

# Work motivation



The case study “ Motivation at Norsk Petroleum” reflects classic examples of theories of motivation. In this paper I will explain both Elizabeth Pederson’s and Ola Rennemo’s work motivation using Maslow’s hierarchy of needs motivational model, Herzberg’s motivation theory and McClelland’s motivational needs theory. I will also explain the fundamental main difference between the theories and present what my advice to Lisa Bohm would be to help her manage her situation.

According to Abraham Maslow’s original 1954 hierarchy of needs motivational model, there are 5 stages that must be satisfied in a given order or in turn (Chapman, n. d. ). For Ola Rennemo, the need requiring fulfillment is reflected in stage 3 on Maslow’s motivational model; Belongingness and Love needs. In particular, Ola Rennemo family is his priority and although Lisa Bohm offers a fully paid advanced education; a reflection of Maslow’s models’ 5th stage; Self-actualization, personal growth and development, Ola’s basic need is still not fulfilled.

In Maslow’s model given Ola Rennemo’s situation, it is only when the lower needs of physical and/or emotional well-being are satisfied that higher order needs are a priority (Chapman, n. d. ). In other words, if the lower needs are disrupted, the concerns for the higher needs are of no longer a concern. As for Elizabeth Pederson, her needs directly reflect stage 4 (Esteem needs) and stage 5 (Self-actualization) of Maslow’s model.

The issue here is that Lisa Bohm offered monetary and fringe benefits to satisfy her motivational work needs but in reality, Elizabeth is seeking increased responsibility, achievement, personal growth and fulfillment.

Frederick Herzberg's theory of motivation implied that satisfaction and dissatisfaction at work nearly always stemmed from different factors and most importantly, were not opposing reactions of the same factor (Chapman, n. d. ). Elizabeth Pederson is a prime example of Herzberg theory of motivation.

Elizabeth tenured her resignation not because of the lack of higher pay or fringe benefits like a company car, but rather for the Herzberg “ true motivators” that his theory states; achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility and advancement. Elizabeth, whose current position was the performance of a specialized task; petroleum extraction, indirectly stated her true motivational work needs to Lisa Bohm during their meeting. Elizabeth said she will have greater responsibility for managing two teams of petroleum engineers and negotiating supplier contracts (Bratton, n. d. , p. 272).

Elizabeth was dissatisfied, not because of the lack of “ hygiene” (or maintenance factors) such as salary, company car, relationship with supervisor and subordinates; all factors that once achieved do not fill the void like the true motivators do, but because as Herzberg theorize, poorly managed organizations fail to realized or grasp that people are not motivated by addressing hygiene needs but rather through the presentation to enable one to reach for and satisfy the real motivators which represent a deeper meaning of fulfillment (Chapman, n. d. ).

Ola Rennemo situation in respect to Hertzberg's theory reflects only one of Hertzberg's “ hygiene” needs, personal life. And although Lisa Bohm offered

several true motivators in attempt to make Ola stay, the personal life “hygiene” factor was more important to fulfill. In retrospect, Ola’s decision to satisfy a “hygiene” need when offered true motivating factors presents a conundrum to Herzberg’s theory.

David McClelland’s needs-based motivational model reflects needs at varying degrees in all workers and managers and it characterizes their style and behavior in respect to being motivated and motivating others (Chapman, n. d. ). Ola Rennemo’s need in reference to McClelland’s motivational model is best associated with the need for affiliation (nAff). Although Ola’s work motivation need was directly attributed to his family, the need for harmonious relationships with other people and the need to feel accepted (NetMBA, n. d. ) can best associate Ola within McClelland’s needs-based motivational model.

Lisa Bohm confirmed Ola’s achievement when she acknowledged to him that his performance appraisals were constantly excellent however Ola’s personal affiliation need outweighed the offers of increased achievement presented by Lisa Bohm. As for Elizabeth Pederson, her work motivation aligns with McClelland’s need for achievement (nAch) and need for authority and power (nPow). Elizabeth’s need for achievement was not being satisfied at her current position, and the offer of a pay increase by Lisa Bohm could not substitute it.

McClelland suggested that achievement-motivated people possess the characteristic and attitude that achievement is more important than material or financial reward (NetMBA, n. d. ). The motivational need for authority and

power (nPow) that Elizabeth needed was conveyed in her meeting with Lisa, when she said that she would have a greater responsibility for managing two three-person teams of petroleum engineers and negotiating contracts with suppliers (Bratton, n. d. , p. 272). Of the two types of need for authority and power (nPow), institutional would best define Elizabeth's need.

Institutional power is associated with persons who want to organize the efforts of others to further the goals of the organization (NetMBA, n. d. ). Unfortunately for Lisa Bohm, the offer she presented to Elizabeth did not meet the motivational work needs of Elizabeth. When comparing this case study in application to the 3 theories, it's evident that there are differences between them. However, there is one main difference between all three, and that difference is the initial approach of the motivational need.

The Maslow and Herzberg theories imply that stages must be fulfilled; Maslow's theory states that each of the 5 stages must be completed before moving on to the next and that completing each stage is a motivator, whereas Herzberg's theory has only 2 stages and fulfilling the one (hygiene) only results in a neutral state and that satisfaction and motivation only comes from the 2nd stage (motivator) (Plaza, n. d. ). McClelland's theory doesn't imply stages to achieve motivation but rather implicates states of acquired-needs that are developed over time and life experiences (NetMBA, n. d. ).

Lisa Bohm is no doubt in a position not to be desired. Lisa has already lost 15 percent of her work force to competitors and it can be assumed more will follow if immediate changes are not made. Lisa's approach has been reactive; offering incentives such as higher pay, fringe benefits and advanced

educational opportunities when personnel have already made the command decision to leave. Her planned meeting with departmental managers to garner idea's for recruiting and maintaining existing personnel is a step in the right direction but Lisa already knows why employees are leaving to their competitors.

My advice to Lisa to manage the situation would be to champion an employee survey in an attempt to identify quantifiable work motivating needs. In the interim, use the data collected from exit surveys and the knowledge of what competitors are offering in respect to work motivators, and create a commonality list. Finally, take the compiled data, identify and prioritize work motivating commonalities and determine how Norsk can accommodate and implement them. And following up with periodical employee interviews and surveys to determine if work motivational needs are being met will provide insight for managers on implemented programs.

And my final advice to Lisa, is to be pro-active not re-active to employee needs. The case study at Norsk Petroleum is not unique but rather a common problem, especially in large corporations. Management has the capability to shape, empower and unify its workforce but it takes leadership and an understanding of organizational behavior to provide the cutting edge required to identify and implement solutions to potential problems before they become detrimental to the organization itself.