

7.18: Summary

In this chapter, we first defined motivation and collaboration. We then considered the roles that motivation play in human behavior. We identified and explained the place of strategies for bringing about motivation and collaboration. Finally, we explored the crucial role played by feedback and assessment in motivating members of a group.

Chapter Review Questions

Interpretive Questions

1. What factors might cause a highly-motivated individual to lose his or her motivation abruptly?
2. Under what circumstances might collaboration be of minor importance to members of a group?
3. How would you rank the collaboration strategies described in section 4 of this chapter? On what basis do you feel your ranking is justified?

Application Questions

1. Do motivational speakers actually cause members of their audiences to be motivated? Identify a total of at least half a dozen members of your family, friends, and peers who have heard motivational speakers and ask them how, if at all, the speakers changed their behavior or outlook.
2. A commonly-held view of coaches in competitive sport is that they motivate athletes to achieve personal triumphs and develop productive collaboration with teammates. Investigate this issue and share your findings.
3. Some people feel that, despite its intended purpose of increasing achievement, “high-stakes” assessment of K-12 students entails more drawbacks than advantages. Do you agree? Locate writings by three supporters and three opponents of such assessment, share the documents with classmates, and explain why you endorse or disagree with any two of them.

7.1 Motivation: Direction and Intensity

Define motivation, and distinguish the direction and intensity of motivation.

This chapter has covered the major motivation theories in organizational behavior. Motivation theories endeavor to explain how people become motivated. Motivation has two major components: direction and intensity. The direction is what a person is trying to achieve. Intensity is the degree of effort a person expends to achieve the target. All motivation theories address the ways in which people develop direction and intensity.

7.2 Content Theories of Motivation

Describe a content theory of motivation, and compare and contrast the main content theories of motivation: manifest needs theory, learned needs theory, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, Alderfer’s ERG theory, Herzberg’s motivator-hygiene theory, and self-determination theory.

Motivation theories are classified as either content or process theories. Content theories focus on what motivates behavior. The basic premise of content theories is that humans have needs. When these needs are not satisfied, humans are motivated to satisfy the need. The need provides direction for motivation. Murray’s manifest needs theory, McClelland’s learned needs theory, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, and Herzberg’s motivator-hygiene theory are all content theories. Each has something to say about the needs that motivate humans in the workplace.

7.3 Process Theories of Motivation

Describe the process theories of motivation, and compare and contrast the main process theories of motivation: operant conditioning theory, equity theory, goal theory, and expectancy theory.

Process theories focus on how people become motivated. Operant conditioning theory states that people will be motivated to engage in behaviors for which they have been reinforced (rewarded). It also states that people will avoid behaviors that are punished. The rate at which behaviors are rewarded also affects how often they will be displayed. Equity theory’s main premise is that people compare their situations to those of other people. If a person feels that they are being treated unfairly relative to a referent other, the person may engage in behaviors that are counterproductive for the organization. Employers should try to develop feelings of fairness in employees. Goal theory is a strong theory. It states that difficult, specific goals will result in high performance if employees accept the goals and are committed to achieving them.

7.4 Recent Research on Motivation Theories

Describe the modern advancements in the study of human motivation.

Expectancy theory is a process theory. It also is the broadest of the motivation theories. Expectancy theory predicts that employees will be motivated to be high performers if they perceive that high performance leads to valued outcomes. Employees will be motivated to avoid being low performers if they perceive that it leads to negative outcomes. Employees must perceive that they are capable of achieving high performance, and they must have the appropriate abilities and high self-efficacy. Organizations need to provide adequate resources and to measure performance accurately. Inaccurate performance ratings discourage high performance. Overall, the expectancy theory draws attention to how organizations structure the work environment and distribute rewards.

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