

Read the text: Motivation

Motivation refers to psychological process that gives behavior purpose and direction. It is an important area of study for managers because it helps them better understand our most valuable resource, people. (Realistically, motivation is just one of many explanations of work behavior, such as one's knowledge and emotional state and organizational factors.) Even though the employees in one study ranked "interesting work" the highest among the things they wanted from their jobs, their supervisors believed that they wanted "good wages" above all else. This type of misperception of employees' needs can cripple a motivation program. Pollster D. Yankelovich contends that traditional motivation tools such as fear, money, strict supervision, and the work ethic are inappropriate for nearly half of today's labor force in the USA.

Among alternative motivation theories, Maslow's needs hierarchy theory, Herzberg's two-factor theory, and expectancy theory stand out as particularly relevant for managers. According to Maslow's message, people always have needs, and when one need is relatively fulfilled, others emerge in a predictable sequence to take its place. His five-level needs hierarchy, although empirically criticized, makes it clear to managers that people are motivated by emerging rather than fulfilled needs. Assuming that job satisfaction and performance are positively related, Herzberg believes that the most that wages and working conditions can do is eliminate sources of dissatisfaction. According to Herzberg, the key to true satisfaction and hence motivation is an enriched job that provides an opportunity for achievement, responsibility, and personal growth. Expectancy theory is based on the idea that the strength of one's motivation to work is the product of perceived probabilities of acquiring personally valued rewards. Both effort-performance ("What are my chances of getting the job done if I put out the necessary effort?") and performance-reward ("What are my chances of getting the rewards I value if I satisfactorily complete the job?") probabilities are important to expectancy theory.

Depending on how it is designed, a job can either hamper or promote personal growth and satisfaction. Although historically a key to higher productivity, specialization of labor has been associated with costly human problems in recent years. Managers have the options of fitting people to jobs or fitting jobs to people when attempting to counter the specialization-of-labor dilemma. The first option includes realistic job previews (honest explanations of what a job actually entails), job rotation (periodically moving people from one specialized job to another), and limited exposure (establishing a challenging yet but fair daily performance standard or quota, and letting employees go home when it is reached). Managers who pursue the second option, fitting jobs to people, can either enlarge (combine two or more tasks into a single job) or enrich (redesign a job to increase its motivating potential) jobs. Job enrichment vertically loads jobs to meet individual needs for meaningfulness, responsibility, and knowledge of results. Personal desire for growth and a supportive climate are required for successful job enrichment.

Both extrinsic (externally granted) and intrinsic (self-granted) rewards, when properly administered, can have a positive impact on performance and satisfaction.

Answer the questions:

- 1) Why is motivation an important area of study for managers?
- 2) What can cripple a motivation program?
- 3) What is the key to true satisfaction, according to Herzberg?
- 4) What idea is expectancy theory based on?

Do not forget about VOCABULARY!