

Motivation rewards



“ You have to get rewarded in the soul and the wallet. The money isn’t enough, but a plaque isn’t enough either” (Hymowitz, Murray, 1999, 4).

Motivation-the willingness to exert oneself, consequent of the afore-implied intrinsic and extrinsic incentives, is fundamental to the prosperity of individuals, groups, organizations and society; for absent of this, there exists a lack of satisfaction, productivity and willpower that ultimately leads to inefficiency, dissatisfaction and management constraints. It is the aim of this paper to contest traditional views, by asserting that pay is of equal importance as job-design in achieving motivation-which will in turn provide an appreciation that both job-design and pay act as complementary factors in inducing varying levels of motivation, greatly dependent upon circumstance. This will be accomplished through the exploration of the individual implications of job-design and pay, through the application of practical examples, empirical research and motivational theories.

Job-design is a comprehensive term, and for clarification purposes, it will within this paper include: working environment, relationships, feedback, achievement, responsibility and lastly, growth and developmental opportunities. Hereafter, aspects of job-design which motivate simply through the activity itself, such as feedback, achievement, responsibility, growth and development will be referred to as intrinsic factors; conversely, aspects of job-design which motivate through the anticipation of external rewards, such as changes in the working environment, status through relationships and mainly pay, shall be referred to as extrinsic factors (Deci, 1972). Similarly, pay in this paper refers to salary, pay-per-performance schemes, and any other form of monetary compensation.

Furthering this, Herzberg's hygiene-motivator theory examines the intricate relationship between the extrinsic and intrinsic components of job-design. The theory associates extrinsic aspects of job-design with the 'hygiene' factors, of which the absence or inadequate development will result in dissatisfaction, thereby prohibiting motivation from occurring; however, when adequately present, motivation is still not attainable solely based on those factors (Herzberg, 1987). Conversely, the factors which are claimed to motivate are those of intrinsic nature, being capable of stimulating psychological growth. Upon application to conventional employment, it is commonly accepted that few individuals are able to dedicatedly pursue a goal, if exposed to inappropriate atmospheres, harassing superiors or neglectful colleagues. Thereby, it is understood that prerequisites of extrinsic factors must suffice, and only thereafter could an individual be satisfied and hence motivated by undertaking work which stimulates psychologically. Thus, it is imperative to understand that the visible extent of intrinsic factors available in the design of a specific job, will ultimately dictate the extent to which an individual can be motivated.

Alternatively, 'job characteristics theory' suggests that motivation of employees is best achieved through the application of meaningful work-characterised by 'skill variety', 'task identity' and 'task significance', for which the employee is personally responsible, and receives clear feedback regarding performance (Hackman, Lee, 1979). Thereby, the perceived purposefulness of a job, which is then reinforced through feedback, indicates that the design of a job in terms of potential achievement and its recognition, responsibility and consequently growth and development

through significant contribution-all intrinsic factors, will determine the attitude of an employee, and hence will reflect upon the perceived self-image of the individual in relation to their organization. The lack of feedback could typically induce feelings of insignificance, through impressions of the work not being important towards an organization. Hence, if an individual's perceived role is rather minor, there will be a lack of incentive to perform well. Since people work more for meaning and enjoyment than anything else in their lives, not providing an individual with the opportunity to learn and develop through application of meaningful tasks and feedback, will result in reduced commitment and motivation (Pfeffer, 1998).

Illustrating the significance of acknowledging social needs incorporated into job-design: a case study examining the effects of improving working conditions of workers in The Western Electric Company in Hawthorne, resulted in continuous increases in production during the experiment (Mayo, 1975): clearly illustrating the positive correlation between job-design and motivation. Additionally, the bringing together of individuals placed in an autonomous team, resulted in spontaneous but consistently increasing dedication and collaboration-once again improving productivity, demonstrated that the possibility to develop relationships and achieve '*esprit de corps*' is fundamental, and of great significance (Fayol, 1949) in attaining motivation. However, even control groups seem to have improved their productivity-most likely as a result of increased perceived importance; a phenomenon, which furthermore underlines the influential impact of self-image upon motivation, generated by the perception of work as being meaningful to the organization.

Individuals involved in work whose job-design allows for major involvement and dependency through autonomy and responsibility, would typically find themselves being confident. Such an individual will have earned the respect of management, and in turn developed an increasingly prevalent self-esteem. Taking this into account, the hierarchy of needs suggests that such an individual would be motivated by having the option through commitment in achieving his fullest potential: self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). However, pre-requisites for the basic need satisfactions according to Maslow are amongst others, freedom to express one's self and freedom to investigate and seek information. Drawing on this, individuals who are not autonomous- those who are not granted this discretionary right, will never be able to undergo motivational enlightenment; in other words, jobs which do not stimulate the intrinsic aspects of job-design have significantly reduced effects in motivating individuals according to Maslow's theory.

Consequently, it is imperative to accommodate the needs of an individual to ensure optimal productivity, by providing meaningful, appreciated autonomous work in a steady environment, and thereby avoiding the instigation of absenteeism and the free-rider problem (Knights & Willmott, 2007). Therefore, when the unavoidable occurs-sub-optimal provision of intrinsic and other job-design factors, organizations must ensure that extrinsic aspects succeed for the purpose of compensating the motivational loss. For this reason, the primary source of extrinsic motivation: pay, will now be examined.

Implications of pay as a motivator have long been explored, for the vital purpose of determining to what extent individuals should be rewarded for

their efforts. Traditional studies, which largely focus on the self-reported importance of pay, have frequently dismissed its absolute significance as a motivator (Rynes, Gerhart, Minette, 2004). Of such nature, an extensive study performed at the Minnesota Gas Company, was conducted in order to ascertain which of the factors (advancement, benefits, company, co-workers, hours, pay, security, supervisor, type of work, working conditions) were most important to employees, and as a result would be most motivating (Jurgensen, 1978). Males ranked pay as fifth and females seventh respectively in terms of importance. However, when those exact employees were asked to attribute the same factors in order of preference from the viewpoint of a fellow worker, both males and females remarkably ranked pay as the number one factor! These discrepancies between findings are suggestive of social norms dictating that money as a source of motivation is much less noble than factors involving challenging work, and ultimately contributing to society (Rynes, Gerhart, Minetta, 2004). Additionally, this example is indicative of traditional studies presenting distorted findings, thereby begging the question of how employees' behaviours change in accordance with a change in pay.

Hence: more conventional studies which instead examine behavioural proclivities, have largely concluded that increases in pay or introductions of individual pay incentives, have led to significant increases in production, far greater than those resulting from job enrichment procedures (Locke, et al, 1980). A meta-study of this nature, evaluated through behavioural responses, examined the effects of inducing varying motivational techniques of firstly increased pay or pay per performance, secondly setting goals and

receiving feedback, thirdly employee participation in decision making, and lastly job enrichment, arrived to the conclusion that pay was the greatest motivational factor (Locke, et al, 1980). By having observed the behavioural modifications of involved individuals as opposed to subjective self-reporting information, this case-study illuminates the possibility of pay being far more significant than what Herzberg, Hackman, Maslow and Lawler claim it to be.

Despite there being evidence pinpointing the absolute importance of pay as a motivator, it must be considered that its significance does in fact depend on a number of factors (Rynes, Gerhart, Minetta, 2004). Firstly, it is imperative that variability exists in pay; if this is not the case, when considering pay as a motivator, there would be no incentive to increase performance. Secondly, the effects of pay as a motivator when variability is existent, is dependent on its relative contribution to the existing wealth of an individual. Considering the implications of a billionaire receiving a raise will have ridiculously minute effects. Thus, the motivational effects of pay can be related to its relative impact in achieving varying levels on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Although traditionally assumed that pay can only satisfy lower-order needs (Lawler, 1969), it must be stressed that in contemporary actuality, pay greatly impacts an individuals perceived status, likeability, friendships, respectability and perhaps even sexual relationships.

Moreover, it can be assumed that pay in the sense of allowing the accomplishment of the aforementioned much sought characteristics of man, will ultimately lead individuals being motivated by their desire for them.

Especially since, descriptors attributed to characteristics are always relative to other individuals, it is vital that in the same way, the inputs of an

individual-(which could potentially lead to those much desired traits through pay), relative to their outputs, are equivalent in comparison to others (Adams, 1965). If this condition is ill met, i. e. inequitable circumstances exist: an individual would have no incentive to perform well, thereby losing motivation to perform conscientiously as a result of pay. However, if an equitable environment is maintained, pay would result in motivating an individual as long as it possessed variation, and could impact status.

Realistically, as pay is somewhat of a gateway to obtaining other goods, there will often be conflict involved regarding which individuals will benefit most. Variances in pay which is theoretically a determinant for motivation, is therefore met with competition to claim certain monetary rewards. The traditional method of measuring motivation, through changes in performance and output will often experience decreases, despite enhanced individual motivation: a phenomenon, explained by the undermining of teamwork and perception that certain relationships determine outcome, rather than individual input (Pfeffer, 1998). Even more so, through the lens of Marxism, pay-incentives will ultimately result in alienation from others and oneself, and could completely obstruct efficient functionality through head to head competition, instead of teamwork (Knights & Willmott, 2007).

Fundamentally, regardless of intrinsic and extrinsic factors being available to a specific job, motivation will be determined by an account of what rewards are possible, and are desired for completing a certain task. Hence, the reward value and the probability of that reward occurring from one's effort is what dictates motivation (Lawler, 1969). As seen, both job-design and pay can largely result in motivation, however, the effectiveness of either are

established by the underlying reasons of undertaking an activity; if it is simply for the joy of participating in the work with the expectancy of improving knowledge, pay will have very limited effects in terms of motivation. However, if an individual only conducts a specific task, with the emphasis on craving monetary compensation, even job-designs offering a variety of intrinsic factors will not suffice. Especially considering that every individual will identify a different incentive for undertaking a certain activity- founded on varying cultures, morals and ideals, it is vital to provide a mixture of motivational inducements: namely pay, and job-design.

Subsequently, as seen, job-design through controlling the extent and availability of socially responsible environments, significant and acknowledged tasks, establishment of comradeships, responsibility and discretionary rights, ultimately determines the possible levels of motivation. Consequently, if those aspects are suboptimal, an insufficient reward value for the completion of a task would be incurred. Hence, pay-which is highly probable to occur, can to some extent be used to substitute for the absent intrinsic motivational factors in job-design, which would normally satisfy the psychological needs of individuals, by instead, attaining items and relationships which could indirectly improve self-esteem and image. In this light, both job-design and pay act as complements to each other, compensating for the lack of either, and once again inherently allowing for the pursuit of a goal. Hence: it is understood that both pay and job-design share equal importance. Thereby, it is appreciated that “ single system approaches, regardless of whether their focus is on design, pay...are just

plain destructive and suicidal” (Lawler, 1980, 542) and that both must be equally considered, in order to maximise potential motivation.