Cheat Sheet: Motivating Employees

Essential Concepts

The Hawthorne Effect

Conducted at the Western Electric Hawthorne Works plant in Cicero, Illinois, Elton Mayo and his colleagues attempted to apply Taylor's process of scientific management by conducting experiments in the workplace. What resulted is a phenomenon known as the "Hawthorne effect," which occurs when subjects being studied change their behavior simply because they are being observed and treated differently.

Need-Based Theories

The first theories used to explain human motivation were need based. These theories proposed that people are mainly motivated by trying to meet certain needs and that if you can understand their needs, you can better motivate them. Among the need-based theories are Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's two-factor theory, and McClelland's acquired-needs theory.

Process-Based Theories

Process-based theories of motivation view motivation as a more rational, deliberate process. The three best-known process-based theories are equity, expectancy, and reinforcement theories.

Managers' Attitudes and Motivation

Douglas McGregor theorized that worker motivation is closely linked to the way managers view and treat their workers and that all managers fall into one of two types—Theory X and Theory Y. Later, William Ouchi combined Eastern and Western management practices to develop Theory Z.

Strategies for Motivating Employees

Two methods of applying motivation theory in the workplace are job design and goal setting. Beyond these two applications, companies have become very aware of the way motivated employees impact organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

Career Connection: Customizing Your Résumé

When applying for a job, it is important to customize your résumé for each position by carefully reviewing the job description and making revisions to align your skills and experiences with the employer's preferences, especially if they use an applicant tracking system that scans résumés for specific keywords and ranks them accordingly.

Glossary

applicant tracking system

  software that human resource professionals use to project manage the recruiting and hiring process

compressed workweek

  employees work the traditional 40 hours, but fit those hours into a shorter workweek

equity theory

  employees' perceived fairness of the way they are treated and the rewards they earn motivates their behavior

expectancy

  the individual's belief that effort will lead to the intended performance goals

expectancy theory

  the probability of an individual acting in a particular way depends on the strength of that individual's belief that the act will have a particular outcome and on whether the individual values that outcome

flextime

employee works a specified number of hours each week but has the flexibility to decide how to schedule the hours

four-day workweek

employees work only four days a week but work 32 hours or less; alternatively, workers may still work for a 40-hour week but for 10 hours each day for four days

Hawthorne effect

the theory that employees will perform better when they feel singled out for special attention or feel that management is concerned about employee welfare

Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory

also called Two Factor Theory; argues that motivators (intrinsic factors) serve as job satisfiers while hygiene factors (extrinsic factors) act as job dissatisfiers

hybrid working

splitting time between working remotely and working at the company's offices

hygiene factors

extrinsic motivators such as tangible, basic needs like job security and salary

instrumentality

the belief that a person will receive a desired outcome if the performance expectation is met

job enlargement

an employee's level of responsibility remains the same but is given a greater variety of tasks to reduce boredom; horizontal job expansion

job enrichment

an employee is delegated decision-making and planning responsibilities that give them more authority; vertical job expansion

job rotation

an employee moves between a number of jobs to gain a variety of skills and reduce boredom

job sharing

two individuals to split the tasks, responsibilities, and work hours of one 40-hour-per-week job

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

the theory that each individual has a hierarchy of needs, consisting of physiological (basic, physical needs), safety (security needs), social (relationship needs), esteem (feeling respected and accomplished), and self-actualization (need to live up to your potential) needs and that unmet needs are what motivate people to act

McClelland's acquired needs theory

workers are motivated by three categories of needs, achievement, affiliation, and power, which are shaped by their life experiences

motivation

the set of forces that prompt a person to release energy in a certain direction

motivation factors

intrinsic motivators such as emotional needs like recognition and relationships

need-based theories of motivation

assume that workers act to satisfy their individual needs

outcomes-to-inputs ratio

employees evaluate their outcomes (salary, benefits) in relation to their inputs (hours worked, skills and experience) and compare to others to decide if their outcome is fair

process-based theories of motivation

assume that individuals analyze their environment, develop reactions and feelings, and respond in predictable ways

punishment

anything that decreases the behavior

reinforcement theory

assumes that behavior is a function of its consequences

remote working or telecommuting

a work-scheduling option that allows employees to work from home via a computer that is linked with their office, headquarters, or colleagues

reward

anything that increases the particular behavior

Theory X

a management style based on a pessimistic view of workers that results in micro-management

Theory Y

a management style based on a positive view of workers that results in encouraging workers to develop their skills

Theory Z

a management style that blends U.S. and Japanese work culture and assumes a collaborative relationship between managers and workers

valence

the unique value an individual places on a particular outcome