Expectancy theory of motivation

Science

The expectancy theory ofmotivation, which was first produced by Victor Vroom, has become a generally accepted theory for explaining how individuals make decisions concerning different behavioural alternatives. According to Vroom to motivate someone mere offer a person something to satisfy his important needs will not be adequate. In order for the person to be motivated, he must also be convincingly sure that he has the ability to obtain the reward. An employee's motivation increases when he values a particular outcome greatly and when he feels a reasonably good chance of achieving the desired goal. This definition states that: Any individual acts in a way to reach a maximal effect with a minimal effort.

The first major expectancy theory was put forward by Victor Harold Vroom. The expectancy theory works on the basis that to achieve high motivation, hard productive work must gain a valued goal or reward for example in a workplace if you want moremoney, and more money will come if you work hard then we can predict that you will work hard. IF you still want more money, and all you think working hard will get you is smiles from the boss, an predict that you will chose not to work hard, unless you put a high value on smiles from the boss'(D. Buchanan & A. Huczynski., 2004). Victor Harold Vroom formed the expectancy theory using three concepts: Expectancy, Instrumentality and valence. The equation that he made is:

F (force motivation) = å(V (Valence) x I (instrumentality) x E (expectancy))

The expectancy is the belief that one's effort (E) will result in attainment of the desired performancegoals. This belief, or perception, is generally based on an individual's past experience, self confidence and the perceived difficulty of the performance standard or goal. Studies has suggested that the expectancy theory must be extended in order to consider the effects of the time between when the individual intended to act and when the actual behaviour took place; the connotation of previous behaviour on subsequent behaviour; and the sequence of behaviour(Saltzer, 1981).

Hirokawa and Scheerhorn (1986) developed a model of group decision-making that supports general expectancy theory concepts. This model shows how groups come to decisions, which factors outcome in decisions, and how individual group members affect quality of the decisions. Also, studies shows that treating people as a group may have many benefits, but it also has many objectionable consequences (Hansen 1997). One of the major consequences is that individuals are proven to show less effort when performing collectively than when performing individually. In ASKExpert case, Liz is an experienced system analyst and frequently absent from project meetings, by using Expectancy theory that supports decision-making in groups, it would help Liz to be more comfortable in project meetings. She can gather information from other employees' of the company in addition to her own knowledge.

The Expectancy Theory is a predictor of work motivation, effort expenditure and Job Performance. In the case of ASKExpert, a experienced program tester made a sudden resignation, leaving the company to seek another employee who doesn't know the company procedures, therefore leaving the company in vulnerable position. Based on expectancy models of employee motivation found in the human resources management literature, it emphasizes the importance of providing employees with an understanding of what is expected of them if they are to contribute to service production and delivery, the capacity to meet those expectations and an incentive to do so. Expectancy theory can be used in this case to motivate employees who lack motivation due to whatever the reason, therefore leading to decreasing number of un-satisfied employees who looking for resignation.

High motivation therefore results from high levels of expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. If any one factor is low, motivation will be low. Managers should strive to ensure that employees’ expectancy are high so that they will be highly motivated.