

Brin Bendon continues his excellent series concentrating on improving your off-course skills by looking at the 'M' word – motivation.

Motivation's what you need



Managers in organisations have, over recent years, been increasingly concerned with the question of motivating their people. The major problems within organisations are no longer technological but organisational human problems.

How do you get a co-operative response from the workgroup? How do you get integrated behaviour towards the attainment of organisational goals? In my work as a management trainer, I am often called upon to run sessions on motivation. Head Greenkeepers, like other managers frequently ask, 'How can I motivate my team or how do I motivate an individual?'

My first response to this is to say that you cannot motivate anyone apart from yourself. Motivation is not something you do to people. People have to charge their own batteries, you cannot do it for them. Unless people carry their own 'on-board generator' they cannot be motivated. However, what a leader can do is to create conditions, which are favourable to the development of a motivated workforce.

First of all, it should be stated that people join organisations in an attempt to satisfy their needs. Within organisations, leaders are able to facilitate the motivation of their people, if they can influence the way the individual is able to satisfy their needs, either helping them to satisfy them or threatening their satisfaction. Abraham Maslow, one of the founding fathers of classical motivation theory, drew up perhaps the most widely

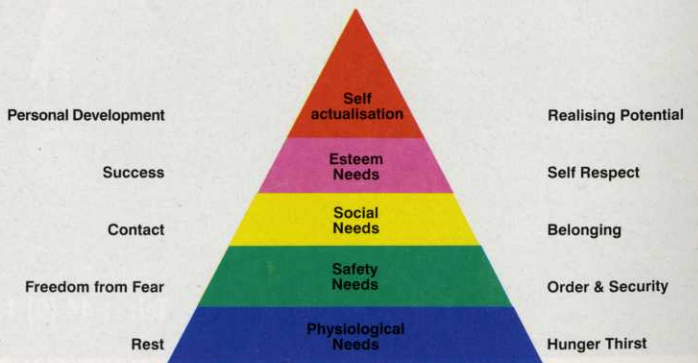
accepted theory of human needs. This theory is constructed on the following foundations:

- All behaviour is 'goal directed' – aimed at satisfying needs, to relieve the tensions created by needs.
- A satisfied need is not a motivator.
- People have 'ever expanding' needs. Once one level of needs is relatively satisfied, the next level will preoccupy them.
- Human needs form a hierarchy – a series of levels.

Creating the conditions under which people can feel motivated isn't just about pay and conditions. If you

haven't got much money, then money will become an important factor. Likewise if people work under poor conditions, these will have an adverse effect upon their motivation. People have to be satisfied with their pay and working conditions before they can be motivated. However, good pay and conditions alone are not enough to encourage motivation. The need for money may motivate us to get a job, but it won't necessarily make us do the job well once we have started work.

The relationship between pay and motivation is a complex one. Both Maslow and Herzberg classified pay as a means of satisfying low level needs, rather than as a motivator. In many jobs there is no direct link between pay and performance. Provided the individual performs adequately the amount of pay received remains static. In these circumstances pay does not motivate people to work harder or to



improve the quality of their work.

Yet economic rewards continue to be used as a means to raise quality and output, often with no more than average results. The response tends to be calculative, with very little commitment to the organisation. With 'carrot and stick' cultures people tend to be preoccupied with WHIFM. They ask, 'What's in it for me,' and work out what effort would be required to get a return or payback on the effort expended. The problem with this approach is that we only get average performance, a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. Sure, as Herzberg once observed, "If you 'bribe' people or threaten them enough you will get a response," something which he called 'movement.' But, that isn't motivation.

Building on Maslow's theory, Frederick Herzberg led an important development in approaches to management – an approach termed 'job enrichment,' where one seeks to improve both task efficiency and human satisfaction at work by building into people's jobs greater scope for personal achievement and its recognition, more challenging and responsible work and more opportunities for individual advancement and growth.

Motivation is about freeing people to do their jobs willingly and well. Most people come to work because they have to. Few come because they want to. And yet, that is what motivation is all about – coming to work because you want to. Many will pursue a sport such as golf, not because they are paid to play golf, but because they want to. Indeed most will pay a lot of money to play golf and will devote much of their personal time to practising and playing their beloved sport. Now that's motivation.

However, to be motivated, two essential requirements need to be present; opportunity and capability. Herzberg argued that unless people have the opportunity to do something, they cannot be motivated to do it. So for example, unless I have golf clubs and access to a golf course, I cannot be motivated to play golf. Secondly, I need the ability to be able to play golf. If I cannot play golf then I cannot be motivated

to play without some instruction or coaching.

This is what I mean by creating the conditions in which people can be motivated to do; by providing the opportunities for people and by encouraging people to develop their abilities. One of the most effective ways that we have of developing ability into capability is through training. The more people are trained to do things, the more they can do, and the more they can do the more they want to do.

If we train people to do their jobs well, and then give them constructive feedback on their performance, praising people when they do things well, then we enhance their self esteem. They feel better about their job. Effective leaders let their people know how important their jobs are by giving some appreciative feedback on the importance of their work. Ever so often, we need to remind people of the importance of the job that they are doing. And we need to let people know that they are personally appreciated when they deserve it for work well done through appreciation, recognition, congratulations or a simple thank you.

Giving people confidence in the value of their job is a key motivator. We can do this by helping people to understand the meaning of their work by explaining the context of their job. Effective leaders explain to people precisely what they are doing and why, i.e. give them a reason for doing so that they understand the context of a task or the job.

Effective leaders also lead by example. They set an example of a positive approach to work.

A second technique for improving motivation is to give people confidence in their value as individuals through offering challenge, praise and concern. Effective leaders encourage their people to realise their individual potential by offering challenge. They will feel stimulated and involved if they feel that their special skills are being used.

Showing concern is the third way that leaders show that they matter as individuals.

If leaders show concern for their



people as human beings, people will show concern for their work. This means getting to know them well and taking an interest in them as an individual.

Finally we need to give confidence in our people in their value as a team by helping them to feel, think, and work like a team.

As a leader you should treat all the members of your team fairly and equally and it is very important that you let them know that they can rely on you for your support and for their protection. Never run the team down, indulge in victimisation, leave someone out on a limb or practise favouritism.

Team leaders can help their people to think like a team by providing opportunities for discussion and two-way communication. Briefing the team collectively will help the team to think that it is worth them contributing their ideas.

To help people to work cohesively together as a team, the leaders has to get each member of the team to think that his or her job is to help the team to do its job – to inspire the idea of helping each other out.

To create the conditions in which people can be motivated, Herzberg's so-called hygiene factors need to be satisfied. These are company policies, administration, salaries or wages, working conditions, working relationships and supervision. Once a certain standard of living is achieved and hygiene factors are satisfied, more than money is needed to increase the individual's contribution.

The leader needs to be aware of how to get people to work willingly and well to increase the individual's satisfaction in the job, and the organisation's efficiency.

To enable people to have confidence in the value of their jobs, confidence in their value as individuals, and confidence in their value as a team, the leader needs to ensure that people's jobs provide opportunities for growth.

Job enrichment can stimulate an interest in the job. Leaders can encourage a sense of achievement by offering challenge and recognition of good work through praise and appreciation and by giving greater responsibility and opportunities for advancement.

Herzberg may be seen as old hat by some, but for my money, he remains ahead of his time.

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