

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

[Psychology](#), [Motivation](#)



This paper looks into Maslow's hierarchy of needs which explains the levels through which an individual passes so that he or she can reach point of self-actualization. Abraham Maslow tried to explain the human array through a pyramid, which he called the 'Hierarchy of Needs'. The paper continues to explain all the levels of the hierarchy of needs and give practical application of the needs. Maslow tried to explain how the hierarchy of needs is important in business management and this report will help us understand what the business world should have in mind when carrying on with its day-to-day activities.

These needs have many and different implications in the business world. Maslow's theory is also bound to have limitations and this paper will point out and criticize some of the implications that it has on business management. INTRODUCTION Abraham Maslow introduced the hierarchy of needs in the year 1943 when he released a paper on 'The Theory of Human Motivation' and in his book 'Motivation and Personality'. Maslow believed that for humans to achieve what they want they first have to be motivated into fulfilling their basic needs and then they can be able to achieve all other needs.

This theory is all about self-actualization and it is believed that no one can do this for you but it is for you to do it for your own sake. Self-actualization can be defined in many ways but it will all depend on the field, interpretation and context on which it is applied. RESULTS If the theory of the hierarchy of needs is actually true, it is therefore very important for leaders to realize the importance of workplace motivation.

All leaders in business management should consider providing motivating factors to employees so that they can produce the desired results. Physiological needs may include giving breaks to the employees and even paying them attractive salaries from which they will be able to purchase all their essentials. Safety needs may include a safe work environment, job security and even a life free from threats. An employee's social needs will include acceptance and belonging in the organization.

All employees will give results according to their self-esteem level and thus it is important that the employer provides esteem motivators and this may include rewarding achievements, assigning important duties to employees and even giving them status in the organization so that they may feel that they are appreciated for what they do for the organization. Employees may also achieve self-actualization through the undertaking of challenging assignments that may attract innovation and creativity. With self-actualization, the employees are bound to progress according to their set standards or goals.

DISCUSSION Maslow displayed the hierarchy of needs in a pyramid which he believed was not just a triangle but a foundation that would get stronger at each level and that the levels on top would be strong if the levels below had a sound foundation. Self-actualization was placed at the summit of the theory and according to Maslow; it is all about the desire of an individual reaching his or her full potential. Self-actualization is a need that is never achieved since humans grow psychologically every day and this brings about other opportunities to continue growing.

People who are self-actualized may have motivators, which may include truth, justice, wisdom and meaning. People who are self-actualized are prone to peak experiences where they may experience moments of happiness and harmony in their minds. Maslow believes that a very small percentage of the population is able to reach the self-actualization level. Below is the pyramid that shows Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Every normal person has esteem needs and one feels that he or she 'belongs' somewhere; one develops a degree of importance. Esteem needs may be internal or external motivators.

Internal motivators are needs that come from within a person and they may include self-respect, achievement/accomplishment and self-esteem. External motivators may include the needs for recognition or reputation. In the pyramid below the esteem needs, Maslow pointed out the social needs that are mainly concerned with an individual's interaction with others. These needs include belongingness, love needs and friendship. Before a person can feel loved or belonging, safety needs will have to be met whereby any individual desires safety from any physical or emotional harm. These needs are desired once a person has acquired physiological needs.

These needs may be achieved through such things as having medical insurance cover, have job security, making sure that one has financial reserves and even living in a place where there is maximum safety. This is a very important level since if an individual has the feeling that his life is threatened, he might not have the urge to acquire other needs that are up the pyramid until he or she feels safe. Every human being needs physiological needs to survive and thus this is a very important level since the needs will

be able to sustain the life of an individual. These physiological needs may include air, water, food and sleep.

For one to achieve other needs such as social needs, safety needs and even self-actualization, he or she must have acquired the physiological needs since they are the basic needs required for existence. CBUPO THEORY Motivation is a key factor to achieving all needs since without it nothing can be accomplished and an individual might even end up depressed through out his entire life. According to Sagor (2002), motivation can be said to be based a certain psychological need named Competence, Belonging, Usefulness, Potency and Optimism, thus, this need is based on a theory named CBUPO (Sagor 2002).

The theory is used to explain why people may be motivated or unmotivated. Students in Melbourne can be motivated through competence since feeling competent is like a basic need in the life of a student. When the students are given credible feedback or when others value their work, the result is a satisfied student who is grateful for the work he or she has done. This motivates the self-esteem of the student and through this, he or she will work harder even on something that is presumed to be difficult.

However, students who have shown several incidents of shortcomings may feel incompetent and therefore authentic ways should be used to make the students competent in their school activities (Sagor 2002). Students also need to feel a sense of belonging since they will in turn comfortable and in acceptance with the rules and regulations of the school. When the overseas students have that sense of belonging, they tend to get motivated and they

have the tendency to use possessive words when referring to their school search as my team, my school etc (Sagor 2002).

Without alienation or students in the school, good relationships will definitely exist and students will be more comfortable in their schooling environment. Students need to feel useful in their school and therefore certain opportunities may be granted to them. A student who is a striker in his or her volleyball team feels that without him or her, the team will not go to far places. He or she is a great contributor into success of his team or group in which he is involved. The student will in turn be motivated into carrying out his activity with a feeling of satisfaction (Sagor 2002).

Students need to feel that they are potent. This means that they need to have that sense of power in such a way that they take credit for what they have achieved or for their success. Students who fail in class may feel like they are facing a life sentence since they may not have acquired opportunities that may influence their success in life (Sagor 2002). The feeling of impotence may lead the students to carry out activities that take little time as long as they get their satisfaction and gratification.

Potency in students will definitely motivate them into doing things more successfully and confidently. With all the above needs, i. e. competency, belonging, usefulness and potency, optimism is created. Optimism is where a student may have a vision of his or her future life. It is common belief that students who have all the other needs will have a positive reflection on their future lives. Students who leave school feeling incompetent, impotent, useless or unbelonging will most certainly live a life full of the same negative feelings.

It is therefore very important that teachers guide students in search for optimism in their lives (Sagor 2002). **CRITICISM** The hierarchy of needs by Maslow may make sense in some contexts but it is a fact that it has little evidence that proves that the hierarchy actually works. Many researchers have challenged this hierarchy and have criticized it due to lack of supporting practical evidence that proves that it is applicable in the life of an individual. An example of its criticism can be the fact that there are certain communities that value their social needs more than other needs found in the pyramid.

A case like the one of the 'starving artist' scenario is an example that Maslow's hierarchy is not applicable in all individuals. In this case, an aesthetic person appreciates beauty and art and therefore he or she might ignore his or her physical needs so that they can achieve his or her beauty or spiritual goals. An example can be a teenager who tends to admire the skinny models she might see or come across and then she decides to starve herself so that she can acquire that ultimate model figure she so much admires.

She will therefore neglect her most basic needs such as food so that she can pursue her aesthetic goal. Another example can be that of a Christian who is ready to fast for some days just to achieve a spiritual satisfaction. The theory of hierarchy of needs therefore, fails to explain why most of the artists may suffer from poverty or even poor upbringing and even depression. Maslow's theory implies that an individual is only able to satisfy one need at a time but it is evident that some needs might conflict and thus the individual may achieve multiple needs at one particular situation.

This can be seen in Clayton Alderfer's ERG theory where an individual may be motivated into achieving more than one need at the same time. Alderfer tried to simplify Maslow's hierarchy of needs and below is a diagram that shows the ERG theory by Clayton Alderfer. CommunicationProf's News and Views: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Retrieved 23 August 2010 from: <http://art-lynch.blogspot.com/2010/04/maslows-hierarchy-of-needs.html>

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