

# MOTIVATING the **TURNED-OFF** EMPLOYEE

*PART 1 The Needs of Man*



**Editor's Note:** This is the first of a series of employee management articles designed to better employee-employer relations. The subject sequence has been separated into definition of needs, problems and goals and application techniques. The series will appear in concurrent monthly issues.

**IN ANY ORGANIZATION** — public or private — there are at least two sets of goals to be achieved: (1) those of the organization and (2) the personal goals of people in the organization. It is imperative that each individual — owners, managers and non-managerial personnel — achieve their personal goals within the organization environment.

The goals of the organization — more profits, more service or whatever — and the goals of the people in the organization are completely compatible, in spite of the efforts of some to establish conflict and hostility. Where conflict and hostility exist, they are the product of a lack of understanding — advertent or inadvertent — between the parties involved. Understanding will not be achieved until those involved understand the nature of man — the needs that motivate him and the work environment in which he strives to survive.

From my observation and experience, I have found that many people in the organization are demotivated inadvertently by managers. Seldom do administrators deliberately demotivate people and when you find managers who *do* undertake such an administrative practice, their objectives should be carefully considered and weighed. Too frequently management and unions take a miserable attitude toward people in general. Often this arises out of inadvertent misunderstanding of what it takes to motivate people in an organization.

Before we progress too far in this analysis, it would be best to define management so that the following discussion can be put in proper perspective. My definition is as follows: Management is a decision-making process of (1) determining and establishing objectives and (2) achieving those objectives by the best possible utilization of limited, allocated resources.

Managers are decision-makers. They make decisions to establish the



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objectives of the organization that will provide guidance and direction for other decisions and human behavior in the organization. Second, managers make decisions that will result in the achievement of the predetermined objectives by the best possible utilization of the resources allocated to them in any function and at any level in the organization.

The most important resource allocated to managers in every organization is people, for all non-human resources lie fallow until the human element is applied. Yet, in our society we tend to use the human resource like we use non-human resources — we just use it; we don't motivate it; we discard it; we get rid of it; it is perishable and when things go bad we can always lay it off or fire it. Each resource allocated to managers must be used in the best possible way if organization goals and the personal objectives are to be achieved. The use of each resource requires the application of a certain body of knowledge if it is to be used properly in achieving objectives. In order to use human resources in the best possible way to achieve organizational objectives, managers must understand the nature of human behavior in the organization environment and what must be done to create a work environment conducive to motivation. To do less will result in a failure to achieve objectives.

The first thing managers should understand is that the people who come to work in the organization bring with them a set of personal goals that must be achieved in conjunction with the objectives of the company. Just enjoying the company of people is not sufficient in good management. You've got to understand the nature of every individual who is working for you. He is motivated by certain things and demotivated by others. And frequently he is *not* motivated by things you think are important.

Many managers have made some very bad mistakes in determining and identifying the goals of people in the organization. They still place too much emphasis on wages, salaries and fringe benefits. Salaries, wages and fringe benefits *are* motivators of people, but only to a certain extent. In addition to economic goals, management must provide satisfaction of a non-economic nature if employees are to

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be motivated to greater efforts and loyalty. In no way are the prior statements meant to downgrade the importance of salaries, wages and fringe benefits as employee motivators. They are important in the total effort but their importance is dependent upon and interrelated with other factors that employees feel are also important to their life in the work organization. Let us look more closely at the nature of man and the factors that motivate him. Although we will observe him in the work climate, the goals relate to his behavior in whatever environment we find him.

To the individual, his goals are important and any failure of management to consider his goals as important will generate a negative reaction. Therefore, a major responsibility of every manager in the organization is to (1) recognize the goals of subordinates and (2) to coordinate and integrate the goals of employees with the objectives of the organization.

### Common Employee Goals

What are the goals of employees in the organization? They will differ for each employee depending upon his needs and personality. I have found that *all* employees have some common goals that they hope to achieve. The following are a few of these common goals.

*To Do A Good Job* — I have never found a person in an organization who did not want to do a good job. However, many people were not doing as good a job as they were capable of doing because they were not motivated to do better. In fact, many employees suffered feelings of guilt and inner conflict because they were not doing the job they were capable of doing. This is not only a terrible waste of resources, but it violates the very dignity of man.

*To Aspire For Something Better Than He Has* — Again, I have found that all employees in the organization aspired for something that they didn't have or that they wanted more of. For a variety of reasons, including personality, health, age, social relationships, sex, motivation and factors internal and external to the organization, employees aspired for similar and dissimilar things. Many aspired for promotions and sincerely felt that they could do a better supervisory job than their bosses. Many aspired for a larger

salary, wage or fringe benefits. Some aspired for better job assignments while others aspired for better working conditions. The aspirations of people involved short and long-run time periods, impossible dreams and achievable goals. People aspire — even in organizations.

*To Achieve Recognition* — Every now and then employees like a little assurance (1) that what they are doing has some relevance in the overall achievement of organization objectives, (2) that they are doing the job expected of them and doing it well and (3) that their efforts are appreciated by peers, superiors, and subordinates. One doesn't have to be told too frequently that he is doing well, but an occasional compliment or word of assurance certainly does things for one's ego. Again the type or form of recognition is dependent upon the individual's personality, ambition, needs or goals. All too often, employees tell me that the only time they hear how they are doing is when they do something wrong.

*Social Balance and Order* — Many employees can't fully explain it, but they have goals that pertain to the maintenance of social order and balance in their work environment. Nothing is more upsetting to employees than management decisions that cause social frustrations and anxieties. Decisions to reorganize without thoroughly explaining the effect it will have on employees can be a very frustrating experience. Crisis management "austerity programs" that create personal survival anxieties can be very demotivational. Changing the physical environment of offices, departments or placements of desks, can create anxiety problems for employees beyond the understanding of most managers.

This does not mean that employees are not receptive to change. Quite the contrary, employees look forward to change if they understand the reasons for the change or are asked to participate in the change. It is axiomatic that people tend to fear the things they don't understand.

These are but a few of the common goals of employees that should be considered by managers in motivating people to the effort they are capable of achieving. It is a manager's responsibility to assist subordinates in the achievement of

these goals and to remove or eliminate obstacles that may prevent the achievement of the goals. Too frequently, managers may create obstacles to the goal achievement of subordinates.

### Employee Expectations

In addition to assisting subordinates to achieve personal objectives, the manager should actively and sincerely create an organizational climate conducive to employee motivation. Research I have conducted has revealed that employees anticipate and expect certain things from their bosses that are necessary to their well-being in the organizational environment. Of the many expectations that employees anticipate from management, four of the most important will be discussed.

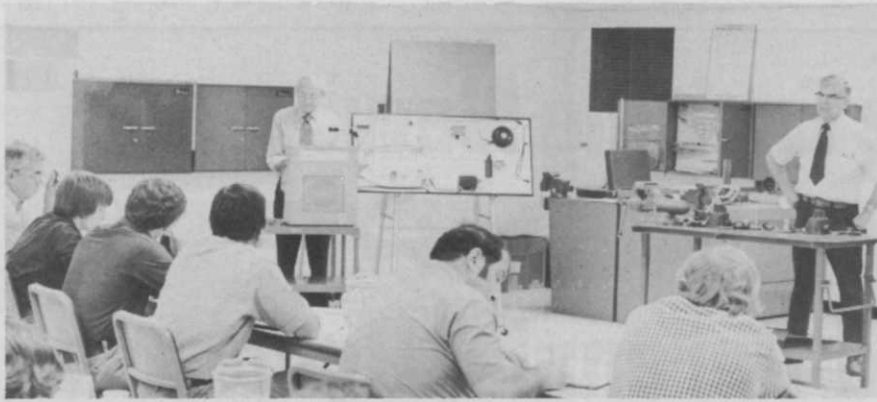
One of the most important expectations of employees is fairness. As important as salaries or fringe benefits, fairness is anticipated by all employees upon accepting a position with an organization. Without fairness, what sort of an organizational environment would it be? Distrust and suspicion would run rampant.

Fairness covers a variety of areas to the employee. He expects fairness in job assignments. In every organizational sub-unit the job assignments include work activities that are sought after and those that are less preferable. In addition to less preferable assignments, the work loads of some employees may exceed that of others. Employees become fully aware of any unfair allocation of work assignments and where such practices prevail it creates human problems.

Employees anticipate that they will be considered fairly when promotions become available in a department. Thus, managers should update the performance files of subordinates constantly if an equitable choice for promotion is to be made from eligible employees. In addition, employees anticipate that salary increments and other rewards or benefits will be given on the basis of fairness and equity.

A second factor is that of honesty. Almost as important as fairness, honesty ranks high in employees' expectations. Not only do employees expect the truth in answers to questions or problems encountered in the performance of their work,

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Arnold Meyer (standing, left), service school training director, and Ed Peterson (standing, right), conduct a lecture demonstration on product electrical systems during a service school session.

### FMC Holds School for Distributor Service Managers

FMC Corporation's Outdoor Power Equipment Division, manufacturer of Bolens lawn and garden products in Port Washington, Wis., has completed its 25th annual series of three-day schools for distributor service managers and field service men from across the United States and throughout Canada.

The classes are designed to keep the distributor service personnel up-to-date on technological changes, service techniques, new product designs and improvements. Special attention is also focused on increasing consumer knowledge of

seasonal maintenance and safety features. In addition, the service representatives hear presentations from major suppliers and utilize simulated working conditions for troubleshooting and repair work. After the session, they are then qualified to instruct at similar schools for their dealers in their respective territories.

Arnold A. Meyer, service school training director, said, "These service schools play a vital role in qualifying our service people throughout the country in providing efficient service and promoting customer satisfaction."

### Goodman Elected Fellow

Dr. Robert N. Goodman, chairman of the University of Missouri-Columbia (UMC) Department of Plant Pathology, has been elected a Fellow in the American Phytopathological Society.

Goodman was one of eight scientists selected for the honor from the 3,000-member society. Announcement of his selection was made at the society's recent annual meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Recognized by the society as a distinguished scientist, writer and administrator, Goodman has just returned to UMC after presenting two invitational research papers in Japan.

In one of these, he reported his finding of the bacterial toxin that causes fireblight. In the other, he reported the discovery of a new disease defense system in plants. Both research findings are having a major impact on scientists' efforts to cope with plant disease problems now causing billions of dollars in food production losses around the world.

Goodman holds B.S. and M.S. degrees from the University of New Hampshire and a PhD from the University of Missouri.

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but they expect to be completely informed — to provide only half-truths or partial facts will not suffice. Although the research placed honesty high in the expectations of employees, the writer found it difficult to comprehend situations in which managers might revert to the use of lies, half-truths or the withholding of information. However, a deeper evaluation of this factor revealed many situations in which the employee could substantiate such practices. In some cases, the follow-up revealed that managers often did not maliciously withhold information or relate half-truths but it was done for other reasons, many of which were later found to be poorly conceived. No matter the reason, once suspicion or a lack of confidence has been instilled in the mind of the employee it is a difficult attitude to overcome.

Third, employees expect the manager to provide opportunity in the organizational environment. Opportunity takes many specific

forms but generally it reflects the expectations of employees to improve their lot in life in the organization. It provides something for each person to "shoot for" in the organization. It avoids the maintenance of status quo in the progression of each individual in achieving personal objectives in the organization.

Opportunity provides for each employee being considered for advancement — technically or managerially. Opportunity may involve an increase in salary, a fringe benefit, or training for a better job in the organization. In the goal structure of the employee, opportunity might provide greater security on the job.

When opportunity does not exist in an organization, the employee has little to aspire for and little to motivate him to achieve higher goals. Opportunity helps provide the means for the individual to achieve goals or to set higher ones.

Fourth, employees anticipate that their efforts and performance will be recognized by management.

Recognition may be a simple pat on the back and a reassuring word that his contribution is appreciated.

Some managers stress the point that they reward employees on the basis of individual merit and contribution to the achievement of organizational objectives. Generally, most qualified employees prefer to have their performance evaluated separately and measured against that of other in competition for available rewards.

Although the aforesaid employee goals and managerial expectations do not exhaust the motivational methods available to managers, they do provide some guidance in managerial action. Demotivated employees are not productive and loyal employees. And demotivated employees create problems in manpower planning no matter how scientific or rational the planning process. The greatest waste of resources in our society is that of the undeveloped potential of demotivated people in the organization.