

Goal setting and McClelland's theory

Business



Goal Setting and McClelland's Theory A goal can be defined as a desired result that one or an organization plans and commits themselves by putting the necessary efforts to achieve them within a specific time. Goals usually describe what an individual wants to achieve and are categorized into short-term or long-term. Short-term goals are set to be achieved in a short period of time whereas long-term goals are objectives that one strives to achieve but in a longer span of time as compared to the short term. Effective goals should be achievable, clearly outlined for remembrance purposes, have the ability to adapt to changes that may arise, consistent with an organization's or individual's mission (Kreitner & Kanicki, 2012).

Goal setting can be a powerful method for motivating members in an organization under right conditions. Researchers have shown that the best performance that an organization can ever have is when goals are specific and challenging, and when they are used in performance evaluation.

Additionally, goals can be linked to feedback on results an aspect that help to create commitment and acceptance at the workplace It is very important for managers to focus on satisfying employee needs since; this is significantly associated with academic achievement, criminal convictions, drug abuse, marital satisfaction, and performance at the work place.

Managers are advised to motivate their employees by formulating programs that target at meeting emerging needs among workers. Researchers have proved that individuals provided with specific goals which are difficult but attainable mostly perform better than those allocated easy, nonspecific, or no goals at all.

The need for power in an individual reflects their desire to influence, coach, teach, or encourage others to achieve. This kind of people with a high need

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for power, tend to work very hard and uphold high standards of discipline and self-respect. This need has both its advantages or the positive side and the negative side which can be referred as the shortcomings. The negative entails the "if I win, you lose" mentality which is a bad mentality among human beings in a community (Kreitner & Kanicki, 2012). On the other hand, people with a positive mentality on power usually concentrate on achieving group goals and helping other employees in an organization. Therefore, McClelland in his theory proposes that top managers in an organization should possess a high need for power coupled with a low need for affiliation. The theory indicates that people with a high need for achievement tend to excel. These categories of people have a tendency of striving very hard in order to achieve this. In addition, they avoid both low-risk and high-risk situations in life. The theory suggests that high achievers avoid low-risk because they believe success that is easily achieved is not genuine achievement.

The affiliation need can be described as the desire to be liked and accepted by others. McClelland explains the affiliation need by suggesting that people who are motivated by affiliation perform best in a group environment although it varies in degree and therefore, should be integrated in a team for the organization to maximize their output and productivity in a firm.

Likewise, people possessing this need don't mostly want to stand out and hence the management should praise and appreciate them in private than in public.

Organizations should consider carefully the benefits that are attached to providing achievement training among employees because according to the theory, adults can be trained on how to increase their achievement

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motivation. Every management that aims at succeeding in its operations should consider achievement, affiliation, and power needs with great concern for better placement in the organization. Research has shown that, individual's need for achievement affects greatly their preference to work in different business organizations and people with a high need for achievement are more attracted to organizations that provide pay-for-performance than those with a low achievement motivation. McClelland suggests that people with a high desire to achieve are more likely to cheat and use short cuts and leave people out of the circle.

References

Kreitner, R., & Kanicki, A. (2012). *Organizational Behaviour* (10th ed.). Arizona: McGraw Companies, Incorporated.