**CHAPTER FIVE**

**Motivation**

Learning Objectives

After completing Chapter 5, you should be able to:

Describe the role that need deficiencies play in motivating employees.

Compare the major differences between the four content approaches of motivation.

Give examples of how the three process approaches affect employee motivation.

Examine how the changing nature of the psychological contract influences employee motivation.

Summarize the action steps that managers can take to motivate employees.

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One story about the culture of IBM concerns a situation involving company founder Thomas Watson. One of his top senior managers made a very costly mistake costing IBM about $3 million. The manager started to clean out his desk to be ready for the inevitable “pink slip” firing. When Watson came to his office to talk, the manager started, “I know why you’re here. I’ll offer my resignation and leave.” Watson looked at the manager and warmly replied: “You don’t think I would let you go after I just spent $3 million to train you.” Watson valued the manager, knew the individual wanted to do well, but had failed.1

Although, the manager’s performance goal in this case was not achieved, he exerted every effort to do the job. Watson wanted to provide a positive motivation atmosphere at IBM. This IBM story has become part of the firm’s cultural history concerning motivation. The manager was an important part of IBM and despite his failure in this case, the leader of the firm was there to support the manager’s willingness to perform.

No one questions the central role motivation plays in shaping behavior and, specifically, in influencing work performance in organizations.2 Nonetheless, as important as motivation is, it is not the only factor that determines performance. Over the years, a variety of other variables thought to play an important role in performance have been suggested. These include ability, instinct, and aspiration level as well as personal factors such as age, education, and family background.

One way of conceptualizing the various determinants of performance is illustrated in Exhibit 5.1. As can be seen from this exhibit, job performance may be viewed as a function of the capacity to perform, the opportunity to perform, and the willingness to perform. The capacity to perform relates to the degree to which an individual possesses task-relevant skills, abilities, knowledge, and experiences. Unless an employee knows what is supposed to be done and how to do it, high levels of job performance are not possible. Having the opportunity to perform is also a critical ingredient in the performance recipe. A researcher for a pharmaceutical drug company whose lab equipment is constantly breaking is unable to perform at the same level as a researcher who does not encounter those difficulties. Sometimes, employees may lack the opportunity to perform not because of poor equipment or outdated technology, but because of poor decisions and outdated attitudes.

EXHIBIT 5.1 Determinants of Job Performance

Source: Adapted from M. Blumberg and C. Pringle, “The Missing Opportunity in Organizational Research: Some Implications for a Theory of Work Performance,” Academy of Management Review, October 1982, p. 565.

Reality Check

How much do you know about motivation?

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In general terms, motivation is made up of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, intensity, and persistence.

intelligence

direction

personality

control

There are many steps in the motivational process. Which step follows after identification of need deficiencies and searching for ways to satisfy those needs?

Goal-directed behavior

Performance

Rewards or punishments

Need deficiencies reassessed

Maslow’s needs hierarchy, Alderfer’s ERG, and McClelland’s learned needs theories can be classified as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

process theories

content theories

learning theories

both a and c are correct

Herzberg referred to such components as salary, job security, and working conditions as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and reasoned that these conditions were needed to keep employees from becoming dissatisfied.

satisfiers

motivating factors

hygiene factors

core benefits

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_occurs when an employee feels that the organization has failed to fulfill an unwritten exchange agreement between the individual and the organization.

Expectancy contract violation

Organizational justice retraction

Judicial contract disturbance

Psychological contract breach

Page 103The third factor, willingness to perform, relates to the degree to which an individual both desires and is willing to exert effort toward attaining job performance. It is, in other words, motivation, and it is what this chapter is about. No combination of capacity and opportunity will result in high performance in the absence of some level of motivation or willingness to perform.

From a managerial perspective, it is important to realize that the presence of motivation per se, coupled with a capacity and opportunity to perform, does not ensure high performance levels. It is a rare manager who has not at some point concluded that performance would be much higher “if I could just get my people motivated.” In all likelihood, those individuals are already motivated; what that manager really wants is motivation that results in more or different kinds of behaviors. To understand this distinction it is helpful to think of motivation as being made up of at least three distinct components: direction, intensity, and persistence.

Direction relates to what an individual chooses to do when presented with a number of possible alternatives. When faced with the task of completing a report requested by management, for example, an employee may choose to direct effort toward completing the report or toward surfing the Internet (or any number of other possible activities). Regardless of which option is selected, the employee is motivated. If the employee selects the first alternative, the direction of his or her motivation is consistent with that desired by management. If the employee chooses the second alternative, the direction is counter to that desired by management, but the employee is nonetheless motivated.

The intensity component of motivation refers to the strength of the response once the choice (direction) is made. Using the previous example, the employee may choose the proper direction (working on the report) but respond with very little intensity. Intensity, in this sense, is synonymous with effort. Two people may focus their behavior in the same direction, but one may perform better because he or she exerts more effort and intensity than the other.

Finally, persistence is an important component of motivation. Persistence refers to the staying power of behavior or how long a person will continue to devote effort. Some people will focus their behavior in the appropriate direction and do so with a high degree of intensity but only for a short time period. Individuals who tackle a task enthusiastically but quickly tire of it, or burn out and seldom complete it, lack this critical attribute in their motivated behavior. Thus, the manager’s real challenge is not so much one of increasing motivation per se but of creating an environment in which employee motivation is channeled in the right direction at an appropriate level of intensity and continues over time.

The Starting Point: Needs Motivate Employees

Most managers must motivate a diverse and, in many respects, unpredictable group of people. The diversity results in different behavioral patterns that are in some manner related to needs and goals. This type of diversity makes the manager’s motivational work very challenging.

As can be seen in Exhibit 5.2, needs refer to deficiencies an individual experiences at a particular time. The deficiencies may be physiological (e.g., a need for food), psychological (e.g., a need for self-esteem), or sociological (e.g., a need for social interaction). Needs are viewed as energizers or triggers of behavioral responses. The implication is that when