

Don't You Know Pump It Up? You've Got to Pump (Intrinsic Motivation) Up!

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Motivation fuels each and every task an individual takes on, from going to the gym to pushing through the 16th hour of practicing and perfecting a sales pitch to that individual's boss. It is the core driver in a person's need for success, it encompasses the reasons an individual may choose, or choose not, to go to work that day. With this much power over an individual's psyche, it seems necessary to analyze the key factors of an individual's motivational drive, motivation's affect on an individual's job satisfaction, and different theories that link job satisfaction to higher levels of either intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. To seek a more comprehensive understanding of the impact motivation has on job satisfaction for employees, an analyzation of motivators that could lead to better levels of output must be completed. The correlation between external motivation levels and job satisfaction will also be discussed to further exemplify the research that an individual motivated extrinsically will not be as highly satisfied as an intrinsically motivated employee. The research that intrinsic motivation leads to higher job satisfaction will be explored and proven true through the exploration of four motivational theories: Herzberg's Dual-Factor Theory of Motivators and Hygiene Factors, McClelland's Theory of Needs, the more recently researched Self-Determination Theory, and Vroom's Expectancy Theory.

Intrinsic Vs. Extrinsic Motivation

In the past, the field of psychology had based a person's motivation off of two factors: the first being for the individual's need for survival and procreation, and the second was derived from extrinsic rewards as well as punishments (Sansone and Harackiewicz). Originally, individuals were found to only be motivated by means of either a desire to survive or a desire not to face repercussions when not doing what they were supposed to. It was then discovered that there was another reason why an individual performs certain acts: motivation from within. This was termed "intrinsic motivation" and it referred to an individual that was motivated by personal

feelings of enjoyment or desired levels of personal growth (Cherry). David Krepps described it as the moment when: “pride in one’s work is high and the work is interesting [to that individual],” (360). Individuals who were motivated by satisfying their own needs of self-worth were determined to be motivated intrinsically. These motivating factors could include: feelings of accomplishment, recognition, responsibility, and acknowledgement (Robbins and Judge 215).

Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, is based on completion of a task even though the task itself might not be appealing to that individual (Cherry). For example, if a person were to formulate a report of a consumer’s spending habits, they may only be completing this task because they does not want to lose their job or possibly because they might have been promised an extrinsic reward if they completed the task. Their reasoning for task completion would not include a personal desire to complete the report, but instead a desire to obtain the benefits from completing the task. This shows that extrinsically motivated acts do not always have the most positive employees completing the task because they could have been coerced into doing the work. The key difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is that intrinsic is fueled by a person’s own need and desire to complete a task, whereas extrinsic could be more forcefully completed simply to get the job done, not because the employee cares if the job is done (Kreps 360).

The line between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation does become blurry in many situations, however (Dessler). The extrinsic motivator of not losing a person’s job is obviously desired by all employees. So how does one differ between an employee who is afraid of losing their job and fueled extrinsically by this fear, and an employee motivated intrinsically who is passionate about their job as well as still aware of the possibility of losing it? This could also be said for an employee’s pay. Although primarily seen as a extrinsic motivator in terms of a riase,

it could also be considered an intrinsic motivator. Receiving a higher salary could signify to that employee that they worked hard and are being recognized for it, that they accomplished things for it, and that now they are given a higher responsibility. All of these feelings are intrinsic motivators (Pardee 14). Because of this blurry line between intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, the close relationship was addressed by many researchers and psychologists. Author David Kreps found that the key factor of differentiating the two is through looking at the employee's level of job satisfaction which is exemplified in their performance at work and through their completion of tasks (361).

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction and motivation go hand-in-hand. An individual's satisfaction at work is often a mirror of that employee's motivational levels. Looking at both factors, the correlation is strong: there is a direct relationship between the two. A direct relationship is when one variable changes, there will be a similar change within the other variable (*What Is Direct Relationship? Definition and Meaning*). For example, if job satisfaction is high or increases, it is likely that motivation is also high or will also be increasing (House and Wigdor).

Herzberg's Dual Theory of Motivators and Hygiene Factors

Herzberg was one of the first to explore the correlation between motivation and job satisfaction as well as motivation and job dissatisfaction. Herzberg's Dual-Factor Theory of Motivators and Hygiene Factors explained that there are factors that lead to job satisfaction and different factors that lead to job dissatisfaction, but they were not the same factors. Those that were related to satisfaction were called motivators and those that were related to job dissatisfaction were termed hygiene factors; they coined this name because just as an individual

must keep up with their hygiene, companies should keep up with factors that lead to dissatisfaction to create a better work environment for employees. The motivational factors that affect job satisfaction are unrelated to the hygiene factors that affect dissatisfaction (House and Wigdor). The two groups are on different spectrums, not different ends of the same spectrum; Herzberg recognized that motivational factors either led to job satisfaction or no job satisfaction, whereas the hygiene factors led to job dissatisfaction or no dissatisfaction (House and Wigdor). If there was an absence of satisfaction it did not necessarily mean the employee was dissatisfied, just simply not satisfied.

This theory gained much attention because of the way it was constructed. Other theories on motivation were based on inferences and personal deductions whereas this theory was conducted through a survey of employees whom were prodded about their needs from their place of employment (House and Wigdor). Based on this theory, the factors that led to job satisfaction, the motivators, were found to be related to the employee's need for self-actualization and recognition. They were related to the work the individual was doing and the achievements directly related to that work. These are prime examples of intrinsic motivation. Robert House commented on similar motivators and their correlation to higher levels of job satisfaction. He stated that, "a sense of performing interesting and important work, job responsibility, and advancement are the most important factors for [increased levels of job satisfaction]," (House and Wigdor). When an individual is motivated by these inner, personal, attributes, their level of satisfaction rises. Their job becomes more rewarding after accomplishment, for example, because their self-esteem rises. This shows the high correlation between intrinsic motivators and high levels of job satisfaction.

Herzberg also discovered the factors that led to dissatisfaction, hygiene factors. He asked respondents to describe good and bad situations in their area of work. The motivational factors that were discovered as “dissatisfiers” in this study, often were related to the employee’s workplace atmosphere, including their setting and their supervisors. It was found that employees, when dissatisfied with their job, blamed it on extrinsic motivators. It was concluded that the correlation between motivation and job satisfaction was this: that the satisfying factors, or motivators, were derived from a person’s internal self, whereas the dissatisfiers, or hygiene factors, were closely related to external factors. The internal needs and the completion of these needs led to higher job satisfaction. Herzberg’s Dual-Factor Theory is just one example of a theory that shows that employees motivated intrinsically, as opposed to extrinsically, are more satisfied with their job.

Looking at this theory, the correlation between motivation and job satisfaction is evident. Herzberg first made the correlation through his study, where he claimed that each human is driven by two things “his need as an animal to avoid pain, and his need as a human to grow psychologically,” (House and Wigdor, 369). Herzberg came to this discovery of motivation’s direct effect on job satisfaction by exploring the human being’s need to expand their mind. He explained it as so:

When a child learns to ride a bicycle, he is becoming more competent...expanding his skills—psychologically growing. In the process of the child's learning to master the bicycle, the parents... can offer all kinds of incentives and rewards...but the child will never, never learn to ride the bicycle... The hygiene factors are not a valid contributor to psychological growth. The substance of the tasks is required to achieve growth goals (369-370).

Hygiene factors (external factors) do not contribute to a person’s need for psychological growth.

If a person’s need for growth is not being challenged or met, they will not be satisfied. This

reiterates the fact that external factors do not foster satisfaction. The analogy pertaining to a child learning to ride a bike exemplifies that an employee, even after he is given more than the necessary support and tools to handle a task, cannot fulfill their own needs if they are not given responsibility, acknowledgement, or recognition. If an employee is not fulfilling their own needs of psychological advancement than they will not be motivated to perform their tasks to the fullest (370). If an individual's needs are not being met, they will not be driven or motivated to perform to their highest ability, and therefore will not be satisfied at work because of this loss of potential.

McClelland's Theory of Needs

Another theory in which shows the close correlation between intrinsic motivation and higher job satisfaction as opposed to extrinsic motivation is McClelland's Theory of Needs. McClelland's theory revolves around three factors that studies have shown to have an effect on motivation (Robbins and Judge, 212). These needs are: Need for Achievement (nAch), Need for Power (nPow), and Need for Affiliation (nAff). Need for Achievement is an individual's inner desire to complete goals and accomplish tasks in accordance with a set level of standards. Need for Power is the need for control of others and the way they act. Need for Affiliation is the need to secure sociable relationships with others (Royle and Hall, 25). When concerned with job satisfaction, researchers have fixated on an individual's Need for Achievement as opposed to their need for power or affiliation.

When an individual is considered to have a high Need for Achievement, success on their own merit is emphasized. Individuals high in Need of Achievement do not like situations where the probability of them succeeding is too high or too low. This is because if the probability of

achieving the goal is too high, the individual does not feel as though their abilities were challenged enough, and if the probability of achieving something is too low they feel that they won by luck and not because of their own abilities (25). The payoff is not high enough for these individuals if it is not accomplished on their own merit.

Being motivated by the Need for Achievement is an exemplification of intrinsic motivation. The Need for Achievement centers around an individual's internal motivators of recognition and self-worth. Royle and Hall go on to mention, however, that not one, but two factors drive achievement needs: intrinsic as well as extrinsic motivation (26). The difference, however, according to McClelland's theory is that achievers motivated explicitly, only appear to be a proactive employee whereas those motivated intrinsically were found to actually be proactive employees. The difference between the leader whom is motivated intrinsically (motivating their employees because they want to see that employee succeed) and the leader who is motivated extrinsically (only motivating their subordinates because the leader feels that they are a direct reflection of him) is their level of job satisfaction. This means that, according to McClelland, the way to differentiate those fulfilling their need for achievement through either intrinsic or extrinsic motives, is through their level of job satisfaction. Leaders motivated intrinsically have a higher level of job satisfaction than those motivated extrinsically (Royle and Hall 26). McClelland's Theory of Needs, particularly the well-researched Need for Achievement, exemplifies this statement through comparing the outcomes from leaders motivated implicitly as well as explicitly.

The Self-Determination Theory and The Cognitive Evaluation Theory

Another theory more recently documented and researched as opposed to Herzberg and McClelland's age old, yet still valuable and researched, theories, is the theory of self-determination. The Self-Determination Theory singlehandedly shows the advantageous effects of implicit motivation and the damaging effects of external motivation. The Self-Determination Theory, as defined by Robbins and Judge, "proposes that people like to have control over their actions, so anything that makes a previously enjoyed task feel more like an obligation than a freely chosen activity will undermine motivation," (215). This theory shows that if an individual's motivation is fueled purely by intrinsic factors, and then there is a possibility of an extrinsic benefit, it will ruin and diminish that person's motivation as well as their overall work ethic.

Robbins and Judge use the example of a volunteer at a pet shelter. After volunteering for a few weeks, the individual is offered a full-time job and decides to take the role. The individual then comes to terms with the feeling that this job is not as she remembered nor expected. This is a prime example of extrinsic motivators undermining intrinsic motivators. This individual no longer felt they had control over the hobby they performed, because she now had an obligation to the pet shelter (215). She must show up when she was scheduled, no longer when she wanted to; she must perform the tasks asked of her, no longer was she allowed to keep her own interests before the interests of the shelter. This fun hobby for the individual had then become a formal responsibility with other factors now attached to it that were not there before.

The Cognitive Evaluation Theory, a form of the Self-Determination theory, also addresses the conflict between intrinsic and extrinsic motivators when it comes to job

satisfaction. The Self-Determination Theory stated that intrinsic motivators can be helpful to employees and adding indirect extrinsic motivators can diminish intrinsic motivation. The Cognitive Evaluation Theory builds on this by exploring direct extrinsic motivators instead of indirect. The Cognitive Evaluation Theory states that if outcomes that were previously motivated by intrinsic motivators are then given direct extrinsic rewards, overall job satisfaction and motivation will decline (Robbins and Judge 215). In the previous dog shelter volunteer example, the worker did not see the extrinsic factors that came along with accepting a position at the pet shelter. She did not realize that this new obligation would be coupled with extrinsic factors when accepting the position. The Cognitive Evaluation Theory would be more along the lines of if someone enjoyed their job because they were recognized or were achieving a lot, and then they were promised a direct extrinsic motivator, a bonus at the end of the year, and they took this bonus. This is an example of a direct extrinsic motivator being offered, accepted, and diminishing motivation whereas with the Self-Determination Theory, the extrinsic motivator was not directly recognized from the start.

A term that has come from the Self-Determination and Cognitive Evaluation theories is self-concordance. Self-concordance tackles the correlation between intrinsic as well as extrinsic motivation and job satisfaction. Self-concordance gives reason to why implicit motivators lead to higher pay off in a person's satisfactory levels with their job. Self-Concordance, as defined by Robbins and Judge, single-handedly sums up the research shown as to why intrinsic motivation leads to higher levels of happiness and job satisfaction as opposed to extrinsic motivation.

Robbins and Judge state:

Self-concordance...considers how strongly people's reasons for pursuing goals are consistent with their interests and core values... If individuals pursue goals for intrinsic reasons, they are happier when they do, and they are happy even if they do not achieve

the goal. Why? Because the process of striving towards goals is fun whether or not the goal is achieved. Recent research shows that people who pursue goals for extrinsic reasons (money status or other benefits)... can still perform acceptably...but are less likely to attain goals and are less happy when they do. Why? Because the goals are less meaningful to them (215).

Robbins and Judge conclude that intrinsic motivators lead to higher job satisfaction, simply put, because that employee is happy to be doing that work. When a task has meaning for an individual, it is worth more time to that individual. As research shows, a task is more enjoyable when fueled by an employee's own passion. If an individual is unhappy or indifferent toward a task, they may internally fight making any progress toward that task, whereas someone who is excited about the task could have no problem carrying it out to completion.

Vroom's Expectancy Theory

There are certain situations, of course, in which extrinsic motivators have led employees to shower better levels of performance and be more highly satisfied with their job. Certain individuals need the pressure of a deadline or a repercussion to fuel their work. This, in turn, fuels their level of job satisfaction after they accomplish the task by that deadline because they were able to perform what was asked of them. This certain type of individual who enjoys the feeling of pressure could be considered extrinsically motivated. Victor Vroom's Expectancy Theory shows the case in which extrinsic motivation could be better for an employee's motivational levels than intrinsic motivation.

Vroom's theory focuses on three beliefs each individual has: instrumentality, expectancy and valence. In Vroom's book, he describes the three as: “ (a) expectancy: the belief that one's effort will result in performance; (b) instrumentality: the belief that one's performance will be rewarded; and (c) valence: the perceived value of the rewards to the recipient” (Vroom, 9). In

sum, Vroom's Expectancy Theory states an individual's effort affects their performance, and their performance affects their reward. If a student expects their performance and outcome on an exam to be high if they study for 10 hours for the exam, this is an example of the expectancy belief. This is a direct extrinsic motivator; the belief that if the individual puts in the time and effort, they will have a good exam outcome. This is a tradeoff for the desired outcome; not because they desire to learn more about the topic, but because they are motivated by the payoff, a high exam score. This could lead into the second factor, instrumentality, if the belief is that their score will be higher if they study for 20 hours instead of 10. This is fueled by a person's desire for a higher reward, leading an individual to the third factor of the Expectancy theory, valence (Vroom, 10). If the individual values the reward of studying 20 hours over 10 hours for the possibility of a higher pay out in the form of their grade, then that is what they will do. This is an example of extrinsic motivation fueling higher satisfaction because for certain individuals, they feel the higher the reward, or letter grade for this example, the higher their satisfaction levels will be, or satisfaction with the class in general.

The fault with this theory, however, is crucial. This theory relies on the fact that a higher effort will fuel better performance on the employee's part. This better performance will lead a higher reward for them. This would fuel their motivation because they are striving for a much better reward (Vroom 10). The fault is this: what if the next reward higher is not worth the extra effort? These individuals are motivated purely by the reward, and thus if it is not great enough, they will not exert more effort than they feel needed (Van Eerde, Wendelien, and Henk Thierry). What if the student who is studying for his exam knows that the only reward difference between putting in 20 hours preparing for his exam as opposed to 10 hours preparing is around five points on his overall grade? If the student decides that five possible points on his exam are not worth

double the hours spent studying, then he will not strive to be better. He will not be motivated to work harder because the reward is so low. Ten extra hours spent studying is only a difference between a grade of a 85 or a 90. This individual is no longer fueled by a higher reward. The same applies for the employee who does not receive a higher income when securing and sending out 100 shipments as opposed to 80. The question then arises: why would he exert extra effort and achieve the shipments he has the potential of achieving for no extra benefit? If there is no motivation to move toward a higher reward, this extrinsically motivating effort-performance-reward system cannot lead to higher job outcomes and therefore, higher job satisfaction.

Promoting Intrinsic Motivation

The above theories have proven the result that intrinsic motivation leads to higher job satisfaction. This begs the question of how to promote intrinsic motivation in the workplace to keep employees highly satisfied. One way to increase intrinsic motivation, and thus job satisfaction, would be by allowing employees the ability to choose. Being able to choose which project an individual works on or even which piece of the project could go a long way in terms of keeping employees happy and satisfied. When individuals have the ability to choose they could select the task that most interests them. If the individual chooses something of interest, they feel as though their skills are being applied in the best possible way. Giving Employees control over miniscule decisions such as who is assigned to which task would allow them to feel higher levels of self-worth. It is an effective way to increase intrinsic motivation. A second way to increase intrinsic motivation in the workplace is to make the opportunity for advancement known and available to employees. If an employee feels they are on a good path toward success with their company, they will be more invested in the company. The employee will be more motivated to work hard if there is a possibility for success in the future at that company. The

individual would not want the company to be unsuccessful in any way; they would wish only the best upon the company because its success has a direct effect on their future. A third way to increase intrinsic motivation in the workplace would be allowing employees to participate in the decision making process. Giving employees a sense of responsibility as well as involvement would allow them to feel more important within the company. Engaging employees creates a sense of camaraderie with their coworkers. It allows employees to feel more appreciated and important which will boost their motivation levels (McQuerrey).

Conclusive Findings

Job satisfaction is extremely important for any employee. If the employee is not satisfied with their job or the work they are doing at their job, they will not be motivated to perform. This correlation between job satisfaction and the internal motivation necessary to succeed is exemplified within the theories of Herzberg and McClelland as well as the Self-Determination Theory. Herzberg's theory continually reiterates the necessity for an individual to possess feelings of accomplishment, recognition, achievement, and responsibility in order to be satisfied at work. McClelland similarly showed the need for internal motivators through his Theory of Needs. His theory stated that a person's need for achievement is only fueled through intrinsic motivators, and that an individual whom is motivated through promotion or higher pay will not care for his work but will only force it to completion. This especially applies to employees in leadership roles where the difference between implicitly and explicitly motivated managers is apparent. The third and final theory that showed the strong correlation between job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation as opposed to extrinsic motivation is the Self-Determination Theory. This theory states that not only is extrinsic motivation bad for an employee's work ethic, but it actually undermines motivation. This being because an individual likes to have control over their

actions, and when an implicit interest is turned into an explicitly motivated task, the person no longer has control over the task. This leads to lower levels of job satisfaction because the individual feels they are now obligated to do a certain task, and the satisfaction of completing the task voluntarily is diminished.

All three of these theories center themselves around the belief that job satisfaction requires high intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation can be beneficial in certain cases as Victor Vroom exemplified in his study, however this theory also relied on the fact that certain rewards are big enough motivators to propel an employee onward. If they are not motivating enough, however, the employee is not inclined to push themselves further which provides a shortcoming of this theory.

Pardee voiced the challenges faced with extrinsic motivation perfectly when stating, “satisfying extrinsic factors is an all too commonly attempted method for motivating workers, but theory shows that these efforts cannot lead to motivated workers,” (abstract). Extrinsic motivators take the passion out of a task and add pressure for the employee, lowering their overall job satisfaction. Intrinsic motivators allow a person to work toward a goal because they have a desire to better themselves internally; because they want to achieve, accomplish, and hold a certain level of responsibility. Intrinsic motivation contributes to the quality of work, while extrinsic motivation contributes to the quantity of work.

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