

What Exactly Are the Motivating Factors for Workers?

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Introduction

Employee motivation is a term that is very familiar to people working in an organization and students studying business as a subject. Motivation is considered to be the driving factor of productivity and efficiency of employees. However, the question is, what exactly are the motivating factors for workers? The basic theory is that financial benefits are the primary motivating factor for workers to show productivity. Hence, most firms adopt the policy of performance-related pay. An employee might be attracted to the salary and wages they receive for their work and possibly put effort into improving their productivity and efficiency. Nevertheless, an employee is a human who can be exhausted, ill, demotivated, discouraged, and afraid for his safety. Thus, motivating factors are the ones that encourage a worker to show up every day, not seek other working options, and be committed to the job and dedicated to his work (Paul Bottomley. 747-757).

A workplace is a major factor that affects employee performance and their motivation to come to work in a place that is safe, welcoming, and suitable to their needs. Worker spend half of their days at their workplace, therefore, they seek a place where they are comfortable, safe and relaxed. This encourages them to come to work every day and think a hundred times before they leave, which means the firm's labor turnover is reduced. Labor turnover has a major impact on the success of the company because high labor turnover means more employees are leaving the company, which increases the costs of human resource practices such as hiring and training. Moreover, the employees who leave their workplace create a negative energy in the work environment and leave a bad impression on the existing employees, who also begin to think about better options for their career development (Lazaroiu, George. 97).

Hence, a workplace has the primary impact on a worker's motivation, which affects their performance, productivity, and the overall success of the firm.

Body

Abraham Maslow, who was a social psychologist, created a hierarchy of workers' needs. The hierarchy included a pyramid of needs, which has food, shelter, and basic needs as the first priority of every employee, while safety and security are the second most important factors for employees to survive in a workplace. Maslow's hierarchy teaches that while financial factors provide workers with basic needs and are one of the primary motivating factors, safety, and security provided in the workplace

are the major driving forces for workers to seek employment in a certain firm and be committed and dedicated to work. This is because financial benefits can be provided to workers at every firm, but working conditions are important to employees as they determine their career development, health, and safety (McLeod, Saul).

A working environment that provides employees with safe working conditions and a hygienic environment reminds them of their importance and the benefits provided to them. In this situation, the employees feel that their comfort and safety matter to the firm, which motivated them to work with similar loyalty and dedication. Safety of employees include their hygiene and protection from any kind of diseases, hence the firm requires to arrange their work place in an area that is environment friendly with minimum pollution and diseases. Moreover, safety includes the personal security of workers from any kind of sexual or verbal harassment. Men and women who are harassed or threatened to be harassed will either file a case or leave the firm, creating a negative image. In case of their continuity at the workplace, they are too afraid, which might affect their motivation to work and their productivity (Osgood, Julie L).

A workplace can provide several benefits and motivating factors to employees that affect their performance and efficiency. Employees are more motivated when they feel accepted, appreciated, and important in an organization. According to Clayton Alderfer's ERG Theory, "related-ness" is one of the most important factors of employee motivation. This is because it is human nature to desire to be appreciated and loved for one's work and personality. Workers feel affiliated with the place they are working (Alderfer 347-361).

David McClelland, a psychologist, believes that workers are motivated by three factors, which include achievement, affiliation, and power (McClelland, David C. 321). An employee who feels that he has achieved something will be motivated to work more for the rewards, hence, bonuses and recognitions are crucial at a workplace. Secondly, affiliation refers to the social relationships and relevancy a worker feels in an organization. An employee who feels that his colleagues are demotivating and that he does not belong to the place he is working at, will be demotivated to work and wish to seek better options. Thirdly, power is another driving factor for workers to feel that they are important and trusted by the organization with some form of authority. This may be as minimal as authority and control over the tasks they perform. An employee who is constantly directed by the manager will feel untrustworthy and foolish, which demotivates them.

Rebuttal

Some people may argue that performance-related pay shows major improvements in employee productivity and efficiency, which is true but not entirely effective. A worker may not always seek employment for financial benefits. Even though everyone relies on their income for survival and to fulfill their basic needs, employees are demotivated at a workplace that does offer them high amounts of wages and salaries but does not appreciate their efforts and poses a constant threat to

their lives and respect (Young, William, 689-703).

Furthermore, Herzberg presents his perception of motivating factors in a “two-factor theory,” which divides the financial benefits and the expected benefits on one side and the non-financial motivating factors on the other side that aren’t expected. He believes that the absence of salary and wages will reduce motivation, but the existence of such factors does not encourage workers to work harder and more efficiently. This is because they know salary and wages are their basic rights. On the other hand, unexpected motivating factors such as a friendly workplace, safety, bonuses, recognition, and fringe benefits motivate employees to be more productive (Alshmemri, Mohammed, Lina Shahwan-Akl, and Phillip Maude).

A research study conducted by Toe, Teoh Teik, Werner R. Murhadi, and Wang Lin shows that employee motivation is directly connected their job satisfaction and overall productivity and efficiency. The study showed that workplace environment, which included intrinsic factors such as creativity, competition, and relationship with the manager, were the primary motivating factors that improved the employees’ performance.

Conclusion

It is concluded that financial factors are the basic requirements of employees that encourage them to seek employment and perform well enough to achieve their desired salary and fulfill their basic needs. However, the workplace environment plays a vital part in the motivation and job satisfaction of employees. An organization that provides workers with a friendly, safe, and hygienic work environment achieves maximum productivity and efficiency. Moreover, an employee prefers to be relevant to their workplace and be appreciated for their efforts and improvements. Workers who are trusted with authority and celebrated for their productivity, not only through financial benefits but also through recognition and appreciation, are more dedicated and loyal to the firm, which improves their efficiency and makes the organization’s goal their personal aim to achieve.

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