

11.20: Job Characteristics that Affect Motivation

Learning outcome

- Describe the job characteristics that affect motivation.

When we covered organizational structure, you learned that the way characteristics of a job are organized can act to increase or decrease effort (job characteristics model). Building on that model, you will learn how job rotation, job enlargement, and job enrichment can have a major impact on motivation.

Job Rotation



McDonald's uses job rotation to keep employees engaged

Job rotation involves periodically shifting an employee from one task or job to another in an effort to decrease boredom. By cross-training employees, companies have also found reductions in repetitive motion injuries and turnover. Lincoln Electric, a manufacturer of welding and cutting parts company, regularly cross-trains all its employees, including salaried management, to weld and operate production machines. This cross-training effort has helped minimize layoffs during downturns and increased job satisfaction.

McDonald's, the fast food restaurant, uses job rotation. According to a manager in McDonald's Hong Kong locations, the young staff wants flexible working hours and is easily bored. But McDonald's job rotation policy makes workers feel like they can learn something new every day.^[1]

Job Enlargement

Expanding jobs horizontally by increasing the number and variety of tasks that an individual performs is known as job enlargement. It seeks to motivate workers through reversing specialization. For example, replacing an assembly line with modular work gives each worker more variety and responsibility. Audi, for instance, is experimenting with modular assembly for its cars.^[2]

Although some employees may welcome the opportunity to take on more work, a 1993 study had mixed results. The study looked at job enlargement efforts among clerical staff and managers in the financial services industry. For most employees, the extra work resulted in less satisfaction and efficiency, and stressful overload and errors.^[3]

Job Enrichment

Job enrichment refers to the vertical expansion of jobs. It increases the degree to which an employee also controls the planning and evaluation of the work that she executes. An enriched job increases the employee's independence and responsibility. It also provides feedback, making it possible for employees to evaluate and improve their own performance.^[4]

Practice Question

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...essments/12279>

1. Liana Cafolla. "McDonald's top recipe for loyalty," cpjobs, June 21, 2011, accessed Aug. 9, 2017, <https://www.cpjobs.com/hk/article/mcdonalds-top-recipe-loyalty>↵
2. "Modular Assembly," Smart Factory illustrated. <https://audi-illustrated.com/en/smart-factory/Die-Modulare-Montage>↵
3. Michael A. Campion and Carol L. McClelland, "Follow-Up and Extension of the Interdisciplinary Costs and Benefits of Enlarged Jobs," Journal of Applied Psychology 78, no. 3 (1993): 339–351 ↵

4. J. Richard Hackman and Greg R. Oldham, Work Redesign, Reading, MA: Addison Wesley, 1980 ↩

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