

Concepts of Human Relations

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This booklet is concerned with the study of human relations principles as they apply to the supervision of people in business, industry, and government. It is intended to supplement 16 hours of course work in Management Human Relations taught by the Engineering and Management Institute of Iowa State University. In this series, we hope to show how principles based upon research in the fields of psychology and sociology can be used profitably by the professional manager of today in managing and supervising the work force.

SOME POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS

Over the years, some popular misconceptions about human relations have existed. In order to clear the air, we should mention some of these incorrect assumptions Human relations as taught today is not a technique for manipulating people. It is not a type of give-away program in which management attempts to satisfy all the needs and demands of its employees. Neither is it a guarantee of perfect results for you as a manager since some people are bound to be different. More important, it is not a substitute for firm, enthusiastic management. The ability to say "no" when necessary can never be dispensed with in management practice.

WHAT HUMAN RELATIONS CAN DO

The ideas that will be discussed in this series are based on scientific research and actual trial in on-the-job situations and are generally recognized effective by modern management. You may ask "what are we really trying to accomplish when we use human relations techniques?" Actually, we really have two purposes or goals in mind: (1) increased productivity and; (2) increased employee satisfaction. The most important goal of any management person is, of course, production and profit - always keep this in mind. We also find that a high degree of employee satisfaction is necessary in bringing about the conditions which promote high productivity. If we can get increased productivity in practicing good human relations, we will find that we have accomplished the two-fold purpose mentioned above.

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Another of the more important things to be derived from studying human relations is that it can give the manager insight into the reasons for certain types of employee behavior. Having gained an insight into how people tend to react in various work situations, the manager should, within limits, be able to predict how his own subordinates will react to a new plan, or a change in work station, new assignments, discipline, etc. In other words, this material should help to reduce the number of "surprises" that daily confront a person who supervises other human beings .

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HUMAN RELATIONS DEVELOPMENT

Before we examine the concepts let us look briefly at some of the historic developments that have affected employer-employee relationships.

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

The Industrial Revolution which began in the United States around 1850, marked the first time that people had been gathered into special buildings on a large scale for the purpose of producing goods. Previous to this time, most people were self-employed or worked in small groups plying the craft in which they were skilled. The new factory system posed some problems for the individual since he was faced with a boss-subordinate relationship for the first time and he no longer owned his own tools. The security of the worker was therefore entirely in the hands of "management." We have all heard of the many evils of the early factory such as sweat-shop conditions, child labor, harsh supervision, and long hours with low pay. The conditions brought on the rise of the labor union movement during the '70s and '80s. The union was one of the first means of forcing management to recognize that they must deal with people as human beings and not merely tools of production.

SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT

In the mid-1890's Frederick W. Taylor, an ex-foreman-turned--engineer working with Midvale Steel Co. in Philadelphia presented a paper at a national professional engineering society meeting entitled "On Scientific Management". This paper and the ideas embodied in it proved to be a turning point in the field of industrial management. Taylor's ideas were directed toward two goals - (1) increased managerial efficiency and (2) increased interest on the part of the employee. In order to achieve the first goal, Taylor suggested use of such things as production scheduling and quality control departments, standardized jobs, scientific method analysis and improvement, etc. We see these ideas at work in our modern industrial organizations. The second goal, increased employee interest, primarily involved the paying of a "fair day's wage for a fair day's work". Here Taylor assumed that the most important motivator was

the paycheck. In order to determine what a fair day's work was, Taylor made extensive use of time study.

It is ironic that time study, Taylor's tool for assuring the worker of a fair wage, later came to be feared as a management weapon to be used against the worker. Even though the early Scientific Management concept was directed toward motivating the employee to put out a "little extra" toward his job, it was particularly successful in accomplishing this second goal. Apparently employees were motivated by other factors in addition to money alone. Taylor's work has proven to be quite valuable in accomplishing the first goal; however, and he is now recognized as the father of the Industrial Engineering profession.

THE AMERICAN PLAN

During the 1920's, American management became quite concerned about the rising tide of unionism. In order to combat this trend, many company owners and managers attempted to give their employees some of those things that labor unions would normally demand. This involved increased wages, and the birth of the now common fringe benefits. Included were insurance plans, retirement plans, and many organized social activities such as company dances, picnics, sports leagues, etc. This philosophy was known as the American Plan. During this decade, we also find the first psychological research into the baffling area of human motivation. The American Plan was apparently meeting with some success because union membership declined during the '20's. Some of this decline of course can be attributed to the general prosperity that existed during those years. The deepening depression of the early '30's brought an untimely end to this interesting experiment.

THE ERA OF PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT

We refer to the period beginning in the 1930's and continuing to the present as the era of the "professional manager". In order to be a professional, by some definitions, we must receive a certain degree of formal training in our particular field. We also must be engaged in a field of endeavor that makes use of research into the sciences or humanities and applies these research findings to the "real" world of human beings. We say therefore, that the effective professional manager of today must master three skills: (1) technical skill in the particular line of work in which his organization is engaged; (2) managerial skill (the ability to plan, organize, direct, control, and coordinate); (3) human skills involving knowledge of the needs, motivational factors, and behaviorial patterns of human beings in a work situation. Knowledge in this complex area of "human skills" has been built up from continuing research initiated in the late '20's. The most famous "human" experiment conducted in an industrial organization was that conducted at the Hawthorn Works of

the Western Electric Co. in Chicago. This experiment was begun in 1927 and originally was designed to measure the effect of surrounding physical conditions such as lighting, noise, ventilation, etc. on work group productivity. The experimenters, however, found that other factors of psychological and sociological nature had greater effect on productivity than the physical surroundings. By the time the experiments ended in 1933, American industry had become vitally interested in the question of human motivation, social systems within the company, and how human beings tend to react in various work situations. This experimental series opened the door to the extensive "human" research which has been carried on up to the present.

Let us now examine the new philosophy of management based upon these years of research.

THE BASIC NEEDS THEORY

This concept of human relations is based on the idea that every person who manages or supervises people must be aware of certain "basic needs" that every individual has. The supervisor must then be prepared to work through these individual needs in order to accomplish the goal of the organization.

Human psychological needs arise from the fact that humans are social creatures who grow up and live and work with other people. There are five classes of psychological needs that have been generally accepted by scientists who study human motivation. These are the basic satisfactions that people want from life and work -- the things people work for.

1. To stay alive. Related to a work situation, this means that each of us needs to have a job so that we may have income with which to purchase food, shelter, and clothing.
2. To feel safe and secure. This means that once we have a job and income, we have a very strong need to know that we will have this income tomorrow, next week, next month, and next year. We want to feel that we will not be summarily thrown out into the street at the whim of our supervisor. Expressions of this motivating force are often seen in such human characteristics as the desire for insurance, religion, year-round employment, protection from criminals and unfair competition, resistance to innovations

- 3, To be social. This means that a normal human being requires a certain amount of social contact on the job, as well as off the job, We need to be accepted by our fellow workers and need to belong to a social group.

To feel respected. We want to think well of ourselves and desire others to also. This means that we wish to advance in rank, pay, and in social standing with our fellow workers. We need to be recognized as an individual human being and not just as a hole in an IBM card or a 6-digit number in the personnel files.

5. To do the work we like. "The postman's holiday" - taking a walking trip -- is an example. The sailors who spend shore leave rowing a boat in Central Park, and with no pretty girl in the boat The garage mechanic who spends every spare moment tinkering on an old car in his backyard Pride in workmanship may be due mostly to this need, or it may include some Motivation from the basic satisfactions 3 and 4.

In this age of mass production and occupational specialization, not all of us can do exactly the work we should like to; consequently, we seek other outlets . Some find the outlet in hobbies Others go to ball games and watch somebody else do what they would like to do. As humorist Finley Peter Dunne said: "Wurruk is wurruk if ye're paid to do it, an' it's pleasure if ye pay to be allowed to do it."

Some of those five psychological needs take priority over others at times . Dr. A. H. Maslow has pointed out that the ones listed first usually take precedence over the others in human behavior. Consider the need to stay alive. Go without food for a few days, and your motivation to be social or feel respectable will be overwhelmed by an animal-like and selfish struggle for food -- as happened in Nazi concentration camps.

Another example is how the need to be social takes precedence over the need to feel respected. Workers stall on the job and lower their self-respect in order to satisfy the need to be accepted as one of the crowd, which has higher priority in the need hierarchy.

The need to feel respected takes priority over the need to do work one likes, as shown by the many who do work that only half interests them in order to be on a job that has prestige in the community. Related to this is the fact that placing workers on jobs that has prestige in the community. Related to this is the fact that placing workers on jobs that fit them best may not count so much in the long run as handling them so that their feelings of personal worth are enhanced.

PARTICIPATIVE MANAGM ENT

This is the term that we use to describe the concept of management which works through the needs of the individual in order to achieve the goals of the organization. We take the word participative to imply that we, as supervisors, are willing to consult with our subordinates and to be aware of their existence as individuals 0 Listed below are five major ideas involved in practicing this concept.

1. Recognition of the individual needs . Management must understand the basic needs of its employees and be prepared to accomplish its goals by working through these needs.
2. Understanding of informal organization . We must be aware of the existence of certain "informal social groups" or social systems within our organizations and of the power that they exercise. We must know their goals, leaders and memberships so that we may enlist their cooperation toward the achievement of management goals
3. Establishment of two-way communications . Management must learn that important "feedback" can only be obtained by practicing good communication downward and upward and by using language accepted and understood by entire work force. We cannot assume that our employees do not have a need to know or are unable to understand.
4. Participation at the work level . Change at the work level can be be introduced much more smoothly when employees are allowed to participate to some extent in decision making and planning. Remember, people do not resist change, they resist being changed arbitrarily.
5. Atmosphere of. healthy superior-subordinate. Management must strive for friendly relationships within the work force so that an atmosphere of harmonious productivity exists instead of opposition, slow-down, and distrust. This does not mean that some conflict is not desirable since many new ideas are introduced through an honest difference of opinion.

Management can do its job only through motivating people to work for management's objectives. But it is impossible to understand motivation without considering what people want and expect from their jobs.

Since people spend about a third of their waking hours at work, it is not surprising that they should expect work to satisfy many sorts of needs physical, social, and egotistic -- and that, further, these needs may be satisfied in a wide variety of ways -- of the job, around the job, and through the job. Though there is some evidence that these needs can be ranked in a hierarchy, it is fairly clear that the various forms of need satisfaction can be substituted for each other.

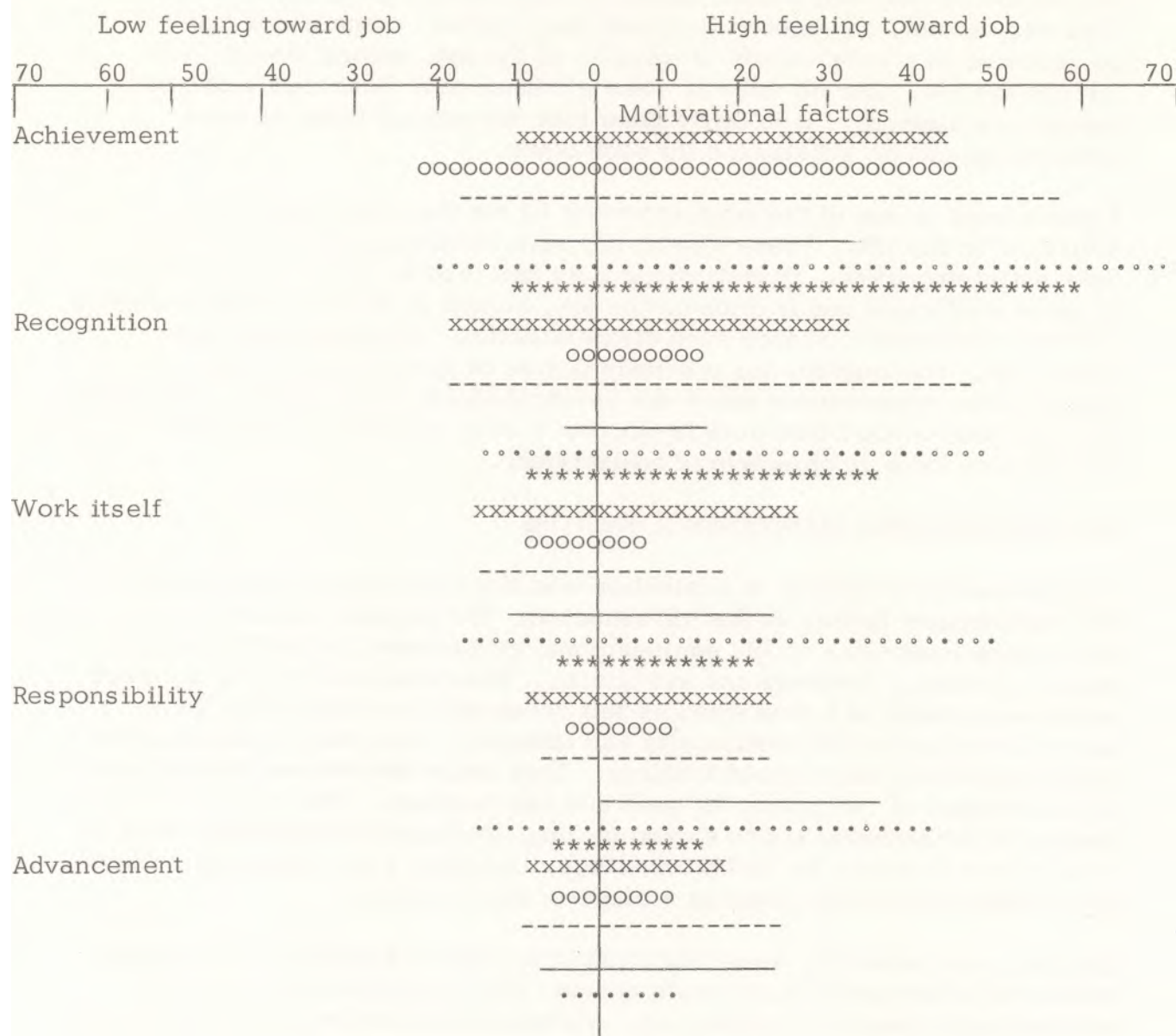
A man's work is one of the most important (if not the most important) activities in his life. Those who do not have satisfying jobs rarely have fully satisfying lives. Dissatisfying work can lead in many circumstances to lower production and friction on the job, so that it may be in management's economic interest to reduce such dissatisfaction. But even where this is not true, management has a certain degree of social responsibility to provide work opportunities which are psychologically meaningful. Regardless, we must bear in mind that work is not man's only objective, nor is work satisfaction the sole objective of management.

MOTIVATIONAL AND MAINTENANCE FACTORS

A significant development in motivation was the distinction of motivational and maintenance factors in the job situation. The original research was based upon interviews of 200 engineers and accountants in the Pittsburgh area by Frederick Herzberg and associates. Their approach was to ask each employee to think of a time when he felt especially good about his job -- and a time when he felt particularly bad about it -- and then to describe the conditions which led to these feelings. They found that the employees named different types of conditions for good and bad feelings. That is, if a feeling of achievement led to a good feeling, the lack of achievement was rarely given as cause for bad job feelings. Instead, some other factor such as company policy was given as a cause of bad feelings.

Herzberg concluded that some job conditions operate primarily to dissatisfy employees when the conditions are absent, but their presence does not motivate employees in a strong way. Many of these factors traditionally are perceived by management as motivators, but the factors are really more potent as dissatisfiers. See figure 1-1. (Observe in this instance how the perceptions of management are not the same as the perceptions of employees.) These potent dissatisfiers are called maintenance factors in the job, because they are necessary to maintain a reasonable level of satisfaction in employees. They are also known as dissatisfiers, or as hygienic factors because they support employee mental health.

Figure 1-1



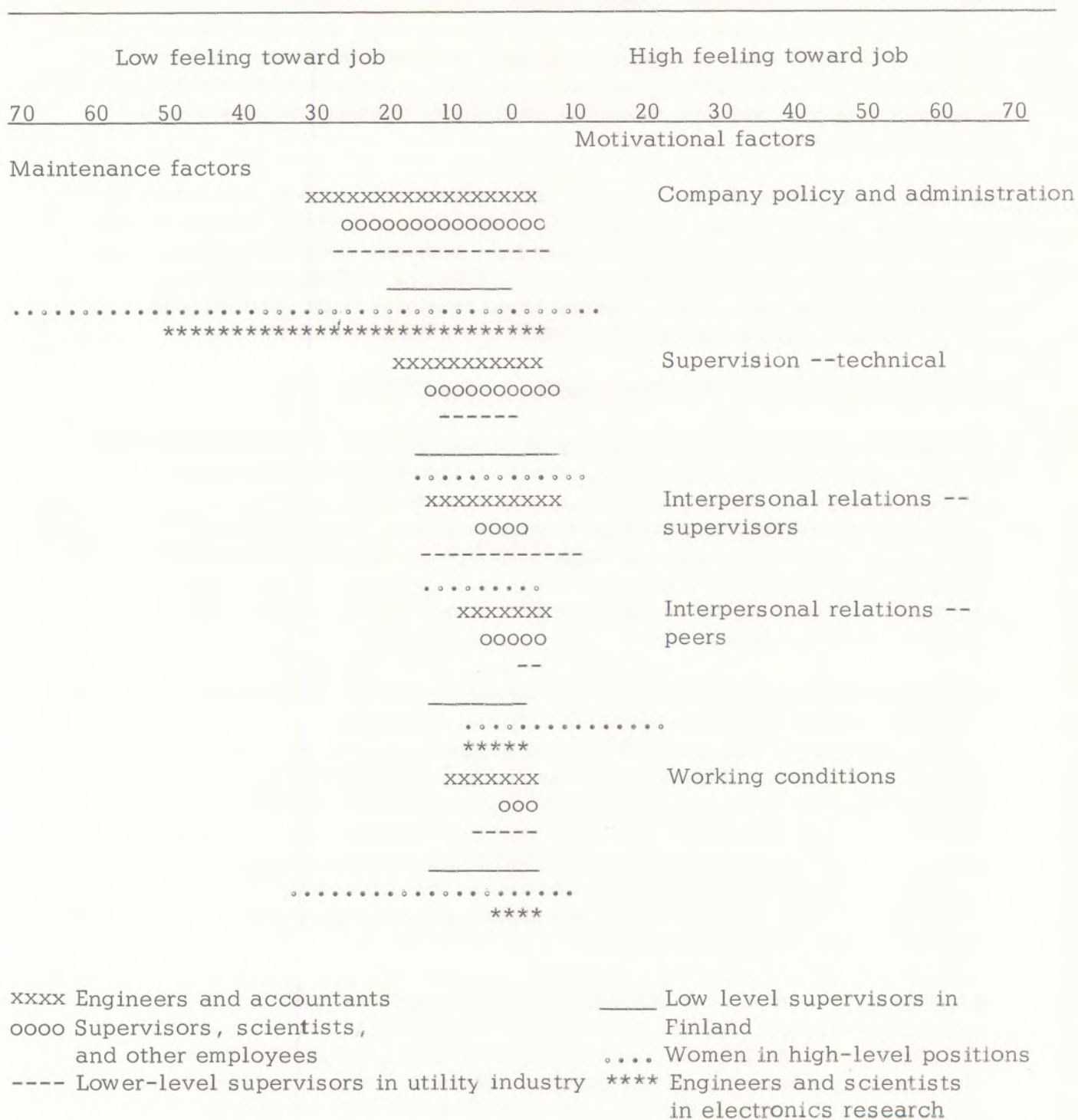
xxxx Engineers and accountants

oooo Supervisors, scientists,
and other employees

---- Lower-level supervisors in utility industry

_____ Low level supervisors
in Finland..... Women in high-level
positions***** Engineers and scientists
in electronics research

Figure 1-1 (continued)



Another set of job conditions operates primarily to build strong motivation and high job satisfaction, but their absence rarely proves strongly dissatisfying. These conditions are known as motivational factors, motivators, or satisfiers. For many years managers had been wondering why their fancy personnel policies and fringe benefits were not increasing employee motivation on the job. The distinction of motivational and maintenance factors helped answer their question, because fringe benefits and personnel policies were shown to be primarily maintenance factors.

The original Herzberg study included six motivational factors: achievement, recognition, advancement, work itself, possibility of growth, and responsibility. There were ten maintenance factors: company policy and administration, technical supervision, interpersonal relations with supervision, interpersonal relations with peers, interpersonal relations with subordinates, salary, job security, personal life, working conditions and status.

THE MOTIVATION-MAINTENANCE MODEL IN PRACTICE

Subsequent research in a wide variety of situations has generally confirmed the motivation-maintenance model. Figure 1-1 gives the results of six research studies covering professional and supervisory personnel in order to show the remarkable similarities in results among these studies. Motivational factors such as achievement and responsibility are mostly to the right side of the zero scale. They are related directly to the job itself, the employee's performance on it, and the recognition and growth which he gets from it. Motivators are mostly job-centered; they are related to job content.

The factors which stand out on the left side of the scale (maintenance factors) are mostly related to the environment external to the job. This environment includes company policy and working conditions, as well as interpersonal relations with others. Maintenance factors are mostly environment-centered; they related to job context. This difference between job content and job context is a significant one. It shows that the employee is motivated strongly primarily by what he does for himself: When he handles responsibility well or gains recognition through his own behavior, he is strongly motivated. Management is primarily providing the environmental surroundings and support for his satisfying accomplishments.

The distinction between job content and job context is similar to the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivators in the field of psychology, but the ideas are not identical. Intrinsic motivators are those which occur at the time of performance of the work, so there is a direct motivation to perform the work because the act of performance is itself rewarding. Extrinsic motivators are those which occur after work or away from work, providing no direct satisfaction at the time the work is performed. With extrinsic motivators

the employee is motivated to get through the work so that he can enjoy the incentive, He cannot enjoy it until he stops working. Examples of extrinsic motivators are retirement plans, health insurance, and vacations, because none of them provide satisfactions during work. Especially in white-collar and professional work, the intrinsic motivators are more effective because of their direct connection with performance, but with blue-collar work the emphasis on security and social factors in the work culture is so high that the intrinsic motivators are less effective than with white-collar workers 0

For the last generation or more, managers have been centering their attention on extrinsic and maintenance factors, often with poor results. Now that they better understand the difference between these factors and the intrinsic and motivational factors, they are giving more emphasis to these latter factors because of their superior possibilities. This new emphasis has been too slow in coming, but it is welcome because of its greater potential benefits for the employee, the organization, and society. During the last thirty years employees have been paternalistically maintained too much and enthusiastically motivated too little.

COMPARISON OF THE HERZBERG AND MASLOW MODELS

When the Herzberg and Maslow models are compared, it can be seen that they both emphasize the same set of relationships, as shown in Figure 1-2, Maslow centers on human needs of the psychological person at work or anywhere else. Herzberg focuses on that same person in terms of how job conditions affect his basic needs.

Maslow's need-priority model		Herzberg's motivation-maintenance model	
Self-realization and fulfillment	Motivational factors	Work itself Achievement Possibility of growth Responsibility	Overlapping items
Esteem and status		Advancement Recognition	
Belonging and social activity	Maintenance factors	Status	
Safety and security		Interpersonal relations- supervision peers subordinates Supervision-technical	
Physiological needs		Company policy and administration Job security Working	
		Conditions Salary Personal life	

Fig. I-2. A comparison of Maslow's need-priority model, with Herzberg's motivation-maintenance model.

The Herzberg model adds something to the need-priority model by showing the distinction between maintenance and motivational factors and showing that motivational factors are mostly derived from the work itself. Of the six motivational factors in Figure 1-2, the first four are clearly intrinsic motivators, and the remaining two are substantially intrinsic. The Herzberg model is, therefore, quite realistic in expressing current motivational conditions on the job and focusing on the potential progress available through intrinsic motivation.

THE MOTIVATION PROCESS

Having discussed motivation in terms of the employee -- his needs, wants, and perceptions -- it is now appropriate to look at it from a manager's point of view. There are various approaches he may take, such as being authoritarian, meaning that he uses power to require an employee action. He may take an economic approach, emphasizing mostly money. Occasionally managers use a "surrender" approach to beg an employee to do something. In this instance we shall assume that the manager takes a supportive approach which emphasizes helping an employee reach his higher-order needs as much as possible. He motivates others by taking a series of steps which we call the motivation process.

First, as with all management activity, he is required to determine his objective or purpose. He cannot motivate someone in a specified direction without first choosing the direction. He has to know where he is headed and what he is trying to do. This simple requirement of management is still much overlooked by operating managers.

Second, he needs to empathize, meaning that he tries to see the situation as the employee sees it and to feel about it as the employee feels. Empathy is necessary because a manager's efforts to motivate are a whim of chance unless he understands what his employees' drives are. In the behavioral area we always have to ask why -- why does someone act in a certain way? In the physical sciences this question is not essential. We do not have to ask why hydrogen and oxygen make water under certain conditions. It is enough that they do.

Third, it is necessary to communicate, for this is the only way a manager can reach another person to motivate. To the degree that a manager cannot communicate, he is stymied. For example, if a manager can communicate only half his ideas, his motivational power is accordingly limited. Full communication also involves feedback from the employee.

Fourth, a manager attempts to integrate interests, relating his organization's purpose (as he interprets it) to the employee's need-want complex. This kind of mutual relationship gives rewards to both parties, providing a sort of "double plus"

Fifth, a manager needs to provide auxiliary conditions. It is useless to ask a salesman to contact certain customers unless he is provided the route list and some means of transportation, and is trained concerning company products and sales methods. Effective motivation, therefore, depends on training each employee, providing him equipment, and establishing a

supportive climate in which he can progress. A manager acts to remove the major obstructions hindering effective action towards objectives. (Some obstructions still remain as a normal challenge of the job.)

Finally, a manager tries to develop teamwork, integrating each employee's goal seeking with the actions of other employees so that there is coordinated group effort. This is the operating aspect of motivation. It provides a means of building group effort out of individual effort.

This is the motivation process by which managers apply psychological ideas to operating realities. When motivating others, a manager should never underestimate the importance of seemingly minor details or trifles. What is a trifle to the manager may be the exact notch in the key that unlocks his employee's fullest motivation.

SUMMARY

When an individual, comes to a work group, he brings with him certain needs which affect his on-the-job performance. Some of these needs are basically physiological; others are higher-order needs related to his environment. The latter are much more difficult to determine and satisfy, and individual differences in them are great. Needs generally have a priority in the following order: physiological needs, safety and security, belonging, esteem, and self-realization. Needs interact with environment to form on-the-job wants which management and employees try to satisfy. We will see as we proceed through this course, how the supervisor must take these needs into consideration and, by attempting to satisfy some of these needs, accomplish the two-fold purpose of (1) increased productivity, and (2) a high level of employee satisfaction. The ideas of participative management are strictly democratic ideas. This philosophy attempts to accomplish that mutuality of interest that Frederick Taylor was after in his Scientific Management concepts born in the 1890's. Research and experience shows that when properly applied, these ideas will work.

You may say that you have known of many instances where the hard-nosed, two-fisted, autocratic, supervisor who made all the decisions himself was able to get out production efficiently. This is true, we have all known supervisors like this, but the philosophy of participative management promises that "little bit extra" from an employee who is interested in his job, not only as a means to receive a paycheck, but as something he actually likes to do

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