Information Pack

Unit: 415

Motivating People in the Workplace

Unit 415-Motivating People in the Workplace

INTRODUCTION

Leaders have a crucial role to play in motivating others to perform to the best of their abilities. Here we provide an overview of what you need to know about this complex subject, from key motivation models and theories to best practice advice for motivating others. We also look at the relationship between motivation and employee engagement and consider how the psychological contract can help leaders to ensure their employees are motivated and engaged.

The role of the management team and the managers employed within an organisation are pivotal to the success or otherwise of the organisation. Within all organisations there are different levels of management, demanding managers possess or acquire different skills sets to be effective in the role, and, crucially, different organisational configurations which reflect either the culture of the organisation or the work being carried out. Understanding the management role and the roles middle managers are typically required to undertake will enable you to develop your capabilities as a manager to meet the demands of today and tomorrow.

This information pack explores motivation and performance and looks at the behavioural characteristics of well-motivated employees. We will explore further on how to increase motivation and consider what demotivates people and how you might prevent or reduce de-motivators in the workplace.

GUIDANCE

This document is prepared to break the unit material down into bite size chunks. You will see the learning outcomes above treated in their own sections. Therein you will encounter the following structures;

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Purpose	Explains *why* you need to study the current section of material. Quite often learners are put off by material which does not initially seem to be relevant to a topic or profession. Once you understand the importance of new learning or theory you will embrace the concepts more readily.
Theory	Conveys new material to you in a straightforward fashion. To support the treatments in this section you are strongly advised to follow the given hyperlinks, which may be useful documents or applications on the web.
Example	The examples/worked examples are presented in a knowledge-building order. Make sure you follow them all through. If you are feeling confident then you might like to treat an example as a question, in which case cover it up and have a go yourself. Many of the examples given resemble assignment questions which will come your way, so follow them through diligently.
Question	Questions should not be avoided if you are determined to learn. Please do take the time to tackle each of the given questions, in the order in which they are presented. The order is important, as further knowledge and confidence is built upon previous knowledge and confidence. As an Online Learner it is important that the answers to questions are immediately available to you. Contact your Unit Tutor if you need help.
Challenge	You can really cement your new knowledge by undertaking the challenges. A challenge could be to download software and perform an exercise. An alternative challenge might involve a practical activity or other form of research.
Video	Videos on the web can be very useful supplements to your distance learning efforts. Wherever an online video(s) will help you then it will be hyperlinked at the appropriate point.

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SAMPLE

Maslow observed that achievement of self-actualisation is not an end in itself. He considered self-actualisation to be the level at which personal growth can continue ad infinitum. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is often depicted as a triangle or pyramid:
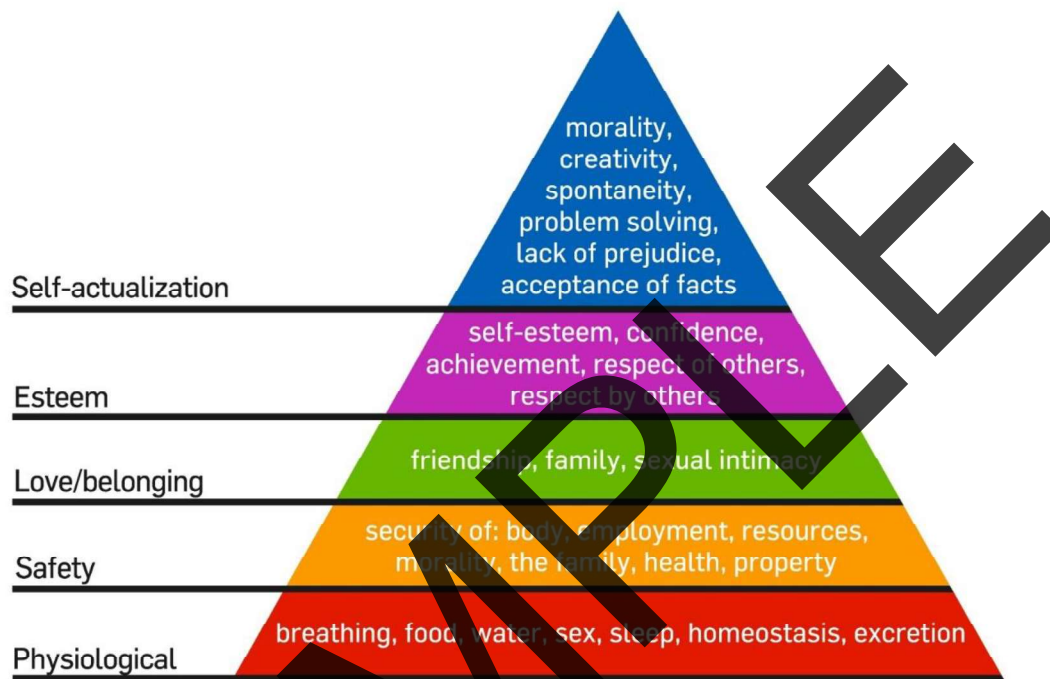
Other classic models rooted in the principles of needs-satisfaction theory include Frederick Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory and Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y. Motivation-Hygiene Theory outlines the distinction between the factors that prevent dissatisfaction at work (hygiene factors) and those that genuinely motivate employees (satisfiers). Hygiene factors include having a safe working environment and the necessary equipment and resources, while satisfiers include being given relevant and challenging work, having an appropriate level of responsibility and being recognised for your achievements.

Theory X and Y, meanwhile, describe two styles of management that are guided by very different sets of assumptions about human needs and motivation. 'Theory X' managers assume that employees are inherently averse to work and must be directed, manipulated or threatened with punishment in order to perform. 'Theory Y' managers, on the other hand, believe that team members are capable of motivating and directing themselves, and that they seek out responsibility rather than avoid it.

While a number of developments have been made in the field of motivation study since these classic models were first published, these theories remain popular and continue to provide valuable insights into how managers can motivate their teams. Maslow's model, for example, suggests that to motivate employees, leaders and managers should ensure team members' individual needs are met in the workplace. This might involve:

- promoting a culture of health and wellbeing within the team
- ensuring the working environment is comfortable and safe
- providing employees with as much information and reassurance as possible during times of uncertainty
- providing opportunities for employees to build effective relationships with one another
- providing team members with regular feedback
- recognising team members' efforts and achievements.

Herzberg's theory suggests that leaders should take steps to both prevent employee dissatisfaction (e.g. by ensuring the working environment is safe and providing employees with all the tools and resources they need) and meet team members' high-level satisfier needs (e.g. by matching roles and responsibilities to employees' skills and interests, giving individuals increased responsibility when appropriate and recognising and rewarding their achievements). Few managers today are likely to subscribe wholly to the rather extreme, traditional approach of McGregor's Theory X. It could, therefore, be argued that McGregor's Theory Y most closely resembles a 21st century leader's view of what motivates employees.

However, this 'softer' style of motivation isn't always appropriate in every situation. In reality, leaders and managers need to strike an appropriate balance between the two approaches. In addition to Maslow, Herzberg and McGregor, a whole raft of psychologists and social scientists were at work throughout the 20th century developing their own theories of motivation. In the 1920s and 1930s, for example, Harvard professor George Elton Mayo conducted a series of experiments at the Hawthorne Western Electric Plant in Illinois. In doing so, Mayo uncovered a phenomenon – known as 'The Hawthorne Effect' –thereby productivity tends to increase when employees are supervised in a supportive manner and are encouraged to build positive working relationships with their managers and with one another.

Equity Theory, meanwhile, is based on the principle that employees are motivated when they feel their 'inputs' at work are matched by the 'outputs' they receive or experience. According to John Stacey Adams, the psychologist who proposed the theory in 1963, inputs include skills and experience, effort and working hours, while outputs include financial rewards and benefits, praise and recognition. The theory states that if employees feel that their inputs outweigh their outputs they are likely to become disgruntled, unproductive and unmotivated.

Developed by management expert Victor Vroom in 1964, Expectancy Theory seeks to explain why individuals are motivated to choose certain behaviours over others. Vroom proposes that there are three governing variables at work here:

Expectancy – the extent to which a behaviour or action is anticipated to help the individual achieve a certain performance outcome (i.e. will doing this help me achieve my goal?).

Instrumentality – the anticipated reward (financial or otherwise) associated with the behaviour or action (i.e. if I do this, how will I be rewarded?).

Valence – the value of the anticipated reward to the individual.

According to Vroom, individuals unconsciously use these variables to identify the 'motivational force' (MF) of each potential behaviour or action, and then select the option with the highest MF value. Like Adams' Equity Theory, the guiding principle is that people are motivated by the prospect of a return on their efforts.