

Motivation – assignment

Sociology



Motivation is an important element in organizational learning due to its ability to enable employees to function effectively. There are several theories of motivation which can be useful to managers in motivating employees of organizations. The major theories of motivation have been classified broadly into three distinct categories including “ needs theory, cognitive theory and reinforcement theory” (Islam and Ismail, 2008). Motivational theorists have identified basic hierarchical needs (Maslow, 1970) among individuals which should be fulfilled in order to achieve motivation; “ existence” which refers to physiological aspects of work including secure working conditions, good remuneration, benefits, food and shelter etc; “ relatedness” which refers to relationships, familial, professional and friendly; and “ growth” which refers to “ self esteem and self actualization” (Alderfer, 1972).

Another major theorist of motivation (Herzberg, 1968) stated the importance of “ motivators” as opposed to the “ elimination of dissatisfaction through hygiene factors” to initiate satisfaction among workers. Researcher McClelland (1985) affirmed the importance of “ achievement, affiliation, and power” as the three crucial needs for motivation. Other theories which grant importance to motivation and state the several factors which impact it are the Equity theory which grants importance to the relative rewards which people receive from the work they deliver; and Goal-setting theory which postulates that setting of goals and providence of rewards serves as important motivators for individuals.

Several of these theories have been tested by researchers who have found that productivity and retention of employees is directly impacted by their motivation (Lord, 2002). Studying the responses of twenty-nine engineers,

Lord (2002) found that the primary motivators among them were accomplishment of their projects, their responsibility towards their jobs and the recognition they received from this accomplishment. Through this study Lord (2002) affirms that through the application of successful motivators, job satisfaction and subsequent productivity among employees can be augmented. Researchers also confirm the association between “intrinsic motivation” and social factors such as values, moral and the norms by virtue of the social existence and relationship of the individual in society (Peterson and Quintanilla, 2003).

Additional motivational factors which have been researched by conducting studies of four distinct types of employees including “ground workers, library clerks, patient relation representatives and medical record assistants” and found recognition for services and payments to be the most crucial motivating factors among them while (Mani, 2002). Some more factors which have been found to impact the motivation levels of employees include job security, appraisal systems which are based on the performance of employees, and training programs for effective solving of problems and work related issues (Milliken, 1996).

It is therefore essential for organizations to look for and employ people who “fit” into the values of the organization and are able to function according to these values. Organizations must also have suitable managers who have the ability to coach and mentor their employees to deliver optimally. Enhanced leadership enables managers to motivate their employees to produce the best possible skills and practices in human resources (Maister, 2002).

Research confirms the importance of motivation in leading employees and

influencing them to stimulate and energize people so that they “ work towards organizational goals” (Islam and Ismail, 2008). Researchers have placed great importance on the responsibility of managers “ to create a proper climate in which employees can develop to their fullest potential” (Steers and Porter, 1983).