

Drive: the surprising  
power of what  
motivates us



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Drive: The Surprising Power of What Motivates Us Daniel Pink's theory of motivation states that the three elements of true motivation are autonomy, mastery and purpose. This statement is contrary to the common belief that financial incentives are what motivate people. According to Pink, as long as the job requires only mechanical skills, the theory that higher pay leads to better performance is true. However, once the job involves rudimentary cognitive skill, a larger reward leads to poorer performance. Pink espouses the idea that the secret to high performance and satisfaction comes from the human need to direct their own lives, to learn and create new things, and to do something good for themselves and for the society. He believes that motivation does not come from money alone. On the other hand, Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory states that a person has five basic levels of basic needs starting from the lowest levels which are the physiological or biological needs, safety needs, need for love, affection and belongingness to the higher levels which is the need for esteem and need for self-actualization. His basic theory is that the lower level needs must be satisfied first before the higher needs can be addressed. When a need is satisfied, it no longer motivates and the next higher need takes its place. Comparing the theories of Pink and Maslow, I am more inclined to agree with Pink. I believe that the satisfaction of the basic needs of a person is not enough to motivate him. I agree with Pink that even if you offer huge financial incentives to an employee, he still may not perform well if he has a low morale and if he has no passion for the job. Although people want to be fairly compensated with what they do, employees will be more than motivated if they are given a certain amount of flexibility and if they feel that they can make a difference by performing their jobs. References Simons, J., Irwin, D. & Drinnien, B.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. (1987). Retrieved 16 May 2011.

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