

The Role of Motivation in Organizational Behavior

Motivation and Organizational Theory

Though we have discussed motivation extensively earlier, the role of the HR department and the role of the organizational culture in motivating employees have not been discussed at length. As organizational theory states, employees need to be motivated to actualize their potential and there are several ways of enabling them and empowering them to do so. These include the role of reward systems in motivating employees according to their needs for extrinsic or external motivation and by providing them opportunities that appeal to their intrinsic or internal motivation needs. The other factors that motivate employees are the kind of job that they are asked to perform, the added benefits like extended vacations and perquisites like company provided accommodation and funding for kids schooling as well as provision of medical insurance coverage for the employees and their families. In recent years, there has been lot of emphasis on motivating employees by organizing offsite events and fun and recreation events where the employees let their hair down and indulge in the much-needed stress relieving activities. Further, many employees are motivated because of the presence of famous business leaders in the top management of the company as is the case with Apple, Microsoft, Infosys, and the TATA Group.

Some Factors that can Motivate Employees

The organizational structure is another aspect that can motivate employees. For instance, it has been found that flat organizations as opposed to hierarchical organizations motivate employees more. Next, the organizational culture plays an important role in motivating employees. The examples of Google, Facebook, and startup companies where the organizational culture is open and collegiate are relevant in this regard. Third, the HR managers have an important role to play in motivating employees by interacting with them, finding their grievances, and proposing solutions to behavioral problems. There are many multinationals like Fidelity where the HR managers hold one on one sessions with the employees to foster an open and inclusive culture where employees do not hold anything back and where they are encouraged to be as forthright as possible. Fourth, organizations that promote diversity as an organizational imperative are known to motivate women employees who feel less threatened and less insecure than in organizations where bias and prejudice are rampant. Fifth, many organizations have the habit of saying one thing and doing something else altogether which means that they are hypocritical in their approach. Such organizations cannot motivate the employees particularly at the lower levels since the fresh recruits and those with less experience often look to the senior managers and the leadership for integrity and consistency.

Salary and Benefits are not the only Motivators

Having covered the various aspects of how the organizations can motivate the employees, it needs to be mentioned that mere reliance on salary and benefits cannot motivate employees completely. With the advent of the software and services sector, the attraction of being sent onsite has become an important motivator for the employees who when given the chance to go onsite ramp up on their performance noticeably. Apart from this, the fact that the brand image of the organization makes a lot of difference to the motivation levels of the employees is another factor. For instance, many graduates have their own preferences for dream companies or companies that they would like to work in after graduation. This important motivator attracts the best talent to those companies that are often viewed as the benchmark for industry peers. Of course, if the image does not meet up to reality or if the hype is without substance, many employees lose motivation to work in such companies.

Concluding Thoughts

Finally, as discussed above, there is no set formula on what organizations can do or cannot do to motivate the employees. The best approach would be to let employees find their own niche within the organization and let them actualize their potential instead of forcing them to do work that is not to their liking. Apart from this, many industry veterans are also of the view that employees have to find their company that suits them and hence, clinging on to jobs that do not motivate them is counterproductive.