The role of motivation in achieving management goals

Akbar Jadidi Mohammadabadi[1], Ali Hosseinzadeh Ghasemabad[2], Mohammad Naji[3] and Ali Jabbari Zahirabadi[1]

[1]Payam-e-Noor University, Manoojan Branch, Iran; [2] Rafsanjan Education Department, & Payam-e-Noor University, Rafsanjan Branch, Iran; [3] Payam-e-Noor University, Anar Branch, Iran;

Abstract

One of the major responsibilities of managers in an organization is to identify potential capacities of the personnel and to bring about conditions for their growth and realization of these capacities which in turn, serves the basic goal of promoting productivity. In other words, gaining knowledge about motivational factors for improving performance and productivity of the organization is of great importance. Also, such this knowledge can greatly help to improve the application of human resources in organizations, prevent employees' resistance against change, reduce limitations in the output, and prevent conflict among personnel, a process which consequently results in a profitable organization. Motivation is about human life and realization of goals. Human beings live and work happily and hopefully when they feel alive and perceive a meaningful relationship between their work and life.

Keywords: Motivation, Management, Productivity, Organization personnel

Introduction

One of the major duties of managers in an organization is to identifypotential capabilities of their employees and to pave the way for their realization. Thus, it is inevitable for managers to shape internal and external environments in the organization so that they can select appropriate goals to meet employees' needs and motivate them. Motivating employees requires identifying the needs and trying to meet them. The main challenge of an organization is to create a balance between general goals of the organization and personal values of the employees.

Therefore, motivation is the result of a mutual relationship (interaction) between individuals and the situation they are in. Managers who succeed in motivating employees shape the environment in a way that there are appropriate goals to meet employees' needs.

If specific needs of a person in a given situation are taken into account, motivation finds an individual aspect. People might vary in terms of the level of needs. Also, habits and special ways of individuals affect the way they satisfy their needs. One can consider motivation from the perspective of the stages of meeting the needs as well as the impact of past behaviors and experiences. For instance, people's experiences of rewarding employees may decrease or increase their motivation to work. On the other hand, individual's perception and expectations of the organization can affect their motivation. Another aspect of studying motivation deals with the ways of motivating people, including management. Motivation deals with how and in what ways one can motivate people to work more energetically and eagerly to achieve goals and increase productivity.

This makes managers establish hinternal and external environments in the organization to select appropriate goals to meet employees' needs and succeed in motivating them. In this regard, some issues must be kept in mind:

1.   People are different from each other with respect to motivational dynamicity. For example, the motivation level of a worker differs from that of a clerk, and plans motivate an intermediate manager which differs from those motivate a top manager. Also, staff depressed from working in one section of the organization might have a high productivity in another. In addition, a worker who is tired of working with a machine in a city might be able to work with the same machine in another city with-

Corresponding author: Akbar Jadidi Mohammadabadi, Payam-e-Noor University, Manoojan Branch, Iran. E-mail: a_jadidi58@yahoo.com

out feeling tired. Many researchers believe that the reason might not be related to the person or worker; but it may depend on the environment, situation, or work conditions.

2.   The motivation level of an individual varies in different times.

3.   An employee may work hard in an organization but his or her attempts may not be in line with organizational goals. For instance, many employees spend a lot of time talking to their friends and colleagues to meet their social needs. In this situation, a great attempt is made but not for increasing organization profitability. Therefore, the individual's attempts are less likely to improve organization's performance, unless attempts are made to achieve organizational goals.

The above-mentioned points indicate that organizational employees vary in terms of factors contributing to motivation as well as the time and place of its enhancement. Thus, organizations need different plans and tools for creating and increasing their employees' motivation, which is one of the major responsibilities of mangers. The more individuals' needs are met, the more rational their behavior will be. Hence, one major duty of organizations is to find ways to create and enhance employees' motivation.

The relationship between motivation and management

Motivation is one of the basic topics of educational management. The success of organizational management and employees greatly depends on the motivation of its human resources. Motivation is so important that it affects four major issues of education, i.e. learning, growth, personality, and emotion.

•   Motivation and learning:

The findings of many studies indicate that a significant portion of learning relates to learners' interests and needs. Learners learn materials effectively when they are selected according to their needs and presented through interesting methods. Learners' participation in the learning process by working with tools, watching movies, and using educational aids would result in effective learning compared to teaching methods which do not use such tools. In such a situation, behavioral changes take place, which is the main goal of learning effectively.

•   Motivation and growth:

In simple words, growth is the result of a continuation of individuals' satisfaction of logical needs. That is, an individual grows physically by constant nutrition. In a similar vein, if social and psychological needs of individuals are met in educational organizations, social and mental growth will be resulted. So, motivation which is mainly concerned to meet needs is considered as the main factor of the growth. By motivating individuals in educational organizations, one can prepare the ground for individuals' growth in different areas.

•   Motivation and personality:

In studies on the personality, psychologists have found learning and past experiences as major factors constituting personality. The values and methods used for training individuals in early years of life are of great importance. At the same time, schools play a significant role, too. School expectations, opportunities provided by schools for individuals, control and supervision methods, relations with the individual, punishment and reward patterns, and success and failure experiences all contribute to specific thinking and behavior styles which remain as a dominant and identifiable pattern throughout an individual's life.

•   Motivation and emotion:

Emotion which is also called "adaptive response" is the subjective reaction to the environment associated with neural and hormonal responses. Emotions affect an individual's behavior. They are represented as fear, anger, anxiety, aggression, depression and failure. Such emotions are provoked when the individual feels a kind of uncertainty about meeting their needs, barriers in the way of meeting needs, and/or failure in meeting needs. Emotions have many physical, hormonal and mental roots.

Educational environments associated with mental pressure resulting from work, lack of love and affection, threat, punishment, deprivation, and the like lead to negative emotions. Teachers who treat their students with aggression gradually implant experiences of aggression in them. Such aggression, besides being considered as a learned pattern, results from not meeting the needs or risks of meeting them. People who are raised in violent environments and who have experience violence, conduct violent behavior in later stages. Lack of affection and aggressive or indifferent behavior leads to aggressive behavior in the individual.

In some cases, people face problems in recog-

nizing motivation or goals. A motivation or a need is an internal state of the individual, while goals are external and are sometimes referred to as "expected" rewards which attract motivations (Heresi & Blanchard, 1993).

Goals and motivations affect each other. A high motivation leads to the adoption of greater goals, and if such goalsare of a higher value, the individual's motivation to attain it would increase. Nowadays, the role of human resources of an organization in employees' growth and development has been acknowledged. Various studies conducted in different areas of human resources focus on this issue. One of the major and effective areas of human resources is the issue of motivation and how to motivate human resources of an organization. Managers need to use especial mechanisms for motivating their employees. Motivators can be objective and tangible (i.e. a raise) or subjective and intangible (i.e. appreciation of employees' efforts or empowering them) which are as important as intangible motivators in encouraging employees and activating their behaviors (Heresi& Blanchard, 1993).

Of course, it must be mentioned that material motivators such as money are not as motivating as it seems. If salary is high enough to cover expenses of shelter, clothing, eating out, and taking vacations, then increasing salary would not have much impact on division of work. Although an employee does not normally reject the offer for a raise in salary, he or she would soon get used to it (Gizlahagman, 2001).

What encourages employees to work hard is closely related to personal welfare, human relations, and the type of the work. A good working atmosphere, an interesting job, and real visions about personal change attract competent employees. Motivation is primarily related to factors other than money. In contrast, a high salary does not guarantee that people enjoy their job. The good news for management is that they can contribute greatly to the increase in employees' motivation without any expense. Still, if there is any expense involved, it will soon be returned to the organization as profits. Managers, using materialistic and non-materialistic factors, should provide their employees with the interest and motivation to work.

Motivation in management

Motivation is one of the major concerns of education, influencing all activities of learners, teachers and employees. Any manager undoubtedly wants their employees to work eagerly, attend learners' problems, solve them, be kind to the learners, and if necessary, allocate more time to responsibilities while following the goals of organization more seriously. Even though heredity, environment, intelligence, enriching educational atmosphere, and improving teaching methods greatly affect the educational situation, motivation is at the heat of education and no one would learn without motivation. Motivation, in general, is the tendency for educational progress, and, in particular, is the inclination toward specific goals. Today, with in-depth views toward education and new outlooks of psychology, the needs and wants of students are more revealed to teachers. We now know how much every teaching method will help us achieve our goals;know each method's advantages and shortcomings, and how it can be enriched.

Relating lessons to the everyday life and past experiences is an important part of stimulating curiosity and guiding interests as well as creating rich experiences. Supplementary and extra-curricular activities, promoting exploratory learning, representative and role-play teaching methods, and problem-solving patterns make learners central to the learning process while encouraging them to learn. Education in the third millennium differs from that of previous ages. Significant advancements in behavioral sciences and meta-cognitive theories have led to high self-esteem in learners, which is a condition for achieving important goals of education. One cannot expect learners to reach great goals without first achieving average goals which enhance the sense of achievement in them. Goals must be set in relation to daily issues of the learner and with regard to his or her interests.

Since motivation is arises from a set of beliefs and attitudes that families and the society have toward education and progress in science, students coming from families with a positive attitudes would make more educational progress. However, after all discussions which relate motivation to basic needs, social needs, environmental conditions, and emotional relations, the question, at this point, is what can be done to increase teachers' and learners' motivation? One of the issues largely ignored is the relationship between teachers' motivation and learners' motivation. A highly motivated teacher can motivate learners and vice versa. Factors common to teacher's and learner's motivation, such as variety of teaching methods, role-play, discussion groups, exploratory learning, pair work, group

work, and other complementary activities make teachers interested in professional skills, on the one hand, and pave the way for an interesting learning environment, on the other.

It might seem that the ability to motivate others is an innate capacity and some might possess it while others do not. However, this capacity can be studied and acquired through a process which is called "motivation management".

Motivation and rewarding

To train people to develop sound attitudes, they must be guided to view their job as a meaningful activity. Success and failure of productivity plans depend on attitudes, strategies, policies, and more importantly, practical activities of the managers. There are two types of basic strategies for productivity: The first type is based on increasing investment in work, which is highly costly and time-consuming method. The second type which is based on better management methods uses managerial techniques such as collective planning, goal-based management, and application of computerized and high-tech information systems.

Non-material motivations

In some circumstances, emotional motivations are stronger than monetary ones. Belief in emotional motivation leads to more participation of employees in the management process. This can stimulate employees' sense of cooperation without considering monetary profits. One major element of Japan's economic success is the tendency of Japanese workers to actually work. This tendency results from cultural attitudes which value group-oriented behaviors and prioritize public interest over personal interest. The studies also emphasize the fact that Japanese workers do not view their jobs as solely a way to make income; rather they consider work as a place for showing their talents and capabilities. Therefore, Japanese employees feel belonged to the whole company not a certain job. Indeed, sources of non-material motivation are not limited to appreciation and work ethics. It involves employees' involvement in decision-making, working life quality, and working conditions.

A solution for motivational problems

The thorniest barrier facing managers for improving motivation is their wrong conception of their job as a manager. The job of a manager is not solving problems, because effectively solving all problems in their field of expertise is not possible. They should find a solution for problems, while motivation can greatly help. When employees are not properly motivated, they themselves know what the problems are and what solutions can be applied to those problems. Managers can guide employees toward stating their major problems and offering solutions for them.

Conclusion

Motivational features, which can help achieve effective performance, play a significant part in people's responses to their job conditions. The findings indicate that the need for professional progress is related to managers' success, and features such as the need for power, financial reward, and job security are not important for managers. Highly-motivated managers try to take responsibility of their job. In such a situation, they enjoy doing jobs more and do not let others prevent them from reaching their goals. Features such as accepting the responsibility of solving problems and commitment to advance organizational goals guarantee success. Such people perceive the world objectively and constantly correct their mistakes. They are more committed and loyal to their organization than others. Managers who are at this level of need try to reach the highest level of awareness. They believe in constant growth and development in the organization which results in their progress.

Regarding the need for power, it can be argued that managers' power is exerted in two directions: in a negative direction, i.e. dominating others in a dictatorial manner, and in positive direction, i.e. guiding other through encouragement and reward. Managers belonging to the first group are individuals who try to influence others, and, more than thinking about effective performance, try to increase their power and fame. They are strongly inclined to control employees. Such a control leads to higher resistance on the part of employees, reducing performance of the organization. Since power-oriented managers try to dominate other, their behavior disturbs effective performance of the organization. Considering the need for financial reward, it can be argued that such rewards have a controlling role in the job and reduce the sense of qualification and freedom. In other words, financial rewards

can be considered evidence for individuals' qualification and make them believe that they are working for getting reward. Hence, they decrease the sense of qualification and freedom, leading to a decline in performance. Thus, material factors are not considered primary motivational factors, rather they are secondary sources. People who need job security believe that if they are certain of the future of their jobs, they would succeed in doing organizational duties. They have security needs and if those needs are not met, other values would be meaningless to them. A successful individual is no longer motivated by security needs; rather he or she strives for respect and growth. Hence, it does not matter for successful managers to be certain of their future and social position in the organization as they are making attempts for satisfy other needs.

References

Alvani, S. M. (2000). General management. Ney Publications, Tehran.

Andersen, J (1999). If you actually want to succeed. Translated by Zehtab, D.

Desler, G (1992). Basics of management. Translated by Madani, D. Navid pub. 2nded.

Ferris, G. R, &Rowland K.M(1988). Human resources management, perspective and issues. Boston Allyn and Bacin Inc.

Hagman, G (2001). Motivation and change management. Translated by Goodarzi, A. M.

Heresy, P,&Kent B (2005). Management of organizational behavior. Translated by Alagheband, A.

Horton, T. R (1995).Characteristics of a successful senior manager. Translated by Kosarinejad, Gh. Public Administration Journal, 28, Published by Public Administration Education Center.

Lajevardi, M.R(2001). Motivation management. Management, Tehran, Iranian Management Association.

Mark, J.S. (1999). Human resource management. Translated Al-e-agha, F. Tehran: Public Administration Education Center.

Naeli, M. A (1994).Motivation in organizations. Ahwaz: Shahid Chamran University, 1sted.

SeyyedJavadin, S. R. (2007). Theories of Management. Negah-e Danesh, 3rded.

Rezaeian, A. (2002). Principles of organizational behavior management.

Rio, J.M. (1999).Motivation and emotion. Translated by Seyyed Mohammadi, Y. Virayesh Publication, Bahar, and Tehran.

Roth, A.R.,&Ross T. (1999). Workforce management, motivation, and division of achievements. Translated by translation group of the ministry of industries. Tehran: Basir Publication.