyn College.

Maslow's original Hierarchy of Needs model was developed between 1943-1954, and first widely published in *Motivation and Personality* in 1954. At this time the Hierarchy of Needs model comprised five needs. This original version remains for most people the ultimate Hierarchy of Needs.

Each of us is motivated by needs. Our most basic needs are inborn, having evolved over tens of thousands of years. Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs helps to explain how these needs motivate us all.



**Figure: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

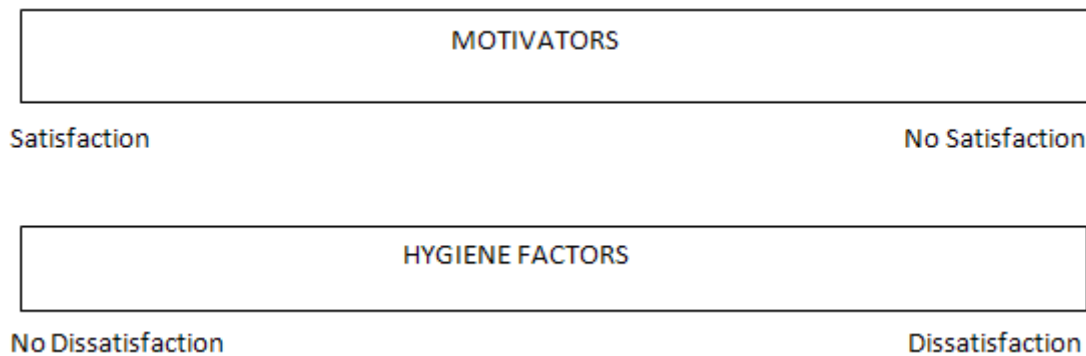
Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs states that we must satisfy each need in turn, starting with the first, which deals with the most obvious needs for survival itself. Only when the lower order needs of physical and emotional well-being are satisfied, we are concerned with the higher order needs of influence and personal development. On the other hand, if the things that satisfy our lower order needs are swept away, we are no longer concerned about the maintenance of our higher order needs.

1. **Basic Needs** - The first level is the physiological needs. These are the basic needs that are to be met in order to survive, including air, food, water, clothing, sleep, and shelter.
2. **Safety needs** - The next step is security or safety needs, which means that the person's surroundings are not threatening to them or their family. If the environment seems to be safe, then it means that there is stability in the surroundings. Security could also include financial security so that there is no financial uncertainty in the future. This could be achieved by creating a retirement package, securing job position, and insurance.

3. **Social needs** The third level is social needs which are the need to feel affiliated or to be loved. In the workplace, this means to feel as though they are a part of the group or organization and included in the work. People have the urge to be accepted by others, especially the people they are around all the time.
4. **Esteem needs** - The fourth level is explained as esteem needs. In order to fully understand this level, the person must have a high image of them and encompass self respect. This level has two components: feelings of self worth, and the need for respect from others.
5. **Self-Actualization needs** - The last and final stage of the hierarchy of needs is self actualization need. This level is defined as someone being all they can be and they have met each of the previous stages. In this particular level, the person's talents are being completely utilized. Maslow believes that no one is ever completely self actualized. People are always striving to be better and use their talents in new ways. This is important to motivation because a person must be motivated to fulfil their needs and strive for the next level until they reach self actualization. These needs motivate humans to care for themselves and live a rich life.

### **Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory**

Frederick Irving Herzberg was influential in the business world with his theories based on how to motivate employees. He is most famous for introducing job enrichment and the motivator-hygiene theory. Known as the "Two Factor Theory," Herzberg introduced the motivator-hygiene theory as seen in the figure below. Motivator factors are the duties or the position itself that gives an employee increased satisfaction with employment. Hygiene Factors are the company policies, salary, and the working environment, which can cause dissatisfaction. In 1959, Frederick Herzberg, a behavioural scientist proposed a two-factor theory or the motivator-hygiene theory. According to Herzberg, there are some job factors that result in satisfaction while there are other job factors that prevent dissatisfaction. According to Herzberg, the opposite of "Satisfaction" is "No satisfaction" and the opposite of "Dissatisfaction" is "No Dissatisfaction".



**Figure: Herzberg's view of satisfaction and dissatisfaction**

Herzberg classified these job factors into two categories -

- a. **Hygiene factors-** Hygiene factors are those job factors which are essential for existence of motivation at workplace. These do not lead to positive satisfaction for long-term. But if these factors are absent / if these factors are non-existent at workplace, then they lead to dissatisfaction. In other words, hygiene factors are those factors which when adequate/reasonable in a job, calm the employees and do not make them dissatisfied. These factors are extrinsic to work. Hygiene factors are also called as **dissatisfiers or maintenance factors** as they are required to avoid dissatisfaction. These factors describe the job environment/scenario. The hygiene factors symbolized the physiological needs which the individuals wanted and expected to be fulfilled. Hygiene factors include:

- **Pay** - The pay or salary structure should be appropriate and reasonable. It must be equal and competitive to those in the same industry in the same field.
- **Company Policies and administrative policies** - The company policies should not be too rigid. They should be fair and clear. It should include flexible working hours, dress code, breaks, vacation, etc.
- **Fringe benefits** - The employees should be offered health care plans (medicclaim), benefits for the family members, employee help programmes, etc.
- **Physical Working conditions** - The working conditions should be safe, clean and hygienic. The work equipments should be updated and well-maintained.

- **Status** - The employees' status within the organization should be familiar and retained.
  - **Interpersonal relations** - The relationship of the employees with his peers, superiors and subordinates should be appropriate and acceptable. There should be no conflict or dishonour element present.
  - **Job Security** - The organization must provide job security to the employees.
- b. **Motivational factors**- According to Herzberg, the hygiene factors cannot be regarded as motivators. The motivational factors yield positive satisfaction. These factors are inherent to work. These factors motivate the employees for a superior performance. These factors are called satisfiers. These are factors involved in performing the job. Employees find these factors intrinsically rewarding. The motivators symbolized the psychological needs that were perceived as an additional benefit. Motivational factors include:
- **Recognition** - The employees should be praised and recognized for their accomplishments by the managers.
  - **Sense of achievement** - The employees must have a sense of achievement. This depends on the job. There must be a fruit of some sort in the job.
  - **Growth and promotional opportunities** - There must be growth and advancement opportunities in an organization to motivate the employees to perform well.
  - **Responsibility** - The employees must hold themselves responsible for the work. The managers should give them ownership of the work. They should minimize control but retain accountability.
  - **Meaningfulness of the work** - The work itself should be meaningful, interesting and challenging for the employee to perform and to get motivated.

### **Implications for Managers**

Maslow's Need Hierarchy theory still has implications in the modern day workplace. If a manager or organization understands that lower-level needs must be met before a person can satisfy higher-level needs, the manager or organization is better positioned to meet those

needs, and in the order they must be met. Physiological needs can be met by offering a fair competitive wage, lunch/coffee breaks, fitness facilities, and company cafeterias so that the employee feels comfortable that his/her basic needs are satisfied. Next, a company can ensure that the work facility is a safe environment, so that employees feel physically safe. The company can also have a fair progressive discipline policy ensuring job security. Also, the employer can encourage employees to participate on work teams and/or sponsor informal gatherings so employees may socialize to help meet their social needs. A rewards and recognition program for good performance, perfect attendance, and similar programs could help satisfy the employee's esteem needs. Finally, to help satisfy employees' self-actualization needs, companies can offer in-house development, or offer reimbursement for tuition or relevant training seminars. There are many possibilities for applying these needs to drive worker's motivation. It may not always be very clear what needs to be done, but this is why it's important for managers to understand these needs theories so that they are better able to apply them when the opportunity arises. As stated by NetMBA, "the manager must be able to recognize the needs level at which the employee is operating, and use those needs as levers of motivation" (2010).

The Two-Factor theory implies that the managers must stress upon guaranteeing the adequacy of the hygiene factors to avoid employee dissatisfaction. Also, the managers must make sure that the work is stimulating and rewarding so that the employees are motivated to work and perform harder and better. This theory emphasize upon job-enrichment so as to motivate the employees. The job must utilize the employee's skills and competencies to the maximum. Focusing on the motivational factors can improve work-quality.

### **Different Types of Motivation**

It is very important to understand that we are not all the same; thus effectively motivating your employees requires that you gain an understanding of the different types of motivation. Such an understanding will enable you to better categorize your team members and apply the appropriate type of motivation. It is found that each member is different and each member's motivational needs vary as well. Some people respond best to intrinsic which means "from within" and will meet any obligation of an area of their passion. So it is very important to



determine which type will work best with which team members. Motivation can be classified on the following basis:

1. Positive or Negative motivation
2. Financial or Non-financial motivation
3. Extrinsic and Intrinsic motivation

### **Positive motivation**

Positive motivation is a process of attaining the organizational goal by influencing the employee's behaviour through recognition and appreciation of employee's efforts and contribution. Motivation for a reward or an appreciation can be treated as positive motivation. An example of positive motivation is that a student studying to get a play station from his father for achieving higher grade in the school. Positive motivation can be implemented by taking interest in subordinate's benefits; appreciation and credit for work done, delegating authority and responsibility to subordinates.

### **Negative motivation**

On the other hand Negative motivation is the process of influencing the employee's behaviour by giving warnings or imparting a sense of fear in the mind of employees, which he has to suffer for lack of good performance. If an employee fails in achieving the desired results, he should be punished by demotion or termination. Negative motivation is based upon fear i.e. demotion, lay off, punishment etc. Fear of punishment or insult in front of co-workers may bring behavioural changes. But it is to be kept in mind that, poor performance and lower productivity could be the result of negative motivation even though it controls the misbehaviour.

### **Financial Motivation**

Money plays an important role in motivation. To motivate the workers, management generally make use of financial incentives like bonus, retirement benefits, wages and salaries, medical reimbursement etc. However, such incentives may not always prove to be motivating factor. To keep the workers with the organization, in many cases, management may have to increase the financial incentives regularly. To attract and maintain good workforce,

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organizations have to maintain attractive wages and salaries. These monetary rewards should be competitive between various enterprises to attract good workforce. Money plays a significant role in satisfying physiological and security needs of the employees. So, money is a real motivating factor till the physiological and security needs are met. Therefore, management can use financial incentive for motivation. Money also helps in satisfying the social needs of employees to some extent because money is often recognized as a symbol of status, power and respect.

Besides, money is an important means of achieving a 'minimum standard of living' although this 'minimum' has the tendency to go up as people become more affluent. But this doesn't mean that money will always be a motivating factor to all the people. After a particular level, to some people, importance of money may be reduced and non-financial rewards may become more important.

Money provides for the satisfaction of physiological and safety needs only which have been called hygienic factors by Herzberg. Hygienic factors include wages and salaries and other fringe benefits. The presence of these factors at a satisfactory level prevents job dissatisfaction. According to Herzberg, in order to motivate the employees, it is necessary to satisfy social and self actualization needs. But these needs are present generally in the case of employees in the higher positions, who get higher monetary rewards and are not motivated by increased monetary benefits. In case of employees at the operative levels, money certainly plays a significant role in motivating them because their survival and safety depend on it. It is to be noted that money is not the only motivator and it is not always a motivator. Management should, therefore, establish a motivational system which is efficient in helping different kinds of human needs. On the job, by helping themselves to develop in different areas of work can increase the satisfaction of employees. Recognition, job enlargement, participative management, status symbols and making the job challenging are some of the other non-financial incentives which also motivate employees.

### **Non-Financial Motivation**

When the physiological and security needs are satisfied with the help of money, then money doesn't remain a motivating force. So money is regarded as a maintenance factor. Employees have other needs like status and recognition in society. When survival needs are satisfied by

money, people look for satisfying their ego needs. They want to achieve something in their lives. In order to motivate the employees, management may use the following non-financial incentives.

**1. Praise or appreciation of work done:** Since it satisfies one's ego needs, recognition of satisfactory performance acts as a non-financial incentive. Sometimes, appreciation of work done is more effective than any other incentive. It should be done with great care because praising an incompetent employee creates resentment among competent employees.

**2. Competition:** Healthy competition among individual employees or between groups of employees leads to achieve their group goal or personal goals. Therefore, competition acts as a non-financial incentive.

**3. Rating of performance:** Knowledge of rating of the work accomplished leads to employee satisfaction. The production workers normally do not have contact with the consumers. A worker would be happy to know about the response from the consumer. A worker gets satisfaction by knowing the comments of a satisfied consumer. So rating of performance by consumers or by the higher officials of the organization would be a great motivator for employees.

**4. Workers' participation in management:** It is a strong motivator for employees to make them participate in decision making. It gives them psychological satisfaction that their voice is heard. Participation in management provides for two-way communication and so imbibes a sense of importance.

**5. Opportunity for growth:** Opportunity for growth is another kind of incentive. If the employees are provided with opportunities for their advancement and growth and the development of their personality, they feel very much satisfied and become more committed to organizational goals.

**6. Suggestion System:** It is an incentive which satisfies some needs of an employee. Many organizations provide a platform for suggestions as it improves the working procedure and reduce waste and cost of production. Some organizations make use of cash awards for useful suggestions. They sometimes publish the worker's name with his photograph in the company

magazine. This motivates the employees to be in search for something which may be of great use to the organization.

### **Intrinsic Motivation**

Intrinsic motivation means that the individual's motivational stimuli are coming from within. The individual has the desire to perform a specific task, because its results are in accordance with his belief system or fulfils a desire and therefore importance is attached to it.

Our deep-rooted desires have the highest motivational power. Below are some examples:

- **Acceptance:** We all need to feel that we, as well as our decisions, are accepted by our co-workers.
- **Curiosity:** We all have the desire to be in the know.
- **Honor:** We all need to respect the rules and to be ethical.
- **Independence:** We all need to feel we are unique.
- **Order:** We all need to be organized.
- **Power:** We all have the desire to be able to have influence.
- **Social contact:** We all need to have some social interactions.
- **Social Status:** We all have the desire to feel important.

### **Extrinsic Motivation**

Extrinsic motivation means that the individual's motivational stimuli are coming from outside. In other words, our desires to perform a task are controlled by an outside source. Note that even though the stimuli are coming from outside, the result of performing the task will still be rewarding for the individual performing the task.

Extrinsic motivation is external in nature. The most well-known and the most debated motivation is money. Below are some other examples:

- Employee of the month award
- Benefit package
- Bonuses
- Organized activities

## **The Best Techniques for Motivating Employees**

As a motivator, manager must adopt these techniques in order to motivate employees

1. Encourage participation by setting goals and determining how to reach them.
2. Keep team members aware of how their job relates to others.
3. Provide the tools and training necessary to succeed.
4. Pay at least the going rate for jobs that are performed.
5. Provide good, safe working conditions.
6. Give clear directions that are understood and accepted.
7. Know people's abilities and give them assignments based on their ability to handle those assignments.
8. Allow team members to make decisions related to their jobs.
9. Be accessible. Listen actively and empathetically.
10. Give credit and praise for a job well done.
11. Give prompt and direct answers to questions.
12. Treat team members fairly and with respect and consideration
13. Help out with work problems.
14. Encourage employees to acquire additional knowledge and skills.
15. Show interest and concern for people as individuals.
16. Make each person an integral part of the team.
17. Keep people challenged and excited by their work.
18. Consider your team members' ideas and suggestions.
19. Keep people informed about how they're doing on the job.
20. Encourage team members to do their best and then support their efforts.

## **Conclusion**

Motivation is a complex concept and can help or harm an organization depending on how it is used within an organization. If a manager takes the time to understand the needs of his/her employees, then the recognition can be extremely useful. There have been many philosophers, who have tried to understand what motivates people, but every person is different and a theory cannot describe all people. It is understandable the managers have a full

time job and do not have much down time to be spending on rewards, but it also gives them the opportunity to understand their employees and connect with them on a personal level.

Managers are not the only ones who can recognize others in the workplace. Employees can recognize each other as well. It has been proven to that one can not directly motivate someone else, but they can give them the tools they need to motivate themselves. Managers are the resources for employees and they should make sure that their work environment is pleasant and desirable. This will help the productivity and improvement of their employees. If the above suggestions are implemented properly, managers will have a fully motivated team.

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