A THEORETICAL STUDY ON EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION AT WORKPLACE

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Abstract
Motivation in the workplace is a crucial subject in the modern business world, since it is the force, which drives the entire organization and affects its performance. One of the biggest questions, which is constantly being asked by the majority of the managers is, how to motivate an employee and to set a productive environment within an organization. This paper will examine the common behaviours of employees in the workplace and will try to identify the factors, which affect their motives. In the first part of the paper an already existing literature will be studied. The main purpose of this study will be to identify the existing problems, which occur in the workplace. The second part will concentrate on identifying the tasks, which could help managers to motivate their employees. Different theories will be examined, and the effect of their applications will be discussed. The third part will discuss the role of managers in the motivating process. And, finally, the last part will conclude the paper and its findings.

Introduction
Motivation is a term that refers to a process that elicits, controls, and sustains certain behaviours. It is a group phenomenon which affects the nature of an individual's behavior, the strength of the behaviour, and the persistence of the behavior. For instance: an individual has not eaten, so he or she feels hungry, and as a response he or she eats and diminishes feelings of hunger.

There are many approaches to motivation: physiological, behavioural, cognitive, and social. It is the crucial element in setting and attaining goals—and research shows you can influence your own levels of motivation and self-control. According to various theories, motivation may be rooted in a basic need to minimize physical pain and maximize pleasure; or it may include specific needs such as eating and resting; or a desired object, goal, state of being, or ideal; or it may be attributed to less-apparent reasons such as altruism, selfishness, morality, or avoiding mortality. Conceptually, motivation should not be confused with either volition or optimism. An organization cannot be functioning without people. It cannot be successful without its employees working together as a team toward the same goal. However, motivating people is one of the most difficult tasks for every manager. Every employee in the company is, first of all, an individual. As any individual, each employer has its own needs and beliefs. Managers have to find the way to set a required environment for everyone to feel satisfied and necessary for the company.

Motivation in the workplace and its major difficulties
The problems in the workplace usually arise because of two things: employee's inability to perform a task and employee's inability to perform the task correctly. While the first factor deals with a person's professional skills, the second one is about his or her role in the company, discipline, and attitude toward the work. Inability to perform a task can be caused by a misunderstanding between an employee and a manager. Workers might not fully understand their responsibilities and tasks within the company. In this case manager can solve the problem by giving clear guidelines and explaining in details, what an employee is responsible for. Inability to perform tasks correctly, on the other hand, is a more important and complex issue. This problem is, usually, caused by the hidden needs and beliefs of an employee. If, for example, a person was raised in the family, where punctuality was never given a great importance, he or she might experience problems with being on time at the meetings and at work in general. A certain employee can be a great professional with a big potential; however, he or she might experience difficulties with sticking to the company's rules. In this case a manager must go deeper into an issue and not just tell the employee, how to work and what to do. It might be easier for a person to quit the job than to change his or her beliefs and habits. However, it might be risky for the company to lose a valuable worker.

The major problems arise in the workplace, when a manager needs to decide what leadership style (and, consequently, organizational culture) to use within a company. "Leaders can shape a team's culture in various ways, for example, by charismatic motivational speeches, by giving an example, or by incentives, i.e., by rewarding desired actions and by punishing unwanted activities" (Gürerk, Irlenbusch & Rockenbach, 2009). The decision of choosing between awarding and punishing techniques appears to be the most difficult and needs a careful examination. There are issues, which are connected to both approaches, and they will be discussed later in the paper.

Theories and their applications
Maslow's Theory. It was mentioned above that each person has his or her own needs and beliefs. Abraham Maslow, however, was the first one, who has developed a theory, where he divided and explained in details certain behavioral features

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of separate individuals. He divided person's needs into physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization. Maslow's theory is formed in a hierarchical way, so that physiological needs appear to be in the bottom of the pyramid and self-actualization- on top. He explains that in order for a person to exist, he, first of all, needs to have food, water, sleep, breathing, etc. All these things, according to Maslow, are necessary in order for the person to be able to move forward and to work on his personal traits. Moreover, Maslow explains that these are the most important needs for every person, which provide him with the initial satisfaction. Safety needs come after physiological ones. These needs are connected to person's home, work, health, family, etc. People need to feel secure about where they are going to sleep, how they are going to earn money and, consequently, support their families. Those are also very strong needs, which affect every person's satisfaction and behavior. Next need is a need for socializing. Each person needs to belong to a certain group of people in order not to feel alone and unneeded. He needs to feel love and affection in order to feel more confident and successful. Whenever previous three needs are satisfied, person moves forward and experiences the necessity in the respect of other people around him, self-esteem, confidence, recognition, achievement, etc. Person needs to feel he has a purpose in life and is able to set his own goals. The respect by other people is crucial, since it affects a person's self-esteem and confidence. The last, but no least, is the need for self-actualization. While all the previous needs were connected with the person's external factors, this last need starts developing in the person's mind. The process of self-actualizing is very complex and tricky, since the needs in this category are not easy to understand. A Person might not be aware of the problems he is facing on this stage, because those needs are deeper and are connected to a person's inner analyses and convictions.

Maslow's theory can be a powerful tool in the hands of a manager. Despite its complexity (especially on the higher stages), it illustrates, what are the most important factors, which influence every person's behavior. This knowledge is very useful, since it can assist in approaching an employee from a correct perspective. The problem can be solved relatively easily, if it becomes clear that a person has a difficulty with satisfying one of the above mentioned needs. Motivating employees, however, is not only about finding out about their five basic categories of needs. Even if the problem is connected to them, manager has to find a correct approach in order to clear things up and improve the way an employee feels in the company.

Hawthorne Study. Hawthorne study was designed in order to find out whether physical factors influence employees behavior in the workplace. It has not shown any specific results; however, it helped to understand another important issue. After a study was completed it became clear that workers started working harder after they have felt an increased attention from their managers. During the study, managers were constantly around their employees for analyzing changes in their behavior, and, as a result, it has caused workers willing to work more and harder. The study has also shown that a performance of the workers was influenced by the ability of managers to handle a communication within the team. Researchers understood that a workplace is a social system for the employees, and that it is highly important to create a pleasant environment within the company for people to feel safe and tranquil.

Theory X and Theory Y. Another theory about employee's motivation was developed by Douglas McGregor. This theory is called 'Theory X and Theory Y'. Theory X claims that all workers try to avoid extra tasks, because they dislike working. Apart from that, it says that people are afraid to take responsibility and must be guided and controlled most of the time. It argues that setting a precarious environment within the company is incorrect, because there are only two proper ways of motivating: rewarding and encouraging self-perfection. According to this theory, however, employees have to behave and work according to the rules set by their managers. Theory Y, on the other hand, leaves a place for self-analyses and creativity in the workplace. It claims that an employee can motivate himself in a pleasant working environment. This theory assumes that a worker will not even be afraid to take responsibility and will try to work more and harder. It emphasizes an importance of a pleasant and satisfying environment within the company.

Immaturity/ Maturity Theory. Chris Argyris offers in his Immaturity/Maturity theory to go deeper into the personality and see how it develops with years. It claims that by analyzing the changes, which happen in every person, managers can have a clearer picture of how to approach their employees. This theory defines seven major changes, which happen in the process of a person's growth. First assumption claims that with time people become more active and movable. Then it claims that adults are less dependent on other people. Third assumption is that adults have a tendency to change their ways of behavior. Fourth says that with time people get more attached to their interests. In fifth assumption Argyris claims that adults become influenced not only by present, but also by the past and future. Sixths assumes that all the adults are on more or less the same level. And, finally, the last assumption claims that grown-up people can recognize and control their own 'self'. Theory's author argues that not every person reaches his or her maturity level. This is important, because it shows that people have to be regarded as separate and different individuals. It also shows that, according to the level of immaturity or maturity of a person, he needs an absolutely different approach.

Motivation-Hygiene Theory. 'Motivation-Hygiene Theory', was developed by Frederick Herzberg. In his study he found that

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there were different factors, which caused satisfaction and dissatisfaction of employees. According to Herzberg's theory employees are satisfied when they are recognized; are allowed to work on their own; are given a responsibility; are able to achieve goals set either by themselves or by a company; etc. However, they are dissatisfied when their salary is too low; they have bad relationships with other employees or with a certain manager; they are being constantly controlled; etc. This theory, which is based on the various employees' evaluations, provides managers with more specific guidelines, which can be used in order to motivate employees and set a pleasant environment within the company.

Steps to motivate an employee
usually money is considered to be the best motivator. However, this assumption is being frequently argued and does not guarantee improvements. Moreover several studies have proved that awarding system sometimes can result in the employees' discouragement. "Psychological research suggests that excessive rewards can in some cases produce supra optimal motivation, resulting in a decline in performance" (Ariely, Gneezy, Loewenstein, Mazar, 2005). It is explained in the study that motivation needs to be separated from the performance. The widespread assumption that increased motivation increases performance is, indeed, not always correct. In the study by Ariely, Gneezy, Lowenstein and Mazar in 2005 it was mentioned and explained that performance depends on different factors, which are not connected to the motivation. They explain further, "Psychologists has documented situations in which increased motivation can result in a decrement in performance– a phenomenon known as "choking under pressure". This happens, for example, when a person must perform in front of the public and is too concerned with his or her performance. In general, it is stated that the more person thinks about a certain process the less successful a performance of the task will be.

Sometimes an employer fails to understand that money is not the most important factor in his or her employee's existence. It is important, but is far from being the most important. There are many factors, which interfere with this assumption. The above mentioned study proves that the awarding techniques can sometimes lead to the decrease in performance.

The subject of 'performing in the public' is further discussed in the study by Ariely, Bracha and Meier in 2007. In this study researchers claim that motivation, which interacts with image, is more effective in private rather than in public. Their research proves that awarding systems have a negative effect on the employees' performance in public.

Some managers believe that employees work better if they fear the people, who are above them in the company. This assumption is also being argued frequently. There is a common belief that the awarding techniques increase motivation, while punishments do the opposite. The study by Gürerk, Irlenbusch and Rockenbach in 2009, however, shows that in the later stages managers are disposed to choose the punishing approach rather than awarding one. Moreover, it proves that the first method has a positive effect on employees' motivation. Researchers explain that employees' fear for the punishment already results in the initial increase in motivation.

Other assumptions are connected to the beliefs that whatever motivates managers also motivates their employees. This is a wrong approach, since every person wants and needs different things. Whatever is good and satisfying for a manager, might be unacceptable or unnecessary for an employee. Finally, some managers believe that employer's behavior is something, which cannot be changed or influenced. Many studies and practices show that this is not the case, and that a person can be understood and motivated.

Manager's role in the motivating process
Managers play the most important role in motivating company's employees. They are responsible for the tasks to be accomplished and for the workers to be satisfied and productive. However, their role in the company is often underestimated. Managers are the people, who have to lead the entire company. They are responsible for setting the goals for the company and communicating it to the employees in a correct way. Supervisor must make sure that his or her information reaches workers and makes them work hard toward the goals. Managers are the leaders in the companies. Employees usually look up to them and expect to see the example of the required model of behaviour. Nevertheless, it appears to be one of the most difficult tasks for a manager to guide its employees for a long period of time.

One of the first things, which a manager should do, before thinking of the ways to motivate his employees, is to examine his own approach toward the work. It is impossible to motivate someone, if one is not motivated himself. It is important for a manager to enjoy his work and feel connected and responsible towards it.

Managers must understand that organizational goals are somewhat different from those of its employees. There are many things to consider before finding the best method for motivating employees. People vary greatly in their needs, and this

makes it very difficult for managers to find one correct approach. Organization and its employees must sometimes be separated in order to better concentrate on each. In any case, whatever the employee's goals are, they must match with those of an organization.

Whenever a manager tries to identify the employees' goals, he must examine each person separately. As was mentioned above, every person is different and needs a different approach. This might be a difficult task; but it will guarantee the success of the motivating process. It is crucial to be able to talk to each worker and to get a deeper understanding of his beliefs and needs. Manager must understand what it takes for an employee to be satisfied with his work.

In addition to that, motivating employees must not be considered as a task or a project. It is a never-ending process, which should always be maintained and further developed. Motivating requires a lot of time and energy; however, it can be gone very easily. Person's life constantly changes, and, consequently, so does his behavior. In order to prevent certain problems before they emerge, managers must always be flexible in their methods and approaches toward people.

Finally, managers must think of the ways to reward workers for the changes performed by them. Good result must always be noticed and encouraged. It is essential for the employee to feel satisfied with his own work. It is also important for workers to feel their supervisors are satisfied with their performance.

Conclusion

Despite of the method, which a manger thinks is the best to use, the most important thing in motivating employees is to understand its importance and necessity. Manager's major goal in the company is to improve its performance both internally and externally. However, these two tasks are linked, and in order for the company to be successful in the market, it must be able to organize its internal forces. Employees, which are motivated in the correct way, will be a good tool in every manager's hands. It will not only guarantee the success of an organization, but also will make the process of running business easier and pleasant.

This paper has illustrated that the common beliefs can often cause the negative results. It has shown that awarding techniques sometimes result in the employee's discouragement. It has also shown that punishing techniques are more effective than awarding ones. Finally, it has illustrated that the motivating process is very complex and involves many nuances, which need to be considered by a manager.