Motivation and its Different Levels

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***Introduction***

Every action and reaction has a purpose, a motive. Without that purpose, that action is useless and vain. Motivation refers to the will of performing an action. Motivation is the reason behind anyone’s action; it shows the willingness to achieve a specific goal. Motivation is derived from the word "motive" which refers to the need for satisfaction. Motivation defines an individual’s direction to behavior or the factors that will make that individual repeat that behavior. In short, motivation can be said to be the driving force behind anyone’s activities.

Motivation plays a significant role in any organization. It shapes the behavior of the employees working there which further makes the achievement of organizational goals much easier (Reeve, 2014, p., 34). A motivated employee can prove to be a much better and productive resource for the company as compared to an employee who is not motivated and dull.

***Description***

**Levels of Motivation**

Employee motivation can be a really challenging thing which requires excellent strategic planning and skill. It poses a great challenge for managers as every employee shows a different level of motivation. Not every employee gets motivated by the same thing; for one employee, money may be a very promising and shinning factor to start working and give their best, while for another employee, money may not be of that much importance, but something else would definitely work for him. There are various levels of motivation which define what factor will work the best for any employee. In this regard, Maslow’s need hierarchy paves an excellent way for better understanding.

*Level 1: Incentives*

The first and most basic level of motivation involves incentives and monetary benefits. It is a motivating factor for almost all the individuals no matter where they are working and what role they are performing (Lepper, 2015, p., 195). Nearly all of the employees are motivated by proper monetary benefits and compensation, and these can be used as the best strategies to encourage employees. This can also be the best strategy for the achievement of organizational goals.

*Level 2: Safety and Security*

An employee must feel secure and safe about his job. The management must make sure that job security is ensured in the minds of the employees. If this factor is made strong that the job of the employee is safe and secure and no one is going to kick them out of their jobs at any time, it gives a sense of satisfaction to the employee, and he or she can better concentrate on his or her job duties.

*Level 3: Affiliation*

The sense of belonging acts as a highly motivating factor for the employee. Although it is a tricky factor of motivation, still, very effective and efficient in arising motivation among the employees (Leary, 2017 p., 60). An employee feels more productive and gives out his best when he or she is made to feel like a part of the team, and he or she realizes that the team and organizations own him. It can also bring amazing changes in the behavior of the employee apart from the job responsibilities.

*Level 4: Development*

Development also plays a major role in boosting up the morale of the employee. No matter how much handsome salary he is getting from the organization, or how much secure his job is, if an employee feels that there are no opportunities for growth and development in his organization or at his role, he would gradually lose the charm in the job and ultimately leave the company (Nicholls, 2017, p., 229).

*Level 5: Work-life Balance*

It is one of the significant factors and much has been discussed and done on it by the experts of human resource management. As per the experts, if an employee does not get enough time to spend with his family, or for the activities that he loves, he will not find his job attractive, and will start thinking of quitting it, no matter how good he is being paid. So, for the purpose of retention of its employees, an organization should pay special attention to this factor that his employees are enjoying a proper work-life balance.

**Role of Middle Manager In Motivating The Employees**

A middle manager is the most important person in an organization, especially those organizations which have large and complex hierarchal structures. The middle manager acts as a bridge between the higher management and the immediate employee or the lower management. In his role, the middle manager conveys the concerns of the immediate employee or the labor to the higher management. In the same way, the instructions given for the line managers or the down employees travel down the line via the middle manager.

A manager, especially a middle manager, should always understand the tiresome nature of work and the stressful environment. A middle manager is expected to devise certain strategies to bring motivation to his employee (Pinder, 2015. p., 45). He should always try to take certain steps to keep the employees motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically.

As discussed earlier that not every strategy works of every employee, a manager needs to carefully design the motivational strategies which fit the needs of all the employees or at least cater the needs of the majority of employees. There are certain roles that a middle manager can play in order to bring motivation and keep the employees motivated. Some of them are listed below:

*Combining Work goals with Employee Goals*

Misunderstanding of goals and a wrong allotment of goals can lead to disasters and may contribute to taking the organization down. It is the middle manager's responsibility to clearly communicate the goals and responsibilities to the employees. He or she should clarify to the employees that what exactly are their responsibilities and what the company expects from them. For this purpose, there should be proper communication between the middle managers and the line managers and employees. This will greatly help the employees to better understand the goals and design their strategies as per those goals.

In addition to that, a middle manager should try that the organizational or departmental goals are aligned with the personal goals of the employee. If this aspect of employee motivation is ignored, it may create confusion, and the result would be chaos and frustration. The employee may not be able to understand what you expect from them and you as a middle manager, would not abide to clearly communicate the needs of the organization. As a result of this confusion, the outcomes would not be that much efficient and effective.

*Understanding the motivational needs of every employee*

A good middle manager understands each of his employees and tries to keep them satisfied to the maximum extent so that they can give out their best, for the achievements of their departmental and organizational goals. A good middle manager knows which strategy to be used at what time and what would be the best time to apply any technique for the best outcomes. It is in the knowledge of every middle manager that what motivates every employee working in his team and what are the turning off factors for every individual. For some employees, money and benefits are the biggest motivators, for other, praise is the biggest motivating factor, whereas, for some people, work-life balance works best. A middle manager needs to analyze each and every employee’s individual needs, motivating factors, work-life responsibilities, and underlying motivations. A personal meeting and employee analysis may work best in such cases. In this way, the manager may analyze an employee’s priorities and their work-related desires.

*Creating a Fair System*

A fair system is a big motivating factor and creates a fire in the employees to give out their best. When employees observe that every employee is being treated equally and there exists a fair and just system in the organization, they automatically become motivated to work hard and give maximum time and benefits to the company, as they know, in the back of their mind, that they will be rewarded for this hard work in the end, in complete justice and harmony.

*Leading By Example*

This is the best strategy that a manager can use to motivate his employees and team. The team will follow the example of its leader, which in the case of organizations, is the immediate manager. If the manager is lazy or prone to procrastination, the employees will follow his example and will not give much importance to work. But, on the other hand, if the manager is hard working, and active, even the laziest of employees will have to work hard, and the team will remain motivated.

**Strategies for maintaining high level of Motivation**

Motivation is a constant requirement of a human mind so that it can keep functioning. Motivation guarantees continuous growth and promotion. Good organizations constantly keep striving to plan and design such strategies which will keep their employees motivated, not only extrinsically but also intrinsically. There may be multiple struggles for achieving this purpose, like incentives and bonuses. As discussed, monetary benefits are a very important factor in motivating the employee to give out their best, so an organization should try to give out bonuses and incentives on a regular basis, so that the employees work happily with them. Another strategy may be leisure activities, like tours and in-house games. Another motivational approach adopted by the organizations is the commencement of lump sum leaves on an annual basis, so that the employee gets to spend t ample time with their family and friends.

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