

Chapter 16

Motivating Employees

Learning Objectives

16.1 *Define* motivation.

16.2 *Compare* and contrast early theories of motivation.

16.3 *Compare* and contrast contemporary theories of motivation.

16.4 *Discuss* current issues in motivation.

Employability Skills Matrix

This matrix identifies which features and end-of-chapter material will help you develop specific skills employers are looking for in job candidates.

		Critical Thinking	Communication	Collaboration	Knowledge Application	Social Responsibility
Skill Boxes	It's Your Career	✓		✓		
	Workplace Confidential	✓			✓	
	Learning from Failure	✓			✓	
Skill Practice	Ethical Dilemma	✓			✓	✓
	Skill Exercise	✓			✓	
	Working Together			✓	✓	
	My Turn to Be a Manager	✓	✓		✓	
Cases	Case Application	✓			✓	

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What motivates millennials? There is an increasing amount of evidence that flexibility is near the top of the list.¹ For example, Jessi Berrin, 32, works at the corporate headquarters of Baptist Health South Florida in Miami. She says, "The traditional 9-to-5 is not at all appealing to millennials. . . We want to work for employers who meet us where we are." She values her job because it gives her the flexibility to do things like work from home, leave work early to get to her fitness class, or come in to the office late to avoid rush-hour traffic.

While flexibility might not be an important motivator for every employee, employers who want to attract and keep millennials should consider increasing the flexibility around their organization's work arrangements.

WHAT is motivation?

LO16.1 All managers need to be able to motivate their employees, which first requires understanding what motivation is. Let's begin by pointing out what motivation isn't! Why? Because many people incorrectly view motivation as a personal trait; that is, they think some people are motivated and others aren't. Our knowledge of motivation tells us that individuals differ in motivational drive and their overall motivation varies from situation to situation. For instance, you're probably more motivated in some classes than in others.

Motivation refers to the process by which a person's efforts are energized, directed, and sustained toward attaining a goal.² This definition has three key elements: energy, direction, and persistence.

The *energy* element is a measure of intensity, drive, and vigor. A motivated person puts forth effort and works hard. However, the quality of the effort must be considered as well as its intensity. High levels of effort don't necessarily lead to favorable job performance unless the effort is channeled in a *direction* that benefits the organization. Effort directed toward and consistent with organizational goals is the kind of effort we want from employees. Finally, motivation includes a *persistence* dimension. We want employees to persist in putting forth effort to achieve those goals.

Motivating high levels of employee performance is an important organizational concern, and managers keep looking for answers. For instance, a Gallup Poll found a large majority of US employees—some 68 percent—are disengaged.³ The number

motivation

The process by which a person's efforts are energized, directed, and sustained toward attaining a goal

IT'S YOUR CAREER

What Motivates You?

What's important to you or excites you in a job? Some say "money." Others might say "challenging work" or "fun coworkers." If you have a solid grounding in and understanding of what motivates you, it can help you make smart career and job choices.

The following is a list of twelve factors that might enter into your decision in selecting a job. Read over the list. Then rank order the items in terms of importance, with 1 being highest in importance and twelve being lowest in importance.

- ___ High pay
- ___ Good working conditions

- ___ Friendly and supportive colleagues
- ___ Flexible working hours
- ___ Opportunities for growth and new challenges
- ___ Considerate boss
- ___ Inclusion in decisions that affect you
- ___ Fair and equitable treatment
- ___ Job security
- ___ Promotion potential
- ___ Excellent benefits (vacation time, retirement contributions, etc.)
- ___ Freedom and independence

Now, compare your list with others in your class. How similar were your preferences? It's rare for lists to be exactly the same. This tells us that people differ in terms of what they value. Second, use these results to better understand what you're looking for in a job.



Motivators for employees of Big Island Candies in Hilo, Hawaii, include satisfying their lower-order needs of a salary, a safe job, benefits, and job security.

Source: Jim West/Alamy Stock Photo

hierarchy of needs theory

Maslow's theory that human needs—physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization—form a hierarchy and that each level in the needs hierarchy must be substantially satisfied before the next need becomes dominant

physiological needs

A person's needs for food, drink, shelter, sexual satisfaction, and other physical requirements

safety needs

A person's needs for security and protection from physical and emotional harm

social needs

A person's needs for affection, belongingness, acceptance, and friendship

esteem needs

A person's needs for internal factors such as self-respect, autonomy, and achievement, and external factors such as status, recognition, and attention

self-actualization needs

A person's need to become what he or she is capable of becoming

globally is even more disturbing—some 87 percent are not excited about their work.⁴ It's no wonder then that both managers and academics want to understand and explain employee motivation.

EARLY theories of motivation

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We begin by looking at four early motivation theories: *Maslow's hierarchy of needs*, *Theories X and Y*, *Herzberg's two-factor theory*, and *McClelland's three-needs theory*. Although more valid explanations of motivation have been developed, these early theories are important because they represent the foundation from which contemporary motivation theories were developed and because many practicing managers still use them.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

The best-known theory of motivation is probably Abraham Maslow's **hierarchy of needs theory**.⁵ Maslow was a psychologist who proposed that within every person is a hierarchy of five needs:

1. **Physiological needs:** A person's needs for food, drink, shelter, sex, and other physical requirements.
2. **Safety needs:** A person's needs for security and protection from physical and emotional harm as well as assurance that physical needs will continue to be met.
3. **Social needs:** A person's needs for affection, belongingness, acceptance, and friendship.
4. **Esteem needs:** A person's needs for internal esteem factors such as self-respect, autonomy, and achievement and external esteem factors such as status, recognition, and attention.
5. **Self-actualization needs:** A person's needs for growth, achieving one's potential, and self-fulfillment; the drive to become what one is capable of becoming.

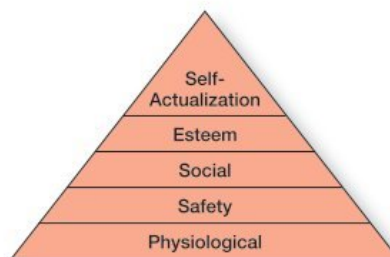
Maslow argued that each level in the needs hierarchy must be substantially satisfied before the next need becomes dominant. An individual moves up the needs hierarchy from one level to the next. (See Exhibit 16-1.) In addition, Maslow separated the five needs into higher and lower levels. Physiological and safety needs were considered *lower-order needs*; social, esteem, and self-actualization needs were considered *higher-order needs*. Lower-order needs are predominantly satisfied externally while higher-order needs are satisfied internally.

How does Maslow's theory explain motivation? Managers using Maslow's hierarchy to motivate employees do things to satisfy employees' needs. But the theory also says that once a need is substantially satisfied, an individual is no longer motivated

Exhibit 16-1

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Source: A. H. Maslow, R. D. Frager, and J. Fadiman, *Motivation and Personality*, 3rd Edition, © 1987. Reprinted and electronically reproduced by permission of Pearson Education, Inc., Upper Saddle River, NJ.



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to satisfy that need. Therefore, to motivate someone, you need to understand at what need level that person is on in the hierarchy and focus on satisfying needs at or above that level.

Maslow's needs theory was widely recognized during the 1960s and 1970s, especially among practicing managers, probably because it was intuitively logical and easy to understand. But Maslow provided no empirical support for his theory, and several studies that sought to validate it could not.⁶

McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y

Douglas McGregor proposed two assumptions about human nature: Theory X and Theory Y.⁷ Very simply, **Theory X** is a negative view of people that assumes workers have little ambition, dislike work, want to avoid responsibility, and need to be closely controlled to work effectively. **Theory Y** is a positive view that assumes employees enjoy work, seek out and accept responsibility, and exercise self-direction. McGregor believed that Theory Y assumptions should guide management practice and proposed that participation in decision making, responsible and challenging jobs, and good group relations would maximize employee motivation. For example, Walmart gives workers a significant role in decision making. Store associates can provide input into what is sold locally. The company relies on associates' judgment because they interact with customers. Walmart's US CEO stated: "There is nothing I like better than hearing about your [associates'] jobs, your ideas, your hopes and dreams, and frustrations, and listening to how we can make your lives easier."⁸ Clearly, this is an example of Walmart putting the philosophy of Theory Y into practice.

Unfortunately, there is no evidence to confirm that either set of assumptions is valid or that following Theory Y assumptions is the only way to motivate employees. In the real world, there are plenty of examples of effective managers who make Theory X assumptions. For instance, Apple co-founder Steve Jobs drove his staff hard and had no problem humiliating employees in staff meetings. Yet he was extremely successful in pushing his people to create innovative products and to constantly work to improve them.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg's **two-factor theory** (also called **motivation-hygiene theory**) proposes that intrinsic factors are related to job satisfaction, while extrinsic factors are associated with job dissatisfaction.⁹ Herzberg wanted to know when people felt exceptionally good (satisfied) or bad (dissatisfied) about their jobs. (These findings are shown in Exhibit 16-2.) He concluded that the replies people gave when they felt good about their jobs were significantly different from the replies they gave when they felt bad. Certain characteristics were consistently related to job satisfaction (factors on

Theory X

The assumption that employees dislike work, are lazy, avoid responsibility, and must be coerced to perform

Theory Y

The assumption that employees are creative, enjoy work, seek responsibility, and can exercise self-direction

two-factor theory (motivation-hygiene theory)

The motivation theory that proposes intrinsic factors are related to job satisfaction and motivation, whereas extrinsic factors are associated with job dissatisfaction

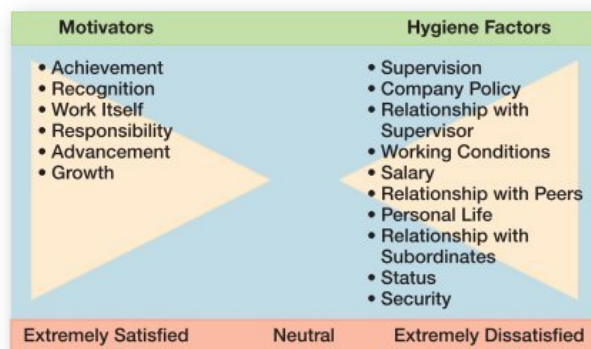
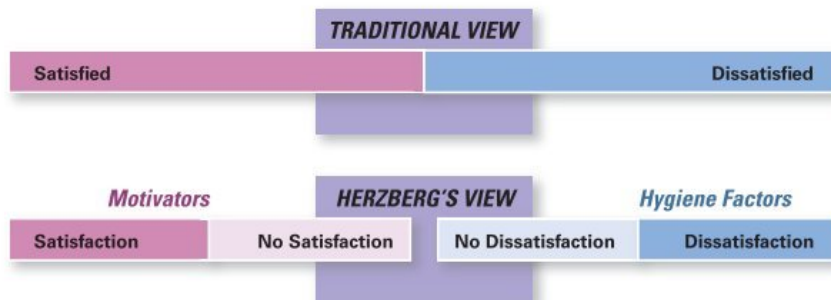


Exhibit 16-2

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Source: Based on F. Herzberg, B. Mausner, and B. B. Snyderman, *The Motivation to Work* (New York: John Wiley, 1959).

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Exhibit 16-3Contrasting Views of
Satisfaction–Dissatisfaction

the left side of the exhibit), and others to job dissatisfaction (factors on the right side). When people felt good about their work, they tended to cite intrinsic factors arising from the job itself such as achievement, recognition, and responsibility. On the other hand, when they were dissatisfied, they tended to cite extrinsic factors arising from the job context such as company policy and administration, supervision, interpersonal relationships, and working conditions.

In addition, Herzberg believed the data suggested that the opposite of satisfaction was not dissatisfaction, as traditionally had been believed. Removing dissatisfying characteristics from a job would not necessarily make that job more satisfying (or motivating). As shown in Exhibit 16-3, Herzberg proposed that a dual continuum existed: the opposite of “satisfaction” is “no satisfaction,” and the opposite of “dissatisfaction” is “no dissatisfaction.”

Again, Herzberg believed the factors that led to job satisfaction were separate and distinct from those that led to job dissatisfaction. Therefore, managers who sought to eliminate factors that created job dissatisfaction could keep people from being dissatisfied but not necessarily motivate them. The extrinsic factors that remove job dissatisfaction were called **hygiene factors**. When these factors are adequate, people won't be dissatisfied, but they won't be satisfied (or motivated) either. To motivate people, Herzberg suggested emphasizing **motivators**, the intrinsic factors having to do with the job itself.

Herzberg's theory enjoyed wide popularity from the mid-1960s to the early 1980s, despite criticisms of his procedures and methodology. Although some critics said his theory was too simplistic, it has influenced how we currently design jobs, especially when it comes to job enrichment, which we'll discuss later in this chapter.

Three-Needs Theory

David McClelland and his associates proposed the **three-needs theory**, which says three acquired (not innate) needs are major motives in work.¹⁰ These three are the **need for achievement (nAch)**, the drive to succeed and excel in relation to a set of standards; the **need for power (nPow)**, the need to make others behave in a way they would not have behaved otherwise; and the **need for affiliation (nAff)**, the desire for friendly and close interpersonal relationships. Of these three needs, the need for achievement has been researched the most.

People with a high need for achievement are striving for personal achievement rather than for the trappings and rewards of success. They have a desire to do something better or more efficiently than it's been done before.¹¹ They prefer jobs in which they can take personal responsibility for finding solutions to problems, in which they can receive rapid and unambiguous feedback on their performance in order to tell whether they're improving, and in which they can set moderately challenging goals. High achievers avoid what they perceive to be very easy or very difficult tasks. Also, a high need to achieve doesn't necessarily lead to being a good manager, especially in large organizations. That's because high achievers focus on their *own* accomplishments, while good managers emphasize helping *others* accomplish their goals.¹² McClelland

hygiene factors

Factors that eliminate job dissatisfaction, but don't motivate

motivators

Factors that increase job satisfaction and motivation

three-needs theory

The motivation theory that says three acquired (not innate) needs—achievement, power, and affiliation—are major motives in work

need for achievement (nAch)

The drive to succeed and excel in relation to a set of standards

need for power (nPow)

The need to make others behave in a way that they would not have behaved otherwise

need for affiliation (nAff)

The desire for friendly and close interpersonal relationships

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Exhibit 16-4

TAT Pictures: Examples of pictures used for assessing levels of nAch, nAff, and nPow

Photo Source: Bill Aron/PhotoEdit



nAch: Indicated by someone in the story wanting to perform or do something better.

nAff: Indicated by someone in the story wanting to be with someone else and enjoy mutual friendship.

nPow: Indicated by someone in the story desiring to have an impact or make an impression on others in the story.

showed that employees can be trained to stimulate their achievement need by being in situations where they have personal responsibility, feedback, and moderate risks.

The other two needs in this theory haven't been researched as extensively as the need for achievement. However, studies have found that the best managers tend to be high in the need for power and low in the need for affiliation.¹³

All three of these needs can be measured by using a projective test (known as the Thematic Apperception Test or TAT), in which respondents react to a set of pictures. Each picture is briefly shown to a person who writes a story based on the picture. (See Exhibit 16-4 for some examples.) Trained interpreters then determine the individual's levels of nAch, nPow, and nAff from the stories written.

CONTEMPORARY theories of motivation

L016.3 The theories we look at in this section represent current explanations of employee motivation. Although these theories may not be as well-known as those we just discussed, they are supported by research.¹⁴ These contemporary motivation approaches include goal-setting theory, reinforcement theory, job design theory, equity theory, expectancy theory.

Goal-Setting Theory

We introduced the importance of goals in Chapter 8 in our discussion of planning. In this section we revisit them but through the lenses of motivation.

Before a big assignment or major class project presentation, has a teacher ever encouraged you to "just do your best"? What does that vague statement mean? Would your performance on a class project have been higher had that teacher said you needed to score a 93 percent to keep your A in the class? Research on goal-setting theory addresses these questions, and the findings, as you'll see, are impressive in terms of the effect that goal specificity, challenge, and feedback have on performance.¹⁵

Research provides substantial support for **goal-setting theory**, which says that specific goals increase performance and that difficult goals, when accepted, result in higher performance than do easy goals. What does goal-setting theory tell us?

goal-setting theory

The proposition that specific goals increase performance and that difficult goals, when accepted, result in higher performance than do easy goals

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- Thirty percent of employees strongly agree that they are involved in goal setting with their manager.
- Employees who are involved in goal setting with their managers are 3.6 times more likely than other employees to be engaged in their jobs.¹⁸

self-efficacy

An individual's belief that he or she is capable of performing a task

reinforcement theory

The theory that behavior is a function of its consequences

reinforcers

Consequences immediately following a behavior, which increase the probability that the behavior will be repeated

First, working toward a goal is a major source of job motivation. Studies on goal setting have demonstrated that specific and challenging goals are superior motivating forces.¹⁶ Such goals produce a higher output than the generalized goal of “do your best.” The specificity of the goal itself acts as an internal stimulus. For instance, when a sales rep commits to making eight sales calls daily, this intention gives him a specific goal to try to attain.

It's not a contradiction that goal-setting theory says that motivation is maximized by *difficult* goals, whereas achievement motivation (from three-needs theory) is stimulated by *moderately challenging* goals.¹⁷ First, goal-setting theory deals with people in general, whereas the conclusions on achievement motivation are based on people who have a high nAch. Given that no more than 10 to 20 percent of North Americans are high achievers (a proportion that's likely lower in underdeveloped countries), difficult goals are still recommended for the majority of employees. Second, the conclusions of goal-setting theory apply to those who accept and are committed to the goals. Difficult goals will lead to higher performance *only* if they are accepted.

Next, will employees try harder if they have the opportunity to participate in the setting of goals? Not always. In some cases, participants who actively set goals elicit superior performance; in other cases, individuals performed best when their manager assigned goals. However, participation is probably preferable to assigning goals when employees might resist accepting difficult challenges.¹⁹

Finally, we know people will do better if they get feedback on how well they're progressing toward their goals because feedback helps identify discrepancies between what they have done and what they want to do. But all feedback isn't equally effective. Self-generated feedback—where an employee monitors his or her own progress—has been shown to be a more powerful motivator than feedback coming from someone else.²⁰

Three other contingencies besides feedback influence the goal-performance relationship: goal commitment, adequate self-efficacy, and national culture.

First, goal-setting theory assumes an individual is committed to the goal. Commitment is most likely when goals are made public, when the individual has an internal locus of control, and when the goals are self-set rather than assigned.²¹

Next, **self-efficacy** refers to an individual's belief that he or she is capable of performing a task.²² The higher your self-efficacy, the more confidence you have in your ability to succeed in a task. So, in difficult situations, we find that people with low self-efficacy are likely to reduce their effort or give up altogether, whereas those with high self-efficacy will try harder to master the challenge.²³ In addition, individuals with high self-efficacy seem to respond to negative feedback with increased effort and motivation, whereas those with low self-efficacy are likely to reduce their effort when given negative feedback.²⁴

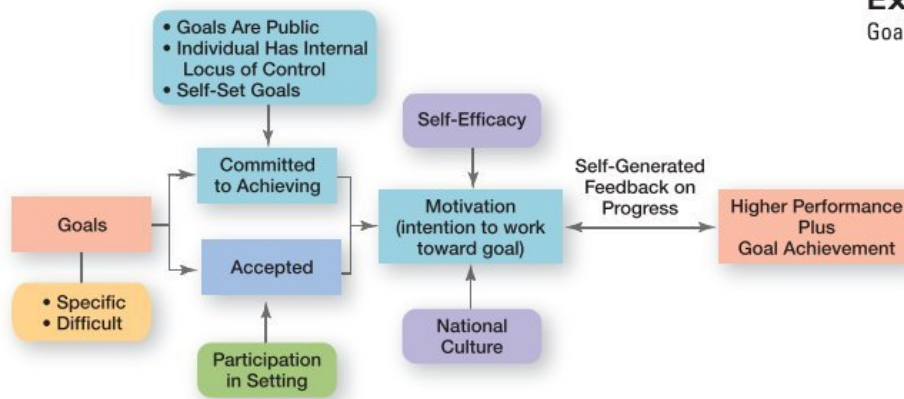
Finally, the value of goal-setting theory depends on national culture. It's well adapted to North American countries because its main ideas align reasonably well with those cultures. It assumes that subordinates will be reasonably independent (not a high score on power distance), that people will seek challenging goals (low in uncertainty avoidance), and that performance is considered important by both managers and subordinates (high in assertiveness). Don't expect goal setting to lead to higher employee performance in countries where the cultural characteristics aren't like this.

Exhibit 16-5 summarizes the relationships among goals, motivation, and performance. Our overall conclusion is that the intention to work toward hard and specific goals is a powerful motivating force. Under the proper conditions, it can lead to higher performance. However, no evidence indicates that such goals are associated with increased job satisfaction.²⁵

Reinforcement Theory

Reinforcement theory says that behavior is a function of its consequences. Those consequences that immediately follow a behavior and increase the probability that the behavior will be repeated are called **reinforcers**. Reinforcement theory ignores factors

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Exhibit 16-5
Goal-Setting Theory

such as goals, expectations, and needs. Instead, it focuses solely on what happens to a person when he or she does something.

In the previous chapter, we showed how managers use reinforcers to shape behavior, but the concept is also widely believed to explain motivation. To rehash, according to B. F. Skinner, people will most likely engage in desired behaviors if they are rewarded for doing so. These rewards are most effective if they immediately follow a desired behavior; and behavior that isn't rewarded, or is punished, is less likely to be repeated.²⁶

Using reinforcement theory, managers can influence employees' behavior by using positive reinforcers for actions that help the organization achieve its goals. And managers should ignore, not punish, undesirable behavior. Although punishment eliminates undesired behavior faster than nonreinforcement, its effect is often temporary and may have unpleasant side effects, including dysfunctional behavior such as workplace conflicts, absenteeism, and turnover. Although reinforcement is an important influence on work behavior, it isn't the only explanation for differences in employee motivation.²⁷

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Seventy-nine percent of employees quit their jobs due largely to feeling unappreciated.²⁸

Designing Motivating Jobs

Because managers want to motivate individuals on the job, we need to look at ways to design motivating jobs. If you look closely at what an organization is and how it works, you'll find that it's composed of thousands of tasks. These tasks are, in turn, aggregated into jobs. We use the term **job design** to refer to the way tasks are combined to form complete jobs. The jobs people perform in an organization should not evolve by chance. Managers should design jobs deliberately and thoughtfully to reflect the demands of the changing environment; the organization's technology; and employees' skills, abilities, and preferences.²⁹ When jobs are designed like that, employees are motivated to work hard. Let's look at some ways that managers can design motivating jobs.

job design
The way tasks are combined to form complete jobs

JOB ENLARGEMENT As we saw in the Management History module, job design historically has been to make jobs smaller, simpler, and more specialized. But it's difficult to motivate employees when jobs are like this. An early effort at overcoming the drawbacks of job specialization involved horizontally expanding a job through increasing **job scope**—the number of different tasks required in a job and the frequency with which these tasks are repeated. For instance, a dental hygienist's job could be enlarged so that in addition to cleaning teeth, he or she is pulling patients' files, refiling them when finished, and sanitizing and storing instruments. This type of job design option is called **job enlargement**.

job scope
The number of different tasks required in a job and the frequency with which those tasks are repeated

Most job enlargement efforts that focus solely on increasing the number of tasks don't seem to work. As one employee who experienced such a job redesign said, "Before, I had one lousy job. Now, thanks to job enlargement, I have three lousy

job enlargement
The horizontal expansion of a job by increasing job scope

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job enrichment

The vertical expansion of a job by adding planning and evaluating responsibilities

job depth

The degree of control employees have over their work

job characteristics model (JCM)

A framework for analyzing and designing jobs that identifies five primary core job dimensions, their interrelationships, and their impact on outcomes

skill variety

The degree to which a job requires a variety of activities so that an employee can use a number of different skills and talents

task identity

The degree to which a job requires completion of a whole and identifiable piece of work

task significance

The degree to which a job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people

autonomy

The degree to which a job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling work and determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out

feedback

The degree to which carrying out work activities required by a job results in the individual's obtaining direct and clear information about his or her performance effectiveness

Meaningful work that helps people with physical problems gives occupational therapist, Abbey Wash, considerable motivation and job satisfaction. Wash's job scores high in skill and task variety plus task significance.

Source: Jeff Siner/Charlotte Observer/TNS/Newscom



jobs!" However, research has shown that *knowledge* enlargement activities (expanding the scope of knowledge used in a job) lead to more job satisfaction, enhanced customer service, and fewer errors.³⁰

JOB ENRICHMENT Another approach to job design is the vertical expansion of a job by adding planning and evaluating responsibilities—**job enrichment**. Job enrichment increases **job depth**, which is the degree of control employees have over their work. In other words, employees are empowered to assume some of the tasks typically done by their managers. Thus, an enriched job allows workers to do an entire activity with increased freedom, independence, and responsibility. In addition, workers get feedback so they can assess and correct their own performance. For instance, if our dental hygienist had an enriched job, he or she could, in addition to cleaning teeth, schedule appointments (planning) and follow up with clients (evaluating). Although job enrichment may improve the quality of work, employee motivation, and satisfaction, research evidence has been inconclusive as to its usefulness.³¹

JOB CHARACTERISTICS MODEL Even though many organizations implemented job enlargement and job enrichment programs and experienced mixed results, neither approach provided an effective framework for managers to design motivating jobs. But the **job characteristics model (JCM)** does.³² It identifies five core job dimensions, their interrelationships, and their impact on employee productivity, motivation, and satisfaction. These five core job dimensions are:

1. **Skill variety**, the degree to which a job requires a variety of activities so that an employee can use a number of different skills and talents.
2. **Task identity**, the degree to which a job requires completion of a whole and identifiable piece of work.
3. **Task significance**, the degree to which a job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people.
4. **Autonomy**, the degree to which a job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out.
5. **Feedback**, the degree to which doing work activities required by a job results in an individual obtaining direct and clear information about the effectiveness of his or her performance.

The JCM is shown in Exhibit 16-6. Notice how the first three dimensions—skill variety, task identity, and task significance—combine to create meaningful work. In other words, if these three characteristics exist in a job, we can predict that the person will view his or her job as being important, valuable, and worthwhile. Notice, too, that jobs that possess autonomy give the jobholder a feeling of personal responsibility for the results and that if a job provides feedback, the employee will know how effectively he or she is performing.

The JCM suggests that employees are likely to be motivated when they *learn* (knowledge of results through feedback) that they *personally* (experienced responsibility through autonomy of work) performed well on tasks that they *care about* (experienced meaningfulness through skill variety, task identity, or task significance).³³ The more a job is designed around these three elements, the greater the employee's motivation, performance, and satisfaction and the lower his or her absenteeism and likelihood of resigning. As the model shows, the links between the job dimensions and the outcomes are moderated by the strength of the individual's growth need (the person's desire for self-esteem and self-actualization). Individuals with a high-growth need are more likely than low-growth need individuals to experience the critical psychological states and respond positively when

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**Exhibit 16-6****Job Characteristics Model**

Source: "Job Characteristics Model," from *Work Redesign*, by J. R. Hackman & G. R. Oldham. Copyright © 1980 by Addison-Wesley (a division of Pearson). Reprinted with permission.

their jobs include the core dimensions. This distinction may explain the mixed results with job enrichment: individuals with low-growth need aren't likely to achieve high performance or satisfaction by having their jobs enriched.

The JCM provides specific guidance to managers for job design. These suggestions specify the types of changes most likely to lead to improvement in the five core job dimensions. You'll notice that two suggestions incorporate job enlargement and job enrichment, although the other suggestions involve more than vertical and horizontal expansion of jobs.

1. *Combine tasks.* Put fragmented tasks back together to form a new, larger work module (job enlargement) to increase skill variety and task identity.
2. *Create natural work units.* Design tasks that form an identifiable and meaningful whole to increase employee "ownership" of the work. Encourage employees to view their work as meaningful and important rather than as irrelevant and boring.
3. *Establish client (external or internal) relationships.* Whenever possible, establish direct relationships between workers and their clients to increase skill variety, autonomy, and feedback.
4. *Expand jobs vertically.* Vertical expansion gives employees responsibilities and controls that were formerly reserved for managers, which can increase employee autonomy.
5. *Open feedback channels.* Direct feedback lets employees know how well they're performing their jobs and whether their performance is improving or not.

The research into the JCM has provided a rich knowledge base for understanding how job design influences employee motivation; however, the research does not directly specify motivating jobs. What are some of the jobs people consider to be more or less meaningful?

A survey of over two million workers in twenty-four job categories provides some insights.³⁴ When asked, "Does your job make the world a better place," more than 70 percent of those working in healthcare, social services, education, and protective services said "yes." In contrast, fewer than 50 percent of those in food preparation services, sales, production, and office administration felt that they make the world a better place.

Research into the JCM continues. Jobs have changed since the mid-1970s, when the JCM was originally formulated. One study, for instance, found that jobs today offer greater skill variety and autonomy—but concluded that the association between the five core job characteristics and satisfaction has remained unchanged over time.³⁵ Other assessments have questioned whether the JCM captures the global shift from a manufacturing economy to a knowledge and service economy by failing to take into account the social dimensions of work.³⁶

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The newly opened headquarters of the Zalando campus was created to facilitate social support, consistent with the relational perspective of work design.
Source: Jens Kalaene/dpa-Zentralbild/dpa picture alliance/Alamy Live News/Alamy Stock Photo

relational perspective of work design

An approach to job design that focuses on how people's tasks and jobs are increasingly based on social relationships

proactive perspective of work design

An approach to job design in which employees take the initiative to change how their work is performed

high-involvement work practices

Work practices designed to elicit greater input or involvement from workers

equity theory

The theory that an employee compares his or her job's input-outcomes ratio with that of relevant others and then corrects any inequity

JOB DESIGN UPDATED In response to concerns that the JCM may not be totally appropriate for today's jobs, two emerging viewpoints have received attention. Let's take a look at each.

The first, the **relational perspective of work design**, focuses on how people's tasks and jobs are increasingly based on social relationships.³⁷ In jobs today, employees have more interactions and interdependence with co-workers and others both inside and outside the organization. In doing their job, employees rely more and more on those around them for information, advice, and assistance. So what does this mean for designing motivating jobs? It means that managers need to look at important components of those employee relationships such as access to and level of social support in an organization, types of interactions outside an organization, amount of task interdependence, and interpersonal feedback.

Let's look at an example of the relational perspective of work design. Have you ever called a software company's help line? Isn't your expectation that the product expert will provide straightforward answers and step-by-step instructions for addressing the problem? Of course, we all do! Microsoft understands customers' expectations. Managers help improve the customer service experience by connecting software developers with customers. In this example, the manager's goal is to have developers write software that meets technical specifications and is user friendly.

The second perspective, the **proactive perspective of work design**, says that employees are taking the initiative to change how their work is performed.³⁸ They're much more involved in decisions and actions that affect their work. Important job design factors according to this perspective include autonomy (which *is* part of the JCM), amount of ambiguity and accountability, job complexity, level of stressors, and social or relationship context. Each of these has been shown to influence employee proactive behavior. For instance, researchers observed cleaners at a hospital took the initiative to craft their own jobs. According to one of the researchers, "The cleaners had tons of rooms they had to clean in a very short period of time so they had very little discretion over the number of tasks they had to get done. . . . [T]o make it more meaningful for themselves, they would do all types of little things to help the patients and their patients' families."³⁹ One stream of research that's relevant to proactive work design is **high-involvement work practices**, which are designed to elicit greater input or involvement from workers.⁴⁰ The level of employee proactivity is believed to increase as employees become more involved in decisions that affect their work.

Equity Theory

If someone offered you \$80,000 a year on your first job after graduating from college, you'd probably jump at the offer and report to work enthusiastic, ready to tackle whatever needed to be done, and certainly be satisfied with your pay. How would you react, though, if you found out a month into the job that a coworker—another recent graduate, your age, with comparable grades from a comparable school, and with comparable work experience—was getting \$85,000 a year? You'd probably be upset! Even though in absolute terms, \$80,000 is a lot of money for a new graduate to make (and you know it!), that suddenly isn't the issue. Now you see the issue as what you believe is *fair*—what is *equitable*. The term *equity* is related to the concept of fairness and equitable treatment compared with others who behave in similar ways. Evidence indicates that employees compare themselves to others and that inequities influence how much effort employees exert.⁴¹

Equity theory proposes that employees compare what they get from a job (outcomes) in relation to what they put into it (inputs), and then they compare their inputs-outcomes ratio with the inputs-outcomes ratios of relevant others (Exhibit 16-7). If an employee perceives her ratio to be equitable in comparison to those of relevant others, there's no problem. However, if the ratio is inequitable, she

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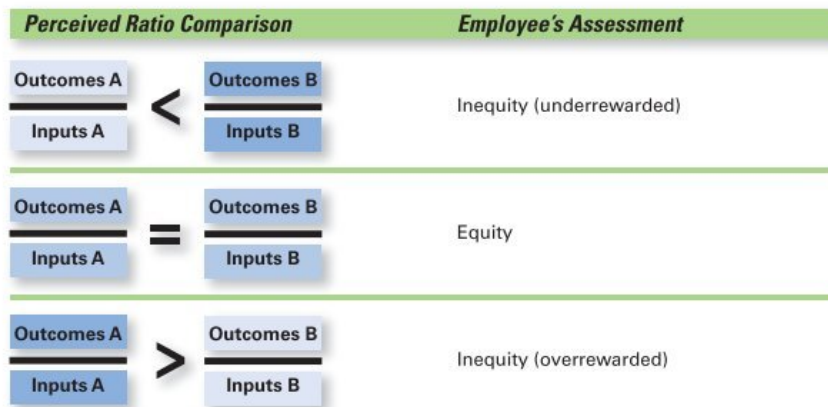


Exhibit 16-7
Equity Theory

views herself as underrewarded or overrewarded. When inequities occur, employees attempt to do something about it.⁴² The result might be lower or higher productivity, improved or reduced quality of output, increased absenteeism, or voluntary resignation. Interestingly, people are pretty good at rationalizing over-rewarding so under-rewarding tends to have the greatest impact on behavior.

The **referent**—the other persons, systems, or selves individuals compare themselves against in order to assess equity—is an important variable in equity theory.⁴³ Each of the three referent categories is important. The “persons” category includes other individuals with similar jobs in the same organization but also includes friends, neighbors, or professional associates. Based on what they hear at work or read about in newspapers or trade journals, employees compare their pay with that of others. The “systems” category includes organizational pay policies, procedures, and allocation. The “selves” category refers to inputs-outcomes ratios that are unique to the individual. It reflects past personal experiences and contacts and is influenced by criteria such as past jobs or family commitments.

Originally, equity theory focused on **distributive justice**, the perceived fairness of the amount and allocation of rewards among individuals. More recent research has focused on looking at issues of **procedural justice**, the perceived fairness of the process used to determine the distribution of rewards. This research shows that distributive justice has a greater influence on employee satisfaction than procedural justice, while procedural justice tends to affect an employee’s organizational commitment, trust in his or her boss, and intention to quit.⁴⁴ What are the implications for managers? They should consider openly sharing information on how allocation decisions are made, follow consistent and unbiased procedures, and engage in similar practices to increase the perception of procedural justice. By increasing the perception of procedural justice, employees are likely to view their bosses and the organization as positive even if they’re dissatisfied with pay, promotions, and other personal outcomes.

Expectancy Theory

The most comprehensive explanation of how employees are motivated is **expectancy theory**.⁴⁵ Although the theory has its critics,⁴⁶ most research evidence supports it.⁴⁷

Expectancy theory states that an individual tends to act in a certain way based on the expectation that the act will be followed by a given outcome and on the attractiveness of that outcome to the individual. It includes three variables or relationships (see Exhibit 16-8):

1. **Effort-performance linkage:** the probability perceived by the individual that exerting a given amount of effort will lead to a certain level of performance.
2. **Performance-reward linkage:** the degree to which the individual believes that performing at a particular level is instrumental in attaining the desired outcome.

referents

The persons, systems, or selves against which individuals compare themselves to assess equity

distributive justice

Perceived fairness of the amount and allocation of rewards among individuals

procedural justice

Perceived fairness of the process used to determine the distribution of rewards

expectancy theory

The theory that an individual tends to act in a certain way based on the expectation that the act will be followed by a given outcome and on the attractiveness of that outcome to the individual

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WORKPLACE CONFIDENTIAL Feelings of Unfair Pay

For many employees, nothing is likely to act as a demotivator as much as learning that someone in their organization is getting paid more than they are for the same or similar job. Depending on your equity sensitivity, someday you might find yourself angry and frustrated because you believe you're not being fairly compensated.

Let's start with the fact that we're not all equally equity sensitive. Equity sensitivity (ES) is a term that developed out of equity theory. ES acknowledges that not all individuals are equivalently sensitive to equity. ES, therefore, is a personality trait based on an individual's preferred input-to-outcome ratios. For our purposes, we will focus on individuals who believe that they are being underrewarded relative to others. If you're not equity sensitive and you think you're underpaid, you might just want to let it go. As we'll point out, there are risks when you try to correct what you perceive as unfair pay. Sometimes the best strategy is to do nothing. Be sure that you really want to pursue the issue before you act.

If you do feel that you're being paid unfairly, you need to start by asking yourself: What's my evidence? A few organizations make employee salaries public. But that's not the norm. Especially for white-collar jobs, organizations typically don't want employees to know what others are making. In fact, in some organizations, it's a stated policy that employees are *not* to share salary information with each other. Why do organizations do this? The obvious answer is that they don't want employees making comparisons and expecting management to justify every perceived unfairness.

The above suggests that you need to do research before you want to proclaim that you're underpaid. While historically it was difficult to get accurate data for comparing salaries, the internet has changed that. Salary websites such as Glassdoor and PayScale.com provide comparative data for many jobs and in different markets.

Two questions to consider: What's your basis for concluding you're underpaid, and is there a logical explanation why you might be paid less than someone else in the same or similar job? Keep in mind that there are a lot of reasons to justify salary differences—education, skills, length of time with the organization, relevant experience, different performance ratings, location, and cost of living. There's a reason, for instance, that two insurance adjusters working for Liberty Mutual might be paid differently if one works out of New York City and the other out of Birmingham, Alabama. In the United States, gender is not a justification for paying a woman less than a man for doing the same job. The Equal Pay Act specifically prohibits wage disparities based on sex. Also, remember that most organizations have salary ranges for specific jobs and people have different skills in negotiating. Some differences in pay may be attributable to initial starting salaries that were negotiated at different times and under different conditions.

If you're convinced your pay is unfair and have the evidence to support your claim, ask yourself how much risk you're willing to take. Is it worth pursuing this, and if so, how hard do you want to push? In some organizations, the culture discourages people from comparing salaries or challenging the pay structure. And be prepared to find that your concern falls on deaf ears. Many managers fear that increasing one individual's pay because he or she complained will open up a flood of requests for pay reevaluations.

If you decide to pursue the issue, you'll need a strategy. Start by deciding to whom you are going to make your case. Don't assume your boss has solo discretion to adjust your pay. Pay structures, especially in large organizations, are carefully designed and monitored. While your boss may have some say in recommending pay increases, the final decision usually lies with the human resources department. So you should consider whether you want to present your case to your immediate boss, the human resources manager, or both.

Timing counts! That is, there are times that are better for making your case. The natural time is with your performance evaluation. A strong evaluation strengthens your hand in asking for an adjustment, especially if it is backed up with evidence suggesting that you're underpaid. And what kind of evidence makes your case and helps your boss to get approvals from his or her superiors? If you have objective data that indicates that others in your organization or community are getting paid more than you are for the same or similar job, present the facts. Additionally, elaborate on your contributions. Specifically reference your past accomplishments and what you expect to contribute in the future. Ideally, you'll have concrete evidence to make your case, such as how much you brought the organization in sales or how much you saved through increased productivity. If your job doesn't lend itself to such facts, support your case with positive comments on your accomplishments from customers, suppliers, or work colleagues.

We conclude with some things you should *not* do. (1) Don't go over your boss's head—for instance, talking with your human resources manager—without first getting your boss's approval. No manager wants to feel that you are undermining his or her authority. (2) Don't discuss your compensation with coworkers. Pay is a sensitive subject. It's best not to share salary information. Use other sources, besides coworkers, to get comparative data. (3) Don't make comparisons to a specific person in your department or organization. This is not likely to win you support from your boss or colleagues. (4) Don't go negative. Complaining or making threats rarely results in positive outcomes. And saying that you haven't had a raise in years or that you're doing twice as much work as everyone else is also likely to prove unproductive.⁴⁸

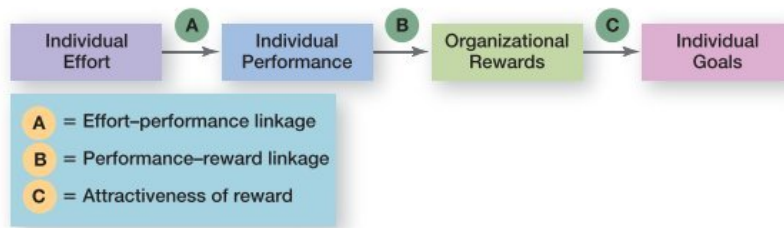


Exhibit 16-8
Expectancy Model

3. *Attractiveness*: the importance an individual places on the potential outcome or reward that can be achieved on the job. This considers both the goals and needs of the individual.

While this might sound complex, it really isn't that difficult to visualize. It can be summed up in the following questions: How hard do I have to work to achieve a certain level of performance, and can I actually achieve that level? What reward will performing at that level of performance get me? How attractive is the reward to me, and does it help me achieve my own personal goals? Whether you are motivated to put forth effort (that is, to work hard) at any given time depends on your goals and your perception of whether a certain level of performance is necessary to attain those goals.

Let's use the classroom organization as an illustration of how one can use expectancy theory to explain motivation.

Most students prefer an instructor who tells them what is expected of them in the course. They want to know what the assignments and examinations will be like, when they are due or to be taken, and how much weight each carries in the final term grade. They also like to think that the amount of effort they exert in attending classes, taking notes, writing papers, meeting with project team members, and/or studying will be reasonably related to the grade they will make in the course. Let's assume that you, as a student, feel this way. Consider that five weeks into a class you are really enjoying (we'll call it MGT 301), an examination is given back to you. You studied hard for this exam, and you have consistently made As and Bs on exams in other courses to which you have expended similar effort. The reason you work so hard is to make top grades, which you believe are important for getting a good job upon graduation. Also, you are not sure, but you might want to go on to graduate school. Again, you think grades are important for getting into a good graduate school.

Well, the results of that five-week exam are in. The class median was 72. Ten percent of the class scored an 85 or higher and got an A. Your grade was 46; the minimum passing mark was 50. You're mad. You're frustrated. Even more, you're perplexed. How could you possibly have done so poorly on the exam when you usually score in the top range in other classes by preparing as you did for this one?

Several interesting things are immediately evident in your behavior. Suddenly, you're no longer driven to attend MGT 301 classes regularly. You find that you do not study for the course either. When you do attend classes, you daydream a lot—the result is an empty notebook instead of several pages of notes. One would probably be correct in describing you as “lacking in motivation” in MGT 301. Why did your motivation level change? You know and I know, but let's explain it in expectancy terms.

If we use Exhibit 16-8 to understand this situation, we might say the following: studying and preparing for MGT 301 (effort) are conditioned by their resulting in correctly answering the questions on the exam (performance), which will produce a high



Just Born Quality Confections—makers of Peeps and Mike & Ike brands—uses expectancy theory in motivating employees to achieve annual sales goals. Sales team members shown here expected their efforts would result in winning an all-expenses-paid trip to Hawaii. But they failed to meet their goal and instead earned jackets and bomber hats and a trip to Fargo, North Dakota.

Source: Ann Arbor Miller/AP Photo

grade (reward), which will lead, in turn, to the security, prestige, and other benefits that accrue from obtaining a good job (individual goal).

The attractiveness of the outcome, which in this case is a good grade, is high. But what about the performance-reward linkage? Do you feel that the grade you received truly reflects your knowledge of the material? In other words, did the test fairly measure what you know? If the answer is yes, then this linkage is strong. If the answer is no, then at least part of the reason for your reduced motivational level is your belief that the test was not a fair measure of your performance. If the test was of the essay type, maybe you believe the instructor's grading method was poor. Was too much weight placed on a question that you thought was trivial? Maybe the instructor doesn't like you and was biased in grading your paper. These are examples of perceptions that influence the performance-reward linkage and your level of motivation.

Another possible demotivating force may be the effort-performance relationship. If, after you took the exam, you believe that you could not have passed it regardless of the amount of preparation you had done, then your desire to study will drop. Possibly the instructor wrote the exam under the assumption that you had a considerably broader background in the subject matter. Maybe the course had several prerequisites that you didn't know about, or possibly you had the prerequisites but took them several years ago. The result is the same: you place a low value on your effort leading to answering the exam questions correctly, hence your motivational level decreases, and you lessen your effort.

The key to expectancy theory is therefore understanding an individual's goal—and the linkage between effort and performance; between performance and rewards; and, finally, between rewards and individual goal satisfaction. It emphasizes payoffs, or rewards. As a result, we have to believe that the rewards an organization is offering align with what the employee wants. As a contingency model, expectancy theory recognizes that no universal principle explains what motivates individuals and thus stresses that managers understand why employees view certain outcomes as attractive or unattractive. After all, we want to reward individuals with those things they value positively. Also, expectancy theory emphasizes expected behaviors. Do employees know what is expected of them and how they'll be evaluated? Finally, the theory is concerned with perceptions. Reality is irrelevant. An individual's own perceptions of performance, reward, and goal outcomes—not the outcomes themselves—will determine his or her motivation (level of effort).

Integrating Contemporary Theories of Motivation

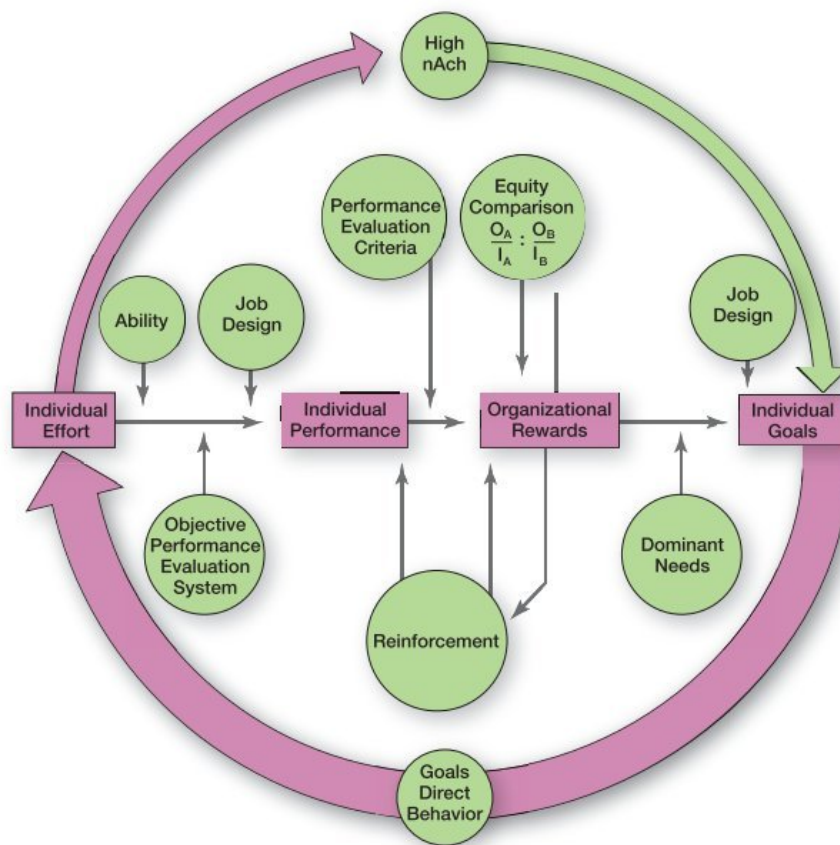
We've presented a number of theories in this chapter. There is a tendency, at this point, to view them independently. This is a mistake. The fact is that many of the ideas underlying the theories are complementary, and your understanding of how to motivate people is maximized when you see how the theories fit together.

Exhibit 16-9 presents a model that integrates much of what we know about motivation. Its basic foundation is the simplified expectancy model shown in Exhibit 16-8. Let's work through Exhibit 16-9, beginning at the left.

The individual effort box has an arrow leading into it. This arrow flows from the individual's goals. Consistent with goal-setting theory, this goals-effort loop is meant to illustrate that goals direct behavior.

Expectancy theory predicts that an employee will exert a high level of effort if he or she perceives a strong relationship between effort and performance, performance and rewards, and rewards and satisfaction of personal goals. Each of these relationships is, in turn, influenced by certain factors. For effort to lead to good performance, the individual must have the requisite ability to perform, and the performance evaluation system that measure the individual's performance must be perceived as being fair and objective. The performance-reward relationship will be strong if the individual perceives that it is performance (rather than seniority, personal favorites, or other criteria) that is rewarded. The final link in expectancy theory is the rewards-goals relationship. Need theories would come into play at this point. Motivation would be high

Exhibit 16-9
Integrating Contemporary
Theories of Motivation



to the degree that the rewards an individual received for his or her high performance satisfied dominant needs consistent with his or her individual goals.

A closer look at the model also shows that it considers the achievement-need, reinforcement, equity, and JCM theories. The high achiever isn't motivated by the organization's assessment of his or her performance or organizational rewards, hence the jump from effort to individual goals for those with a high nAch. Remember that high achievers are internally driven as long as the jobs they're doing provide them with personal responsibility, feedback, and moderate risks. They're not concerned with the effort-performance, performance-reward, or rewards-goals linkages.

Reinforcement theory is seen in the model by recognizing that the organization's rewards reinforce the individual's performance. If managers have designed a reward system that is seen by employees as "paying off" for good performance, the rewards will reinforce and encourage continued good performance. Rewards also play a key part in equity theory. Individuals will compare the rewards (outcomes) they have received from the inputs or efforts they made with the inputs-outcomes ratio of relevant others. If inequities exist, the effort expended may be influenced.

Finally, the JCM is seen in this integrative model. Task characteristics influence job motivation at two places. First, jobs designed around the five job dimensions are likely to lead to higher actual job performance because the individual's motivation will be stimulated by the job itself; that is, they will increase the linkage between effort and performance. Second, jobs designed around the five job dimensions also increase an employee's control over key elements in his or her work.

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Therefore, jobs that offer autonomy, feedback, and similar task characteristics help to satisfy the individual goals of employees who desire greater control over their work.

Anooja Rangnekar
Manager, Medicaid
Business Development



Source: Anooja Rangnekar

Let's Get REAL

The Scenario:

Laura Mora is the sales manager at a solar panel installation company. Some of the members of her sales staff seem to be just getting through the day rather than putting positive energy and effort toward their jobs. These sales staff members are responsible for attracting new clients, discussing potential client needs over the phone, and visiting prospective clients on-site to determine what products would work best for them. When Laura overheard a couple of phone calls some of her staff had with potential clients recently, it seemed like her staff members provided the minimal information asked of them. Additional details about products and their benefits were not discussed. Sales at the company have been on the decline in recent months, which is yet another indicator of a possible motivation problem for at least some of her staff members.

What suggestions do you have for Laura about how she can try to improve the motivation of her employees?

There are a few strategies that Laura can use to improve the motivation of her employees:

1. *It may be the case that some of her employees are unfamiliar with the additional details and benefits of the products. Laura could conduct an all-staff training and provide training materials to help ensure all sales staff are knowledgeable about the products they are selling.*
2. *Laura could work with her team to develop training guides that the staff can refer to while they are conducting sales calls. The guides can serve as reminders to staff about the additional details about products and their benefits.*
3. *Lastly, Laura could introduce the idea of a game or friendly competition among the staff. This can help team members push one another to achieve greater results. Laura could also structure a game that incentivizes staff to compete with themselves and strive to increase sales and productivity month-over-month.*

CURRENT issues in motivation

L016.4 Understanding and predicting employee motivation is one of the most popular areas in management research. We've introduced you to a number of motivation theories. However, contemporary theories of employee motivation are influenced by some significant workplace issues—managing cross-cultural challenges, motivating unique groups of workers, and designing appropriate rewards programs.

Managing Cross-Cultural Motivational Challenges

In today's global business environment, managers can't automatically assume motivational programs that work in one geographic location are going to work in others. Most current motivation theories were developed in the United States by

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Americans and about Americans.⁴⁹ Maybe the most blatant pro-American characteristic in these theories is the strong emphasis on individualism and achievement. For instance, both goal-setting and expectancy theories emphasize goal accomplishment as well as rational and individual thought. Let's look at motivation theories to see their level of cross-cultural transferability.

Maslow's needs hierarchy argues that people start at the physiological level and then move progressively up the hierarchy in order. This hierarchy, if it has any application at all, aligns with American culture. In countries like Japan, Greece, and Mexico, where uncertainty avoidance characteristics are strong, security needs would be the foundational layer of the needs hierarchy. Countries that score high on nurturing characteristics—Denmark, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands, and Finland—would have social needs as their foundational level.⁵⁰ We predict, for instance, that group work will be more motivating when the country's culture scores high on the nurturing criterion.

Another motivation concept that clearly has an American bias is the achievement need. The view that a high achievement need acts as an internal motivator presupposes two cultural characteristics—a willingness to accept a moderate degree of risk (which excludes countries with strong uncertainty avoidance characteristics) and a concern with performance (which applies almost singularly to countries with strong achievement characteristics). This combination is found in countries such as the United States, Canada, and Great Britain.⁵¹ On the other hand, these characteristics are relatively absent in countries such as Chile and Portugal.

Equity theory has a relatively strong following in the United States, which is not surprising given that US-style reward systems are based on the assumption that workers are highly sensitive to equity in reward allocations. In the United States, equity is meant to closely link pay to performance. However, evidence suggests that in collectivist cultures, especially in the former socialist countries of Central and Eastern Europe, employees expect rewards to reflect their individual needs as well as their performance.⁵² Moreover, consistent with a legacy of communism and centrally planned economies, employees exhibited a greater "entitlement" attitude—that is, they expected outcomes to be greater than their inputs.⁵³ These findings suggest that US-style pay practices may need to be modified in some countries in order to be perceived as fair by employees.

Another research study of more than 50,000 employees around the world examined two cultural characteristics from the GLOBE framework—individualism and masculinity (see Chapter 4 for a discussion of these characteristics)—in relation to motivation.⁵⁴ The researchers found that in individualistic cultures such as the United States and Canada, individual initiative, individual freedom, and individual achievement are highly valued. In more collective cultures such as Iran, Peru, and China, however, employees may be less interested in receiving individual praise but place a greater emphasis on harmony, belonging, and consensus. They also found that in masculine (achievement/assertive) cultures such as those in Japan and Slovakia, the focus is on material success. Those work environments are designed to push employees hard and then reward top performers with high earnings. However, in more nurturing cultures such as Sweden and the Netherlands, smaller wage gaps among employees are common, and employees are likely to have extensive quality-of-life benefits.

Despite these cross-cultural differences in motivation, some cross-cultural consistencies are evident. In a study of employees in thirteen countries, the top motivators included (ranked from number one on down) being treated with respect, work-life balance, the type of work done, the quality of people worked with, the quality of the organization's leadership, base pay, working in an environment where good service can be provided to others, long-term career potential, flexible working arrangements,



The motivation of these employees working at the research and development facility at the Daihatsu Motor plant near Jakarta, Indonesia, is influenced by their national culture. Indonesia has a strong collectivist culture, where employees are motivated less by receiving individual praise because their culture places a greater emphasis on harmony, belonging, and consensus.

Source: Kyodo/Newscom

learning and development opportunities, benefits, promotion opportunities, and incentive pay or bonuses.⁵⁵ And other studies have shown that the desire for interesting work seems important to almost all workers, regardless of their national culture. For instance, employees in Belgium, Britain, Israel, and the United States ranked “interesting work” number one among 11 work goals. It was ranked either second or third in Japan, the Netherlands, and Germany.⁵⁶ Similarly, in a study comparing job-preference outcomes among graduate students in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Singapore, growth, achievement, and responsibility were rated the top three and had identical rankings.⁵⁷ Both studies suggest some universality to the importance of intrinsic factors identified by Herzberg in his two-factor theory. Another recent study examining workplace motivation trends in Japan also seems to indicate that Herzberg’s model is applicable to Japanese employees.⁵⁸

Motivating Unique Groups of Workers

Employees come into organizations with different needs, personalities, skills, abilities, interests, and aptitudes. They have different expectations of their employers and different views of what they think their employer has a right to expect of them. And they vary widely in what they want from their jobs. Given these differences, how can managers do an effective job of motivating the unique groups of employees found in today’s workforce? One thing is to understand the motivational requirements of these groups, including diverse employees, professionals, and contingent workers.

MOTIVATING A DIVERSE WORKFORCE To maximize motivation among today’s workforce, managers need to think in terms of *flexibility*. For instance, studies tell us that men place more importance on having autonomy in their jobs than women. In contrast, the opportunity to learn, convenient and flexible work hours, and good interpersonal relations are more important to women.⁵⁹ Millennials value social relationships and, in contrast to older workers, are likely to enjoy being part of a team.⁶⁰ Managers need to recognize that what motivates a single mother with two dependent children who’s working full time to support her family may be very different from the needs of a single part-time employee or an older employee who is working only to supplement his or her retirement income. A diverse array of rewards is needed to motivate employees with such diverse needs. For instance, many organizations have developed flexible work arrangements—such as compressed workweeks, flextime, and job sharing, which we discussed in Chapter 11—that recognize different needs. Another job alternative we also discussed earlier is telecommuting. However, keep in mind that not all employees embrace the idea of telecommuting. Some workers relish the informal interactions at work that satisfy their social needs and are a source of new ideas.

Do flexible work arrangements motivate employees? Although such arrangements might seem highly motivational, both positive and negative relationships have been found. For instance, a study that looked at the impact of telecommuting on job satisfaction found that job satisfaction initially increased as the extent of telecommuting increased, but as the number of hours spent telecommuting increased, job satisfaction started to level off, decreased slightly, and then stabilized.⁶¹

MOTIVATING PROFESSIONALS In contrast to a generation ago, the typical employee today is more likely to be a professional with a college degree than a blue-collar factory worker. What special concerns should managers be aware of when trying to motivate a team of engineers at Intel’s India Development Center, software designers at SAS Institute in North Carolina, or a group of consultants at Accenture in Singapore?

Professionals are different from nonprofessionals.⁶² They have a strong and long-term commitment to their field of expertise. To keep current in their field, they need to regularly update their knowledge, and because of their commitment to their profession, they rarely define their workweek as 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., five days a week.

What motivates professionals? Money and promotions typically are low on their priority list. Why? They tend to be well paid and enjoy what they do. In contrast, job

challenge tends to be ranked high. They like to tackle problems and find solutions. Their chief reward is the work itself. An interesting stream of research has focused on the “flow experience.”⁶³ *Flow* is a state of total absorption in one’s work, where individuals lose their sense of time and awareness of surrounding activities. It appears to apply most directly to professionals. Managers can maximize flow among professional employees by designing jobs that are challenging, provide opportunities for using creativity, and allow full utilization of employees’ skills. The irony of flow is that it’s self-motivating. The tasks themselves stimulate high levels of performance.

Lastly, keep in mind that professionals tend to be focused on their work as their central life interest, whereas nonprofessionals typically have other interests outside of work that can compensate for needs not met on the job. This suggests that professionals are less likely to stay in jobs that lack challenge, variety, or fail to fully utilize their skills.



Managers of home rental website Airbnb motivate the firm’s young employees at its San Francisco headquarters with an open and collaborative work environment that promotes teamwork and a sense of community and stimulates innovation. Employees have the freedom to work where they want and enjoy amenities such as a cafeteria, nap room, library, yoga classes, organic lunches, and \$2,000 each year for personal travel.

Source: Ed Reeve-VIEW/Alamy Stock Photo

MOTIVATING CONTINGENT WORKERS We discussed in Chapter 11 the increased number of contingent workers employed by organizations. There’s no simple solution for motivating these employees. For that small set of individuals who prefer the freedom of their temporary status, the lack of stability may not be an issue. In addition, temporariness might be preferred by highly compensated physicians, engineers, accountants, or financial planners who don’t want the demands of a full-time job. But these individuals are the exceptions. For the most part, temporary employees are not temporary by choice.

What will motivate involuntarily temporary employees? An obvious answer is the opportunity to become a permanent employee. In cases in which permanent employees are selected from a pool of temps, the temps will often work hard in hopes of becoming permanent. A less-obvious answer is the opportunity for training. The ability of a temporary employee to find a new job is largely dependent on his or her skills. If an employee sees that the job he or she is doing can help develop marketable skills, then motivation is increased. From an equity standpoint, when temps work alongside permanent employees who earn more and get benefits too for doing the same job, the performance of temps is likely to suffer. Separating such employees or perhaps minimizing interdependence between them might help managers counteract potential problems.⁶⁴

How do these issues influence contingent workers’ job satisfaction? Research shows that differences in job satisfaction between contingent and permanent workers is not significant until we consider the particular contingent work arrangements—temporary employee versus independent contractor.⁶⁵ Temporary workers are less satisfied than permanent workers. This difference may be explained by the fact that most temporary employees do not receive benefits such as paid vacation and are paid lower wages than earned by comparably skilled permanent workers. In contrast, independent contractors are about as equally satisfied as permanent workers. Why? Organizations are more likely to recognize the importance of independent contractors’ contributions because they’re mostly highly skilled individuals. For instance, management consultants are well educated and have a proven track record of success.

Designing Appropriate Rewards Programs

We conclude this chapter by looking at three reward programs designed to increase employee motivation.

OPEN-BOOK MANAGEMENT Bettina Hein, founder of video technology company Pixability, learned a lesson about secrecy.⁶⁶ In her first company, she lost the trust of

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