

The Top Management's Role in Staff Motivation

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Abstract: A successful identity formation is related to being psychologically well (Erikson,1963).This link seems to be lost in the identity style literature that focuses either on the maturity of the identity styles, or on adaptive and maladaptive behaviour correlates of identity styles. In this study, we address this lost link. We administered the Identity Style Inventory (Berzonsky, 1992a) and the scales of Psychological Well-Being (Ryff,1989) to 230 Hellene University students. The Hellenic translations of the scales functioned appropriately. The findings suggest that, first, avoiding facing identity issues is negatively related to psychological well-being, and, second, when such issues are faced, the way of facing the Minot important.

INTRODUCTION

Top Managements, managers, and directors of all kinds of organizations (schools, athletic programs, and recreational facilities), are forced to play many roles and handle many tasks. Their leadership ability will affect the climate of their organization and, ultimately, its effectiveness.

Employee performance is a function of motivation and competency. To improve or maintain such organizational effectiveness, it's important for the Top Managements to know their employees and how to improve or maintain their job satisfaction.

It's the leader's responsibility to provide his staff with the responsibility for achieving both the individual and organizational goals. His very first task, of course, will be to create a favorable working climate that will encourage and enhance self-motivation.

A working title for this theme would be: The primacy of self-motivation in a physical activity setting. It is essential for our employees to have a working knowledge of the current theories and principles that go into the formation of a motivation-oriented work force.

THEORIES

What is motivation? For our purposes, it may be defined as "the complex forces, needs, drives, tension states, or other mechanisms within us that will create and maintain voluntary activity directed toward the achievement of personal goals (Prince)."

Motivation channels these behaviors and provides a goal orientation. Because individual behavior is directed
Maslow's Needs Tips and Practices for Leaders

toward something specific, it is important for the surrounding environment to reinforce the intensity and direction of such individual drives. In other words, as an Top Management or manager, an individual cannot motivate his or her employees, but can provide a supportive environment in which motivation will thrive.

The term "motivation" includes a number of other concepts such as need, incentive, reward, reinforcement, goal setting, and expectancy. The understanding of such theories tends to center on the work of Abraham Maslow, Frederick Herzberg, and many other theorists who operate on the core idea that a break between a person's actual state and desired state of being. Motivation is a mechanism that reduces the distance between them.

Maslow's view of motivation is based on what he has established as a hierarchy of needs. Structured from lowest to highest, these needs consist of: basic physiological, safety and security, social affiliation/belonging, esteem needs, and the need for self-actualization. When the lower needs are sufficiently gratified, successive sets of higher-level needs emerge (Lehman).

Table 1: Top Management Motivation Practices Addressing Maslow's Needs

	Opportunities for professional
Self-Actualization	growth, training, and development; opportunities for advancement within the organization.
	Recognition of work done well; job
Esteem	titles and awards; wellness programs.
	Belonging Opportunities to know and interact
Social Affiliation/	with coworkers.
	Lighted work areas and parking lots; secure storage for personal
Safety and Security	belongings during working hours; reasonable certainty of continued employment and benefits.
	Comfortable work environment including temperature controls,
Physiological	access to restroom facilities, reasonable breaks and working hours, wellness programs.

Based on this theory, Top Managements should identify ways in which to provide for the higher order needs of his/her staff, while ensuring that the lower order needs are satisfied as well.

Herzberg's theory describes motivation based on two factors: motivators that are associated with job satisfaction, and hygiene or maintenance, which consist of job dissatisfiers.

Motivators consist of achievement, recognition, work

itself, responsibility, and advancement. They are intrinsic and related directly to the nature of the work and rewards attainable from work performance.

Hygienes include company policy and administration; supervision; salary; interpersonal relations with superiors, subordinates, and peers; and working conditions. These are extrinsic and are associated with the work environment (Guthrie).

It is important to understand that these two factors are

distinct and unipolar. In other words, providing for hygiene needs can prevent dissatisfaction, but does not contribute to satisfaction and, therefore, cannot increase motivation.

The greatest potential for increased work performance comes from intrinsic motivators. In this respect, it is important for Top Managements to identify and utilize effective motivators.

Another motivation theorist, Victor Vroom, associates motivation with the expectation of desirable outcomes. This is known as the "Expectancy Theory of Motivation" and is based on three fundamental concepts: valence, expectancy, and force.

Valence refers to the attractiveness of the potential outcomes, rewards, or incentives of working in an organization. Expectancy refers to the perception of the probability that a desired outcome will be attained because of an action.

Force is one's motivation to act and the direction of that act (Miskel & Ogawa, Guthrie). In general, people will work hard when they think that it is likely to lead to desirable organizational rewards.

This theory of expectancy is further integrated with Locke's "goal theory". Goal-setting is believed to be a major regulator of motivation. Its effectiveness is based on three criteria: (1) specific performance goals will elicit higher performance rather than general goals; (2) if accepted by the individual, the more difficult the goal is, the greater the individual's effort, and (3) subordinate participation in goal setting leads to goal acceptance and ultimately to employee satisfaction. Evidence has shown that participation may increase the difficulty of the set goals and produce superior performance (Miskel & Ogawa).

These are just a few of the available general motivational theories. Although each theory is based on its own assumptions, none have been proven superior to the other.

Regardless, it is important for an Top Management to have a general understanding of these theories and perhaps even of those not discussed in this paper.

STRATEGIES OF EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

Understanding the dynamics of employee motivation theories is important. Once you know that when people work hard, they become able to develop working conditions that will maximize performance.

In a study conducted by Snyder, athletic directors were perceived by coaches as responsible for the degree of

administrative support in the workplace. He suggested that the administrative strive to provide supportive work environments and help coaches and staff members achieve professional goals.

Besides creating and maintaining supportive relationships, the administration has other categories of motivational strategies to incorporate into his/her program to ensure success and maximum performance.

Four such categories include: personal regard, communication, participation, and recognition (Lehman). By blending these elements, into his programs an Top Management can develop a successful working environment.

Personal regard is a function of trust, time, and empathy. Trust can be established in many ways, but the easiest way is by being predictable. This is accomplished by creating an organizational vision, publishing clear expectations, and making decisions consistent with the parameters of the vision.

It is also important for the Top Management to make himself visible and available to his staff--building staff morale by showing that the Top Management is interested and supportive (Lehman). Another method of demonstrating administrative interest and support is through the creation of employee wellness programs. Such programs can increase morale, job performance, and job satisfaction (Rudman & Steinhardt, Sloan & Grumen, Satler & Doniek, Panepento).

Contributing factors: employees decreasing stress and improving overall health, thus decreasing absenteeism making the employees feel better and thus increasing their physical motivation to perform, and letting the employees understand that the administration cares about them, everyone will likely work harder at their jobs.

One of the key concepts that Top Managements must realize is that motivation is individual. Each employee will respond to a different mix of internal and external stimuli, and the Top Managements cannot assume that what is motivating to them will also motivate their employees. They should strive to develop a personal knowledge of employees that will enable them to create a climate that fits the employees' rather than the Top Management's needs and desires (Sirota, Mischkind, Meltzer).

What is motivating to a person cannot be directly observed, but the Top Managements should understand that it can be based on their actions and conversations with their employees (Lussier & Achua).

Constant communication can also boost staff morale. One

of the first steps in communication involves the development and publication of clearly stated goals. This will eliminate any uncertainty the staff may have of the Top Management's expectations. The goals should be set high, but remain attainable by both employee and Top Management (Martin).

Motivation is also closely related to the worth one attaches to the organizational mission.

Top Managements can help employees identify the importance and meaning of the employee's work by assisting the employee in creating goals that are meaningful to the organization's mission.

Communication involves providing regular feedback, positive or negative, at the appropriate and specific time of action. And finally, one of the most important aspects of successful communication involves the art of listening, which can be of the utmost importance and the most effective motivator (Lehman).

OPEN TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

Goes hand in hand with participation and the idea of shared decision-making. For some, participation will fulfill what Maslow describes as the need to belong.

Employees who perceive themselves as decision-makers tend to have a higher level of job satisfaction and professional growth (Lehman).

Organizational climates that emphasize cooperation over competition are also recognized as more motivating for employees.

The final category in developing a motivational strategy is recognition. It is one of the most available tools that Top Managements can use in bolstering staff self-image.

As discussed earlier in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, self-esteem is one of the higher needs to fulfill. To be most effective, it must be face to face and directed toward a specific achievement. An Top Management need not wait for a major accomplishment. Even the simplest of virtues are worthy of recognition (Lehman).

Recognition from an Top Management is not always sufficient. It can also be drawn from coworkers, clients, students, athletes, parents, or community members, and can have a galvanizing effect on the employees' feelings of motivation.

It's important to keep in mind that it's not the Top Management's job to motivate his/her staff, rather, to refrain from diminishing employee motivation and to provide the means by which employees can become self-

motivating

15 MOTIVATION TIPS FOR THE TOP MANAGEMENT

1. Be available for employees. Initiate communication and listen to employees.
2. Learn about your employees as individuals. Have one-on-one conversations and respect their differences.
3. Know what motivates you and model your personal motivation.
4. Treat employees fairly and consistently. Don't play favorites.
5. Work with employees to set challenging but realistic goals.
6. Help employees to align personal goals with organizational mission.
7. Make your expectations clear to employees.
8. Provide your employees with the resources, freedom, and authority to meet those expectations.
9. Provide regular and meaningful feedback.
10. Show appreciation for employees publicly and often.
11. Create opportunities for employees to receive positive feedback from customers and co-workers.
12. Emphasize collaboration and information sharing over competition.
13. Provide employees with opportunities to further professional development and education.
14. Create a sense of community and provide opportunities for social interaction among employees.
15. Demonstrate the organization's commitment to employees by creating employee wellness programs.

(Rudman & Steinhardt, 1988; Sloan & Grumen, 1988; Satler & Doniek, 1995; Young, 1991; Tillman et. al., 1996; Panepento, 2004)

Establishing and promoting staff morale is crucial when it comes to creating a self-motivating environment. It's important for the Top Management to remember that he not only must be concerned with task orientation, but also with people orientation. After all, it's the staff that's performing the task and that if motivation is low, the

outcome of the task will be unsatisfactory.

Finally, it's important that for the Top Management to create not only a motivating work environment, but also a challenging one. As Frost puts it, "If the task does not call for strenuous effort and creative thinking, it becomes monotonous and meaningless. A sense of personal worth and importance is maintained only when all the capabilities, ingenuities, and resources of the individual are called upon."

There is considerable evidence that employee morale and motivation has a direct and substantive impact on the overall performance of an organization, whether it is within a school, sport organization, or recreational facility (Sirota et al).

Top Managements should do their utmost to enhance employee motivation by demonstrating through words and actions that employees are valued members of the organization and that their leaders are always seeking to understand what employees want and striving to meet their needs.

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