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Employee/Work Place Services: The Individual

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ABSTRACT

One of the often forgotten elements in the employee/workplace services is the individual. This does not suggest that there has not been a focus on this topic historically, but the amount of emphasis that it has received and should receive should be far more. The other aspect is that even if the employee has been addressed sometimes there is a very simplistic approach to develop a greater understanding. Employees are very complex subject just as the organization. This subject can be studied from a number of perspectives. The perspective that was adopted for this essay has been one that has been used in a number of settings, a Maslow theory. The primary focus of Maslow's the individual and this theory was modified to include an extended perspective.

Really, Maslow is only beginning to the development of a basic understanding of the individual from their interests to their life's dreams.

INTRODUCTION

One theory that has been well-established is Maslow's hierarchy that is based on the needs of the individual. This is been widely discussed. There are individuals who note the Maslow's hierarchy has been studied and has survived the test of time. Others continue to argue about the true nature of this hierarchy. One problem definitely is the operationalization of this theory from a practical application perspective.

Maslow is a motivational hierarchy that helps explains an individual's behavior. It is based upon the premise there is a gradient. This gradient is associated with the achievement of one level before another level can be accomplished. It has been used in a variety of situations to explain the intense desire of an individual to move from an existence/survival to one of achievement/self-fulfillment. In a previous research document, one of the authors suggested a modification of Maslow to include the concept of "other directed". This is a concept in which the individual has fulfilled his/her needs and has reached out to help others through service. This concept was used in this study to modify Maslow's hierarchy to include the original categories and to expand the hierarchy to include the concept of other directed.

Employee services often have been based upon interest of the employees. Often, interest surveys are conducted and programs built around these types of surveys. It must be recognized that interest change over time with different populations. The idea being presented in terms of this study is that needs is a better measure because these do not changed through time. A need remains the same and the individual will have the ability to select different interests in terms of their participation to fulfill a need. The concept of the need provides a more stable approach to begin to understand the behavior of employees.

The expression of needs is a window into the motivational decisions of the individual. It gives a perspective to the understanding of how and why decisions are made. Many times decisions of an individual do not seem to be on a logical basis, but the rationality of a decision is internally consistent with the cognitive makeup of the individual. What may seem irrational to an individual observing behavior is quite rational to the individual decision-maker. The consistency of perspective is important to illustrate how irrational a decision may seem. This does not suggest that all decisions have an external consistent position. There is a basis for decisions that are made and the motivational aspect is one way to understand the internal consistent that seems to be an irrational position. The signals may be external or internal. It is very difficult to get to a perspective on core beliefs and values of the individual to begin to understand the motivations. The concept of rationality or irrationally does not apply, except for the individual trying to apply their basis of decision-making to a diversity of different populations. Maslow's hierarchy provides insight into how and why decisions are made from an internal perspective.

Based upon the Blake/Mouton model there are two perspectives. One is from an organizational point of view and the other is from an individual perspective. There are in fact many different positions when considering the organization. They range from the CEO through middle management to supervisors. When considering the individual perspective they represent many different types of employees. It must be recognized that even at the different organizational and employee levels all are based upon an individual perspective and have a common base. There is also a perspective from a diversity of consumers that the organization serves. The idea of a common base also applies to these consumers. Maslow seeks to describe the common base to these various audiences. It is the expression of the need by the different populations in a diversity of environments and conditions that gives understanding to how decisions are made. As noted, consideration of rationality or irrationality is secondary. The primary objective is to understand the basis of motivation from the environments and conditions. For example, one employee may work primarily for the health insurance because of their failing health and another may work for the compensation to maintain a standard of living. Both of these reasons give perspective to the physiological need of the first level of Maslow.

Chiu, H. C. and Lin, N. P. 2004 A Service Quality Measurement Derived from the Theory of Needs, Service Industries Journal, Vol. 24(1), and pp 187-204.

This concept can be expressed in terms of an article by Chiu and Lin. The basic physical need is expressed in terms of comfort, convenience, responsiveness. The safety needs are expressed in

terms of assurance, reliability, consistency, and secrecy. Belonging and love needs are expressed in terms of relationship, approval, and empathy. The esteem needs are expressed in terms of self-esteem, superiority, politeness analysts, and acceptance. The self-actualization needs are expressed in terms of growth, show, care of the social affairs. The knowledge and understanding needs are expressed in terms of innovation and learning. The ascetic needs are expressed in terms of appreciation of nature, arts, and literature. There are multiple environments and conditions that are expression of each need category. For example, one individual may be self-actualized in terms of rewards within the organization and another individual may be self-actualized in terms of awards through contributions to service organizations. It is extremely important to understand the environment and conditions not just the motivational categories as expressed in terms of their content. It is the process that makes the difference in terms of understanding decisions based upon motivation using Maslow.

NEW MODEL

Even though needs give insight into understanding decisions, they are a short-term measure and provide insight into a small frame of reference. The primary question being raised is there a larger systems perspective they can provide additional guidance to understanding the individual. It is evident that the individual seeks to fulfill and satisfy their needs. These are the immediate considerations. The individual expresses these needs in terms of different interest. These interests represent different instantaneous pursuits. They change with different environmental and circumstances through an individual's life. The need and the remains the same, but the individual seeks to find different ways to express the different level of their needs. As the individual pursues their interest in the light of their level of needs, the primary outcome is success, satisfaction, and happiness. These are the end results of the achievement of the different need levels. There obviously are the negative conditions of not achievement. This causes the individual to find new paths and interest to be able to have a successful positive energy. This pursuit of the complete achievement is a rarely accomplished. The individual's life therefore is a constant pursuit of both positive and negative experiences in regard to the pursuit of short-term outcomes.

The long term achievement of dimension of meaning in life and the achievement are obviously tied to the short-term outcomes. These outcomes are the building blocks toward the overall accomplishment of the perspective life's experiences. These dimensions are not set in stone and can be changed as one moves through their life. Meaning in life is an intermediate step to the achievement of dreams. Dreams are final or end outcome. Events can have an important meaning in life without the achievement of one's dreams. Again these meaning in life events are

intermediate building blocks. They are structural and functional elements to making one feel that their life has long-term accomplishments. Dreams are lofty goals that that provide direction and once one has supposedly achieved these levels there is a great sense of accomplishment. Often, when one is has not accomplish one's dreams it is not disastrous as long as there events have some significance in terms of meaning of life. These dreams can be adjusted. When there has been very little progress toward achievement of dreams, this is when there are problems and depression about one's life. The other aspect of dreams is also true in that when expectations are exceeded, one realizes there life has had a significant importance to them maybe as well as others. The meaning in life and dreams are a direct result of one's expectations and how they have developed and why.

A very important theme through all of the structural elements interests, needs, meaning in life, and dreams are significant moments. These are the micro building blocks. They are associated with each of the structural elements. They are the elements that influence the direction of the structural and functional basis of the makeup of one life and their pursues toward fulfillment. In order to understand the decisions and the guiding structures of the individual, you must understand not only the interest and needs, but the long term elements of their life. Through the development of significant moments, organizations can have a significant impact upon the individual. The significant moments must be understood in relation to the short and long-term structural elements of an individual's makeup.

Model

	Significant Moments	Impacts	Structure/Function
Interest	initial appeal/curiosity	hobby	+ worth/value
Needs	consumed with	lifestyle	identity
Suc/hap/satis	fulfillment	obsession	relevance
Meaning in Life	accomplishment	attainment	achievement
Dreams	jubilation	pride	triumph

Note:

(Suc/hap/satis/= Success/happiness/satisfaction)

MEASUREMENT

Needs

Groves, D. L. and Cavins, B. 2021 An Employee Services Model: Morale and Satisfaction, Visions in Leisure and Business, Vol. 23(3), pp 42-79.

A previous instrument was developed to assess employee service programs based upon Maslow. The format followed some of the previous instruments through the using of importance/performance. This instrument recognized that assessment must be based upon attributes and evaluated in terms of specific dimensions such as life satisfaction, job satisfaction, and productivity. The format suggested was one that would give an indication about the nature of program changes/attributes that needed to be improved based upon specific outcomes. The unique nature of the proposed instrument helps to determine not only the status of the program for justification, but also had an element of assessment to determine what changes to be made in the future to improve the organization. The overall stratification of the items was based upon a modification of the Maslow hierarchy.

Quote:

Pg. 45-46

Modified Maslow Hierarchy:

Maslow hierarchy was modified for this study. The system is primarily individual oriented. The modification recognizes that some of the motivation for the individual's behavior is "other

directed". This is the responsibility of the individual toward other individuals and the society. The following is the modified Maslow typology:

Physiological/Health- self/extrinsic motivation/awards for skills/orientation toward the individual (Blake-Mouton)/Need to be completed before achievement can occur.

Safety- Self-interest including family-significant others /extrinsic motivation/awards for skills/orientation toward the individual (Blake-Mouton)/primary concern is security and well-being.

Need to Belong and be Loved-Social development (Immature)/intrinsic motivation/awards for organizational contribution (process not an end result)/orientation toward the organization (Blake-Mouton)/ desire to achieve and be involved in the processes of organization/identification with organization.

Esteem-Social development (learning how to relate to others)/ intrinsic motivation/awards for organizational contribution (end results)/orientation toward the organization (Blake-Mouton)/affiliation with organization/achievement based upon end results.

Self-actualization I-Social development (Mature)/formative leadership/ intrinsic motivation/awards for organizational contribution (end results and products)/orientation toward the organization (Blake-Mouton)/ seeks to achieve advanced position/wants to become star in organization.

Self-actualization II-Social perfection/mature leadership/intrinsic motivation/awards for community service or organizational service/orientation toward the organization (Blake-Mouton)/outcome and success focused /has important position, but desires growth.

"Other directed" I: "Other directed"-social recognition/minimal service/manipulative leadership/ intrinsic motivation/awards for community service or organizational service/orientation toward the organization (Blake-Mouton)/concerned about image /responds to normative processes/larger perspective of self and organization.

"Other directed" II: "Other directed"-active service/compassionate leadership/ intrinsic motivation/awards for community service or organizational service/orientation toward the organization (Blake-Mouton)/cares about individual/self-sacrifice/relates service to causes.

"Other directed" III: "Other directed"-spiritual motivation/self-sacrifice leadership/ intrinsic motivation/awards for community service or organizational service/orientation toward the organization (Blake-Mouton /extremely compassionate/fiercely loyal/emotionally involved.

This system and others based upon Maslow provide a reality in terms of behaviors that have a conditions and environmental reasons to understand the motivational decision process. Everyday decisions are made in terms of reality of life. This reality is the basis the formulation of values and beliefs on which decisions are made. Often this is a short term perspective regarding psychological reality of an individual's life. The organization often takes this short-term approach and it is often successful because it is directly related to an individual's satisfaction. The way the organization approaches the development of employee programs is:

Quote:

Organization approach

Sawyer pg. 6

Each organization has its own unique culture. There is no way to say that one organizations culture is good and another one is not so good. They are just different. These differences are a part of what makes employers more or less attractive to different people. Workers have choices, so they choose the employers and cultures that are most comfortable for them.

It is important to recognize at this point that a different approach often gives depth perspective to understanding the individual. This approaches beyond dollars and cents and rewards. It is a perspective from the individual's meaning in life and dreams and what they hope to

accomplishment on a long-term basis in their life. It is beyond happiness and satisfaction that points to the various dimensions of meaning in life. It is important to understand how these dreams relate to the individual and their decisions on an everyday basis to accomplish their hopes and desires.

Quote:

Employees

Sawyer pg. 9

People are the most valuable resource for any corporation. The employee services provider is the link between the employee and the employer and clearly understands that these people make choices every day. They choose whether or not to (1) go to work for an employer or not, (2) stay with that employer, (3) work productively or non-productively while they are there, and (4) help the employer to become successful.

Meaning in Life and Dreams

Martela, F., and Steger, M. F. 2016 The Three Meanings of Meaning in life: Distinguishing Coherence, Purpose, and Significance, The Journal of Positive Psychology, Vol.11 (5), pp 531–545.

Naghiyaee, M., Bahmani, B. and Asgary, A. 1987 The Meaning in Life Scale: Determining the Reliability and Validity of a Measure, Vol. 40(6), pp 503-512.

Rose, L. M., Zask, A., and Burton, L. J. 2017 Psychometric Properties of the Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ) in a Sample of Australian Adolescents, International Journal of Adolescence and Youth, Vol. 22(1), pp 68–77.

Steger, M. F., and Shin, J. Y. 2010 The Relevance of the Meaning in Life Questionnaire to Therapeutic Practice: A look at the Initial Evidence, International Forum on Logotherapy, Vol. 33, pp 95-104.

Steger, M. F., Frazier, P., Oishi, S., and Kaler, M. 2006 The Meaning in Life Questionnaire: Assessing the Presence of and Search for Meaning in Life, Journal of Counseling Psychology, Vol. 53(1), pp 80–93.

Steger, M. F., Frazier, P., Oishi, S., and Kaler, M. 2006) The Meaning in Life Questionnaire: Assessing the Presence of and Search for Meaning in life, Journal of Counseling Psychology, Vol. 53, pp 80-93.

Meaning in life is an intermediate stage and refers to the significance stages in your total life or season. This is tied to happiness and satisfaction with your current condition or status. It is an exploration of a larger perspective. It serves a number of functions based upon the individual's perception of their performance based upon a standard. It is also associated with an element of self-worth in relation to being able to exercise control over one's life. There are three primary components coherence, purpose, and significance.

Keefer, A. 2019 The Meaning of Life in Ecclesiastes: Coherence, Purpose, and Significance from a Psychological Perspective, Harvard Theological Review, Vol. 112(4), pp. 447 – 466.

Martela, F., and Steger, M. F. 2016 The Three Meanings in Life: Distinguishing Coherence, Purpose, and Significance, The Journal of Positive Psychology, Vol. 11(5), pp 531–545.

Cohesion is a sense of comprehensive ability. Purpose is goals and objectives related to direction in life. Significance is the worth in life based upon standards. Even though these are the three component structures, the meaning in life can shift as one obtains a deeper spiritual understanding of their position in life. This is a direct reflection of how one feels about them. The real question is how one achieves this position. It is in the structural development of needs, satisfaction, and a sense of achievement. As meaning in life shifts there is discovery process in this directly influences how one reflects about their existence. There is obviously from this

exploration a practical element that is directly related to long-term considerations based upon direct experience. There have been theories since ancient times that include Aristotle, Plato, Confucius, Socrates, John Locke, etc. The explorations of these philosophies give rise to a number ways of examining meaning. The common dimension is long-term considerations of achievement. These various philosophies are based upon both structure and function of the elements of one's life.

An important aspect is how meaning is measured. It can be a very simple instrument that deals with one's position and reflective thoughts as to where they are related to achievement. The other aspect is a psychographic approach that uses in-depth questions to explore the nature of once thought about self.

An interesting concept that plays off of the subject of meaning in life is that of dreams. One often has a state of mind of where they thought they would be at a certain position in life based upon accomplishments. An interesting reflection is the difference between meaning as a standard and where they are and where they thought they would be. Where an individual thought they would be is the basic dimension of dreams.

A distinction should be made between dreams and expectations. If it's a short-term outcome, it is an expectation. If it is a long term outcome it is a dream. Expectations are more achievable than dreams. Dreams are often tied to ambition and this may be the motivating factors related to achievement of outcomes. Expectations are more of a cognitive process while dreams are more emotional. There is a relationship between expectations and dreams. There are many paths to achieve expectations but usually only a finite way to achieve dreams. Dreams help one understand oneself. Dreams are a standard for the long-term and expectations are the short-term components that can help you achieve the dreams. Dreams and expectations are usually explored utilizing qualitative methodology and focus upon hobbies, talents, inspiration, passions, work, travel, self-perception, weakness, goals, etc. Expectations are anticipations of circumstances and can change instantaneously. Both expectations and dreams impact one's life by being a guide that helps one develop a path to final outcomes. An interesting part of expectations and dreams is the belief that they can be achieved in light of the risks along the way. Another aspect is the images and symbols that an individual hold strong to maintain their grasp of reality in relation to events that may not happen. Dreams are often modified by reality. It really depends upon the emotional attachment to the dream. Emotional intelligence is an important part of the ability to not get caught up in the expectations and dreams and live in a world that is really not achievable. This emotional intelligence is the ability to be able to deal with reality and develop paths that lead to the successful achievement of expectations and dreams.

SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS

Brackett, M. A., Rivers, S. E., and Salovey, P. 2011 Emotional intelligence: Implications for Personal, Social, Academic, and Workplace Success, Social and Personality Psychology Compass, Vol. 5(1), 88-103.

Clark, A. E. and   Oswald, A. J. 2002 A Simple Statistical Method for Measuring How Life Events Affect Happiness, International Journal of Epidemiology, Vol. 31(6), pp 1139–1144.

Gramling, L. F., and Carr, R. L. 2004 Lifelines:A life history methodology, Nursing Research, Vol. 53(3), pp 207–210.

Mark Tausig, M. 1982 Measuring Life Events, Journal of Health and Social Behavior, Vol. 23(1), pp. 52-64.

Salovey, P., and Mayer, J. D. 1990 Emotional intelligence. Imagination, Cognition and Personality, Vol. 9(3), 185-211.

Ssali, S., Theobald, S. and Hawkins, K. 2017 Life Histories: A Research Method to Capture People's Experiences of Health Systems in Post-Conflict Countries, Health Policy and Planning, Vol. 32(4), pp 595–601.

Warner, S. C. and Williams, J. I. 1987   The Meaning in Life Scale: Determining the Reliability and Validity of a Measure, Journal of Chronic Diseases, Vol. 40(6), pp 503-512.

The common thread from interests to dreams is how to design experiences that are significant moments. The significant moments are the building blocks for each step from needs to dreams. It

is important to isolate significant moments and what makes them important. This is the key to the development of the fulfillment of individual processes beyond needs. The dynamics of these building blocks are at the very core of the individual's decision processes. Most of the measurement or instruments to find significant moments are usually qualitative. The process is usually to ask about choosing one or two significant moments that have been influential in an individual's life and why. There are also quantitative measures to try to determine to what degree certain moments have in an individual's life. It is essential that the significant moments be divided into those that have a short-term effect and those that are long term. It is difficult to design experiences that have a long-term effect in one's life. The primary objective is to help the individual by designing short-term experiences that have a significant influence. The first step in this process is the development of understanding of how and why events are important in the individual's life and building experiences to amplify these events. Through the development of short-term significant events it is possible to help the individual to reflect the value clarification on life experiences and modify each of the stages from needs to dreams. In fact, with the proper guidance and development ones dreams can be exceeded. It must be understood that these are dynamic processes that influence an individual's life and is directly proportional to an individual having a much fulfilled life so that the individual will reach out and move into other directed experiences as defined in the Maslow's need hierarchy.

Creation of Significant Moments

Dan Heath, D. and Harbinger, J. https://nextbigideaclub.com/magazine/conversation-how-to-create-a-moment-youll-remember-for-life/19110/.

Del Sarto, L. https://deserthealthnews.com/story/creating-meaningful-moments/.

Fahkry, T. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-create-more-meaningful-moments-life-tony-fahkry?trk=pulse-article_more-articles_related-content-card.

Friedlander, J. https://www.success.com/the-power-of-creating-meaningful-moments/.

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McLarney, T. https://stylewithmeaning.com/blogs/news/five-powerful-ways-to-create-meaningful-moments-with-those-you-love.

Millen, j. https://www.johnmillen.com/blog/how-to-create-special-moments.

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Significant moments are very hard to define because they are very personal. There is also a great variability of the impacts among events that cause significant moments. The creation of these events is more of an art than a science. There are efforts to study the basic theories behind significance, but it is extremely difficult because of the variability of impact in terms of the psychological mechanisms. The common dimensions of the human experience are the beginning to the understanding of these moments. These moments can be classified in terms of natural or contrived. Both of these are factors that create change in an individual's life. This change is the best way to define these elements. The amount and type of change is the best way to understand the phenomena of significant moments. The one dimension that defines change is the critical nature of the event that that changes the direction of an individual's life. One of the ways to obtain insight into an individual's significant moments is to ask: what is the one event in your life that has changed your perspective or behavior? There should be follow up questions to provide a clearer understanding of the dynamic processes for that individual. It is these dynamic processes that must be well understood in order to design effective significant events. Natural elements can be used once the event has occurred. Contrived events are often the precursor of events. The result of a well-designed program is what makes the impact upon the individual.

Natural Events:

Natural significant moments are direct result of an event in an individual's life. There are two types of events: planned and spontaneous. Planned events are highly anticipated and are very dependent upon details. These details are based upon personal choices. Spontaneous events are a direct result of random occurrences. These occurrences are often very timely and the significance is not felt immediately. Both of these events require adjustment and it is in the modification

where the influence for change happens. The adjustment process is often an intervention and without the intervention the experience from the significant moment is often very negative. Many times these natural moments have a very life changing impact.

Example

Getting married or divorced

Retiring

Losing a Loved One

Having a baby

Death of a spouse where there are two incomes and no insurance. Requires action to maintain standard of living.

Having a new baby in a marriage. Requires a change in relationship between partners.

Contrived:

There are two types of contrived: crisis and spontaneous. Whether the crisis is planned or a result of a major catastrophe, there is stress in the system for modification In this instant, alteration is a necessary function to even maintain the system. Often, change is not sought but demanded. This stress is what creates opportunities to bring about significant moments. Spontaneous are opportunities that involve a crossroads where decisions have to be made to maintain status quote or changes that will radically alter the future. This involves change where there is great risk involved. Change has a wider perspective about one's future. These processes are often adaptation. These events can even be more personal than the natural events.

Example

Taking a big trip.

Paying of debt.

Finishing school.

There was a family that was on vacation to celebrate the anniversary of the daughter and her husband. The trip was obviously a great event for the family as well as the couple. The anniversary was being celebrated with the trip to Las Vegas. The couple celebrating the anniversary had briefly discussed the opportunity to redo their marriage vows. The family took the opportunity to plan a spontaneous wedding at one of the chapels in Las Vegas. As part of the ceremony, the couple was remarried by an Elvis Presley impersonator. The event included limousines, the ceremony with extensive songs, dinner with Elvis, etc. These events were filmed which provided a permanent record of this event and it could be shared with family, friends, and coworkers. The impact was a historic event that is often re-examined at family gatherings.

A decision to quit a job and go back to school to pursue new opportunities with an advanced degree. An unexpected scholarship was offered to pursue education.

CONCLUSION

When considering the individual, it is essential to take a holistic approach. This is trying to understand the world of work from a life's perspective. The traditional approach is to analyze interest and needs. A new perspective is needed that studies interests, needs, meaning in life, and dreams and how this influences the individual. Once these components are understood, question becomes one of how to design significant moments that have an influence upon structure and function to build a consistent positive experience for the individual that influences their work and their life.