

Money an effective motivator at work

Psychology, Motivation



Motivation could be defined as “that which gives impetus to our behavior by arousing, sustaining and directing it toward the attainment of set goals”(Wortman and Loftus 353). In terms of productivity, it is “concerned with helping people to focus their efforts in effectively discharging their duties in the workplace”(Gellerman 3). But due to inherent complexities in human behavior and values, there is no simple nor single motivator or reward that is really quite effective in an organization, including money.

Motivators, on the other hand, refer to rewards that move the worker to better achieve personal and organizational goals through better performance. Abraham Maslow, in his hierarchy theory, posits “that people are initially motivated by basic survival needs such as food and shelter. From there, safety and security tend to be the next major motivators, accompanied by self esteem and self actualization in which ego needs are satisfied through assimilation into social groupings” (Personnel 3411-3412).

When we look at how this theory applies in modern society, we could see the reasons why motivators have evolved from the early industrial period to present day society. Due to assured levels of income and purchasing power which have generally risen above basic survival needs, workers today have more or less fulfilled most of their first and second hierarchy needs, in which money, on its own, no longer serves as an effective motivator(Creech 1998).

Thus in order to satisfy their self actualization needs, “employees tend to embrace more creative and mental tasks that are challenging and satisfying, instead of just plodding repeatedly on their jobs with pay as the only reason of motivation” (Personnel 3412). Through the course of my research, various work motivation theories which leaned towards the function of reward were

noted, including expectancy theory (rewards promote high values), behavior modification theory (rewards act as re-inforcers)