What is the most effective way to motivate staff?

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Introduction

Motivating employees is one of the most crucial, but challenging, roles of a leader in any company. Given the importance of this ability, people who are unable to do that risk their company or are unlikely to survive in their current position. For a long time, it has been widely acknowledged that positive motivators work significantly better than negative ones. The effective manager not only knows this, but also understands that finding good motivators involves a deep understanding of his employees on an individual basis. (Staren, 2009).

This paperwork will define the concept of motivation and after will analyse good and bad practice of motivation practices. In order to achieve these findings, the author will use the concept of job performance. In the end of the report, the best practices will be highlighted and also an explanation of why these are the best will be attached to them.

The Concept of Motivation

The motivation word is derived from the Latin word "movere," which means "to move," and refers to the inner need that motivates individuals to perform. Motivation, according to some experts, is the psychological process that promotes arousal, behaviour orientation, intensity, and consistency (Locke and Letham, 2004). That can be anything that stimulates a person to act, like drinking a glass of water to relieve one's thirst or reading a book in order to learn something new. Motivation involves the biological, emotional, social, and cognitive factors and all these influence behaviours. In day-to-day conversations, the term "motivation" is frequently used to express why someone might do something. It's what motivates people to act the way they do. (2022) (Cherry).

Looking in the past, there are two definitions which are still used. In 1998, Pinder described motivation as the combination of internal and external forces that originate work-related behaviour and determine its form, direction, intensity, and length in the second edition of the best-selling textbook Work Motivation in Organisational Behaviour. Second definition comes from Luthans (1998) which sees motivation as the arousing, energising, directing, and maintaining of behaviour and performance.

Types of motivation

The majority of studies on innovation motivation use the well-known typology of human motivation, which divides between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Arnold, Coyne, Randall and Patterson, 2020).

Intrinsic motivation

If an action is valued and performed for its own sake, and the individual has a true passion and interest in innovation (anything that naturally satisfies you), it is said to be intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation is a result of self-generated factors that influence 's habits. It isn't due to external influences. It can be self-motivation, when people are motivated by their work because they believe it is important, fascinating, and demanding. As Katz said in 1964, the job itself must give sufficient diversity, enough complexity, enough variety and sufficient skill to activate the worker's capabilities.

Extrinsic motivation

If someone performs a task to obtain a reward that is not related to the task is known as extrinsic motivation. Incentives, greater income, acclaim, and promotion are examples of these types of rewards.The main difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is that

intrinsic motivation comes from inside, whilst extrinsic drive is derived from external influences.

Motivation theories

A diversity of theories exists, the majority of which are complementary to each other. Therefore, below is a presentation of one of the most popular theories about motivation.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

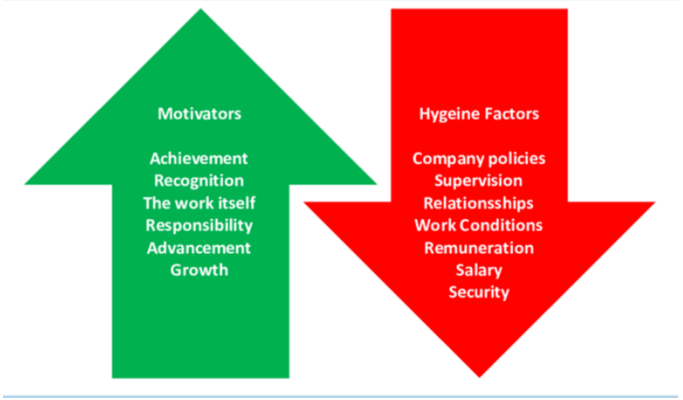
Maslow proposed that there are five primary need categories that apply to everyone, starting with basic physiological requirements and progressing through a hierarchy of security, social, and esteem needs to the greatest need of all, the need for self-fulfilment. When a basic need is met, the individual's focus shifts to meeting the next greatest need. Even an unmet need may encourage behaviour, and the most powerful motivator is the dominating need.
Maslow's hypothesis is based on the fact that people desire to accomplish more in their life, and that their goals are categorised by their importance, according to Smith & Cronje (1992).
Maslow created a five-stage model based on people's basic physical, psychological, social, biological and needs. The method categorises human individual needs into classes and Orders them by their priority.
These classes can be summarised as follows:
- Self-actualisation needs (the desire to succeed or to make a lasting legacy);
- Esteem needs (getting recognition from others);
- Love/ belonging (interaction with others);
- Needs for safety and security (physical protection);
- Physiological needs (food, shelter, clothing).

(Marketing Theories - Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, n.d.)

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory/Motivator-Hygiene

Herzberg's Two-factor theory, often known as Motivator-Hygiene, was developed as a result of a research of accountants and engineers to determine what causes contentment or discontent at work (Saif et al., 2012). The contrast between two aspects, motivation and hygiene, is fundamental to Herzberg's concept. Achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, progress, and the opportunity of growth are motivational aspects, while corporate policies and administration, remuneration, interpersonal ties, supervisory relationships, and working environment are hygiene elements. (Herzberg, 1966; Herzberg, 2003). If positive attitudes regarding the job are influenced by motivation factors, the hygiene elements are factors that may demoralise employees. The motivators determine the employees to work harder, and they can be found within the job scope. Employees would work less hard if hygiene factors are absent. Although hygiene variables do not exist directly in the workplace, they do exist in the environment.

(MacPherson, n.d.)



McGregor's X and Y Theories

As McGregor's states in his theories, employees are categorised into one of two groups by Theory X and Y models, which are based on two sets of characteristics. Each theory is based on opposing perspectives on employee behaviour and various approaches to meet motivational objectives. X theory is based on people's negative perspective. According to it, individuals can have an inbuilt dislike for work and will try to avoid it as much as possible; so, to get them to work, they must be controlled and threatened with penalty. People from this category prefer to be directed, have little ambition, avoid responsibility, and want security. On the contrary, theory Y employees are internally driven, love their work, and strive to improve themselves without receiving a direct reward; so, in contrast with X theories, they do not have to be coerced, controlled, or directed. Each manager can use any of these two approaches, depending on their needs.

McClelland's Need Achievement Theory

In 1961, McClelland proposed an alternate method of defining needs. He recognized three critical requirements:

- Achievement: Individuals driven by a desire to succeed frequently have a strong desire to create and achieve difficult objectives. They value any feedback on their accomplishments and operate in results-oriented settings. These people have innovative and creative ways to achieve their goals, believing that their accomplishments are more fulfilling than monetary benefits, and they tend to work alone. (Miner, 2005).
- Power: People who are motivated by a desire for power seek to govern and control others. Competition motivates them, and they enjoy winning confrontations. Their goal is to get respect in society. These are exceptional leaders who are well-suited to leadership positions. (Miner, 2005).
- Affiliation: Anyone who are motivated by a desire to belong to a group wants to be a part of it. They appreciate maintaining contacts and socialising, and they have a strong wish to be welcomed and liked. They avoid taking risks and prefer to take things slowly. (Miner, 2005).

Challenges of motivating staff

Managers are constantly challenged with motivating their staff to do two things. The first obstacle is motivating personnel to work toward assisting the organisation in achieving its objectives. The second objective is to motivate employees to work on their own personal goals. Managers in all types of businesses often struggle to meet the demands and achieve the goals of both the workers and management.

Good working condition

Generally, working conditions are regulated by law in order to protect workers' health and to facilitate job performance. Organisations have the freedom to construct better circumstances than those allowed by law, and they frequently do so in order to contribute to better employee safety in terms of health protections and to boost the work efficiency. Working environments include not just physical factors such as light, space, colour, and noise, but also mental factors

that influence psychological well-being. Changing culture, forming a strong team, and establishing shared governance for better morale and management trust are all important aspects of forming a strong, functional unit.
Bernard J. Horak, Karen Hicks, Susan Pellicciotti and Anne Duncan presented few strategies from the medical environment which should be used in any company to improve the working condition. First one is to organise a periodic department meeting, allowing the leaders and department staff to better focus on each department specific issues. Another idea is a suggestion box in which the staff could share their issues and offer ideas/recommendations for how to improve the unit. Each idea is carefully considered and analysed during the next staff meeting. For the individuals who need more quiet to stay focused, they came up with the idea to implement a 45 decibels noise limit rule, for some special areas. Because it is important for a team to be like a family, a Sunshine Committee was created in order to plan and implement various social events and activities. The last remarkable practice which must be highlighted here is the training for top leaders from each department, where the consultant met with them to discuss the implications for organisational style, especially how they engage with the workforce.
On the other hand, there are many bad practices used by leaders which may create an unfriendly environment. As he said, when a leader has strong communication skills and also encourages the team to have a high level of communication, the team can innovate at speed and learn to cooperate and not compete. He also identified a couple of common mistakes in leaders' communication. A popular issue is that many leaders are secretive and share as little information as possible because they think that information is power, thus they choose to keep it. Many managers are unclear, outright lies, and never check to see if their words were understood. As the feedback is important to evaluate for any employer, there are several leaders who have issues to offer the feedback or are much bad at giving compliments than they are at giving feedback. The last important problem identified is that there are managers who prefer the safety of their office walls instead of going out to speak with their co-workers and prefer to send emails 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Recognition and awards

According to the study performed by researchers from University of Iowa Healthcare, USA, linking recognition to specific accomplishments, giving criteria-based awards, and allowing meaningful appreciation to be delivered by a significant professional person are all ways that can lead to an engaged workforce (Phillips et al., 2017). The study took into consideration 575 health companies, but the results are valid in any other business or field.
Public recognition, such as in-person feedback, verbal praise in front of the team or published articles in internal newsletters, are all effective strategies that can be used in communicating remarkable results of outstanding employees. This method has the goal of encouraging desired behaviour and high performance on employees of any level, as well as strengthening their long-term self-esteem (Phillips et al., 2017).
Another effective method that can motivate employees is offering criteria-based awards. These awards are given based on a nomination process between peers, at the end of which winners are publicly recognized through internal conferences or during standing department meetings. Some institutions have designed personalised criteria-based awards, for example 'employee of the month', 'best contribution to the development of the company', 'best peer-to-peer communication' and the main objective is to encourage and honour all levels of staff. In order to give further motivation, certificates, trophies, or small financial rewards are frequently attached with the awards (Phillips et al., 2017).
Finally, the study mentioned above suggests that handwritten thank you notes are a useful recognition tool and that employees that receive this type of note express kind appreciation

for the gesture. Though, it is important to mention that the acknowledged behaviour in the note should be clearly linked to the department's or organisation's mission and vision.

Pay

The basic salary isn't the sole or even the most important motive for everyone. However, there is considerable evidence that money is a powerful motivation for the vast majority of people (Rynes, Gerhart and Minette, 2004).In top of basic salary there are other strategies which should motivate a worker. The first one is the variable pay, sometimes known as 'pay at risk,' and refers to the percentage of a payment package that must be paid on a regular basis, generally by reaching or exceeding performance goals. The second one is the allowances and refers to the remuneration for specific circumstances like overtime pay, working conditions, shift pay and stand-by or call-out pay (made to people who must be accessible to work whenever it is needed). The last one in this category refer to employees benefits such as sick pay, pensions, insurance coverage,
corporate automobiles, and a variety of other perks that are not exactly remuneration but can be added to the total monthly income by helping the worker to save money (Armstrong and Brown, 2019).

Conclusion

In conclusion, reviewing all the documentation and all the theories presented above, there is no perfect motivation strategy. As McGregor and McClelland presented in their theories, for each group of people is a different type of motivation, depending on their interests. As Maslow said, in order to motivate someone the first step is to discover in which stage they are and after this, the company may identify what it should provided to keep each staff member motivated. Overall, three motivators which should cover all staff’s categories of interest were identified. These three are the salary, the work conditions, and the recognition.

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