

THERE IS NO easy remedy to the problem of understanding and motivating employees. Managerial gimmicks such as the "ten easy steps" approach will never provide solutions to the human problems in any organization. Many gimmicks have been devised and recommended to managers that have created more human problems than they ever resolved.

The only way that managers will ever achieve any degree of loyalty, respect, productivity and cooperation will be when they are able to understand the nature of human behavior of employees as they strive to achieve goals and satisfy needs — individually and collectively. As was

attitudes of managers toward employees negatively affect the decisions they make in the organization. Many of these attitudes have been acquired over years of learning experiences and frequently result from the biased and prejudiced judgement of others who had some influence on our learning processes. It is not unusual for many attitudes to be passed on from parents to children, from teacher to student or from the boss to subordinate. The author has known instances in which the attitudes of well-educated and professional people toward labor were so negative that they blamed labor (union and non-union employees) for every economic

needs in the work environment there is positively no way that management will be able to maximize or optimize organizational goals.

Management should carefully consider their decisions in terms of the goals and needs of the employees and the reaction a decision will have upon them — individually and collectively. Management should especially evaluate decisions in terms of their effect on the social, ego and creative needs of employees. You had better believe that money and fringe benefits are motivators of employee but there is a point in which these factors will not motivate individuals to greater effort or loyalty if other needs are not being satisfied in the organization. In fact, salaries, wages and fringe benefits as motivators may be negated completely if management is providing social, ego and creative need dissatisfaction in the work environment. This results in the resignation of good employees or of their performing at something less than their potential.

There are many managerial decisions that reflect a negative attitude toward the work force that in turn may lead to negative reactions by personnel affected by the decision. Every policy, rule, regulation, procedure, schedule program, control, budget and other established organizational directive that affects human behavior should be evaluated to determine and eliminate the negative aspects from the order or directive if they exist. It is self-evident that any negative act will generate a negative reaction.

So many management decisions are colored by deeply ingrained attitudes that they are made inadvertently and without known bias and prejudice on the part of the manager. When the negative element of the decision is revealed to the manager it is often a surprise to him that it contained a negative factor. If a self-evaluation by the manager of his decisions succeeds in indentifying one ingrained negative attitude, a step in the right direction will have been made. It is doubtful that the manager will discard a recognized deep-seated feeling immediately, if ever. What the evaluation will do is make the manager aware of how his feelings and be-

(continued)

MOTIVATING the **TUR**ned-OFF EMPLOYEE

PART III Motivation

By DR. JOHN L. McKEEVER, Colorado State University

discussed in the Parts I and II, employees establish goals that must be achieved in the work environment. The goals that employees establish are based on a common set of needs possessed by all humans. Goal achievement results in need satisfaction and when employees do not achieve their personal goals in the work environment they are demotivated and may become counterproductive. It is the purpose of Part III to explore a few of the alternatives available to management to create a more challenging and positive work environment.

Change in Managerial Attitudes

Many of the deeply ingrained at-

problem in the nation. Conversely, there are those who are extremely biased and prejudiced toward management.

These deeply ingrained attitudes should be brought out of the closet and subjected to careful examination. I am sure that a logical analysis of management-labor problems would reveal that the objectives of the organization and personal goals of the people in the organization are not incompatible. In fact, they are extremely compatible and the failure to consider the objectives of each other will result in some degree of goal failure for both. When employees do not achieve personal goals and, consequently, satisfy

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havioral patterns affect and color his decisions and his awareness should encourage him to consider them in future decisions. Change may not come easy for it is difficult to admit that we could have been wrong for so long.

These feelings are common in managers and may include all of the Theory X concepts of Douglas McGregor¹ and many others. A few of the typical deep-seated attitudes that may affect management decisions are as follows:

- (1) Employees are motivated only by wage and fringe benefit goals.
- (2) Employees are irresponsible and will shirk responsibility in the organization.
- (3) The divergent nature of organization objectives and employee goals make them incompatible and in conflict with each other.
- (4) The "my investment, my risk, my decision" syndrome that fails to consider the capabilities of employees.
- (5) Employees must be constantly threatened and coerced if they are to do any work at all.
- (6) Workers are basically lazy, gullible, dishonest and not too bright.
- (7) The "don't rock the boat, we have been doing it this way for years" attitude that stifles individual initiative.
- (8) "Because of the nature of our industry we must draw our employees from the dregs of the labor market."
- (9) The "8 a.m. to 5 p.m." syndrome which measures performance in hours on the job rather than what was achieved during the work period.

The list of deeply ingrained management attitudes is lengthy and will continue to flourish and affect decisions as long as we fail to acquire an understanding of ourselves, others and the work environment that we create.

Motivational Techniques

Generally the author is reluctant to recommend motivational techniques or methodologies because of the inclination of managers and management students to seek and use gimmicks as the answer to all human problems in the organization. Motivational methods and

techniques have purpose only as a part of the total process of understanding human motivation and behavior. In other words, if the organizational objectives are to be achieved, the human resource in the organization must be motivated by all managerial decisions concerned with employees and not by a few techniques.

In determining procedures, techniques or methods used in the motivation of employees, managers in organizations can be very innovative and creative. For example, managers should approach the problem by determining and/or evaluating managerial actions and decisions in terms of the need satisfactions of employees in the organization. If the economic needs (salaries, wages and fringe benefits) of employees are reasonably satisfied, management should determine the types of programs or actions that would provide greater social, ego and creative need satisfaction to the employees. Management can do a number of things to provide a work environment conducive to the motivation of employees that had not been considered before in the organization. Motivational techniques can be devised that will provide for greater opportunity, fairness, recognition and personal growth and development for employees.

Participative Management

One technique the author would recommend is participative management. To avoid any confusion or suspicion of the term the following definition should explain the process:

"Participative management encourages all employees to participate in making decisions, (1) of a non-routine nature, (2) when the decision will affect them in the environment and (3) the manager must always retain the prerogative of making the final decision."

In participative management the employees are given greater control over their work environment by being able to participate in making non-routine decisions that affect their life in the organization. It should be noted that the author's conception of participative management does not give the final deci-

sion to employees but encourages their ideas, suggestions and recommendations. The final decision must always be the responsibility of one person, the manager.

Participative management provides employees the opportunity to satisfy creative and ego need satisfactions and if the participation is performed in a meeting or conference type of discussion process it will provide social need satisfaction. Participative management is merely the utilization of the democratic process in the work environment. Many work environments tend to be dictatorial or monarchical in nature and, consequently, discourage a free flow of ideas from those who may be creatively inclined but managerially demotivated.

Employee Training

Regardless of the type or size of the organization, training programs can be utilized to provide opportunity for employees. If opportunity is not provided in an organization, creative employees may not remain with the company. Many small organizations tend to shut the door on this aspect of employee motivation by assuming there is nothing to be learned on the job once a few simple procedural work

activities have been mastered. Actually, on-the-job training opportunity can be provided employees in any work situation no matter how proceduralized and simple the activities. Through the use of well devised and well written job classifications, a progression of promotional possibilities can be established. The employee can move from job class to job class entailing a pre-planned and orderly promotional path in the organization.

In many company operations, work activities have been broken down into a series of simplified, procedural steps over a period of time (construction cycle, growing period, etc.) and each step requires some time to learn and perform efficiently. In instances like this, if employees can be trained to understand and perform all the operations in the entire sequence of activities, responsibilities have been enlarged and the job takes a greater meaning to the employee. In fact, by training employees to perform all the activities in the entire operation, they can see the end result of their efforts over the entire production cycle. This is a problem in many large organizations in which the individual efforts of employees often cannot be identified with the final product. By systematically and chronologically establishing a well designed over-all training program, you have not only provided an environment conducive to opportunity but the employees may acquire a professional knowledge of the entire operation in which their services are enhanced and their personal worth increased. This process is referred to as job enlargement or job enrichment and results in an increase of responsibilities performed by the employee. Job enlargement through training enhances the ego need and provides the employee with potential to be more creative. From this point on, employee training can be directed toward other functional and management areas.

One of the points the author is making above is that management in industries in which many of the production jobs seem very menial and demotivational can establish training programs that will provide employees with greater opportunity for personal professional develop-

(continued on page 67)

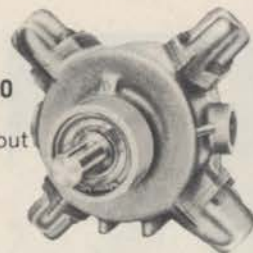
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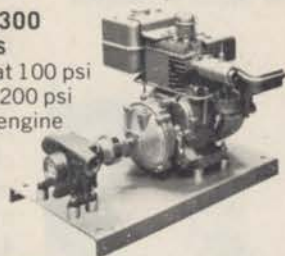
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MOTIVATION (from page 23)

ment than can be offered in large organizations. Employees may be trained in a profession rather than for a specific job. It can enhance an employee's self-esteem and develop pride in work performance — a satisfaction seldom achieved by employees in organizations.

The effect of training programs on the ego and creative needs of employees is immeasurable. Training not only provides employees with a greater creative potential, it will enable them to better direct and articulate their present capabilities. If the training can be offered in a social context, (conferences, seminars, etc.), the social need of employees will be enhanced. To many employees, a training program is management's way of investing in the future of both the employee and the organization, and it integrates the goals of both the organization and its people.

There are a variety of training programs, techniques and methods. Management should evaluate and choose those that will provide the greatest benefit to the organization and its people.

Performance Evaluation

In all organizations, public and private, some form of reward should be available for distribution to employees. If the company is achieving any degree of success in its annual operation, employees should share in the success. Management should try to reward employees for past performance and to provide an incentive for future performance.

An increase in salary or fringe benefits will satisfy the physiological and safety needs of employees and may be important as ego need satisfiers. For the employee monetary and non-monetary recognition for effort does much for both aspects of the ego need.

In every salary increase management should inject and publicize some element of rewards based on merit (individual contributions to the achievement of organizational objectives). However, there may be times when the dollar amounts devoted to merit should be balanced with other factors. During the past five years inflation has eroded the real income of employees. If amounts available for distribution

in salary increments are sufficient, workers should be given a cost-of-living increment and, if available, a portion set aside for merit increases. The publicizing of individual merit performance may be as important to some individuals as the dollar increase itself. However, for others a quiet, non-publicized word of appreciation may outweigh the money value of a salary increment. It is so common in organizations for

management not to tell their subordinates that they are doing well that an employee could be with a firm for years and never know if his contribution is considered adequate or appreciated.

If funds are not available for salary increments, non-monetary rewards should be used to recognize individual and collective performance. There are many rewards that should be considered. Rewards that

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will satisfy the social, ego and creative needs of employees. For example, there may be no substitute for a simple pat on the back and a sincere word of appreciation for a job well done.

Status Symbols

Status symbols are evidence of man's ego need in the organization. So important are these seemingly unimportant things that they should be carefully determined and considered. I have seen highly educated and responsible executives literally worry themselves sick over their status because an administrative peer in another department may have four square feet more of office space, rugs on his floor, windows on two sides of his office, or newer office furniture. I have observed officials in high and low positions pull strings, apply pressure, deviously plan, cojole, beg and threaten others in an attempt to receive a more favorable office location, better equipment, a reserved parking space, a certain secretary, a higher

place in the organizational pecking order, a rewrite of their position descriptions to reflect a greater importance of their position, mahogany desk (versus metal) and many other seemingly insignificant things. But insignificant they aren't, for they reflect the reputation and influence of the manager in the organization.

Lest the reader misunderstand, the author does not ridicule or discourage the striving of organization personnel to acquire status symbols. Quite the contrary, these status symbols are a part of the things we aspire for in every organization. They are the little things that we feel enhance our reputations in the organization and hope that others recognize our importance for acquiring them. To eliminate them or reduce their importance as unnecessary or undesirable is to prevent the employee from achieving his aspirations. Certainly their importance can be over-emphasized but properly used they can become strong motivating factors and non-



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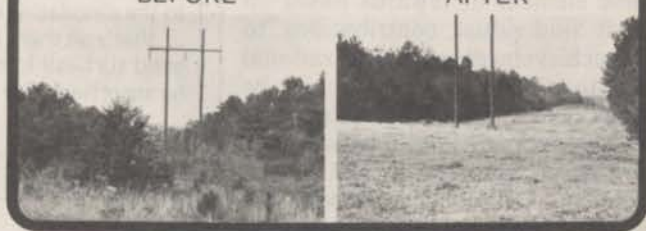
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monetary need satisfiers in the organization environment.

For small firms without facilities or funds to provide costly status symbols there are other little techniques that can be used. For example, job titles are important to people regardless of position in the firm. With job titles management can provide considerable status while establishing opportunity for progression in the organization. This can be done by written job classifications within jobs that will provide the aspiring employee with opportunity to advance in the organization. Also, as he progresses the job class title that he holds gives him ego satisfaction in the form of a talking point with friends in and out of the organization. Titles of jobs are important to the holder.

Another set of status symbols may relate to the claims on certain company resources or areas by employees. On certain jobs it may be an office, uniform, a personal locker, employee shower baths, parking spaces, tool chests or tool lockers, a piece of equipment or a building. This may be a part of the so-called territorial instinct of man to hold, protect and acquire security and status in one's territory or property.

Along with the above, management should consider the effect on the social and ego needs of employees that pleasant eating facilities, restrooms and lounges may have on employees. The social need satisfactions of employees may be enhanced if better facilities are provided in which to socialize. The author has known many employees, managerial and non-managerial, whose major complaint about the company was the lack of adequate or clean facilities in which to eat and socialize.

As it pertains to social need satisfactions, certain employees may be encouraged with little prodding to institute certain activities of a social nature on and off the job. Some employees derive considerable ego, social and creative need satisfactions by planning and organizing small birthday and anniversary parties, in addition to other events such as marriages, births, promotions, departures, holidays, deaths and emergencies. Management should avoid forcing participa-

tion by employees in company parties or events on or off the job. Nevertheless employees may be encouraged to establish a rapport that is conducive to the "happy family" syndrome. They are a happy family and they not only have fun but they take care of each other.

The reader should recognize that any or all of the social event type of activities may not be successful in some environments. The success of any motivational technique is dependent upon how well management is providing over-all need satisfaction in the work environment. In addition, it is possible that many management motivational techniques will not be successful simply because of the manner in which management offered them. A paternalistic or "big daddy" approach by management should be avoided for it turns employees off. The author has known and observed many work environments in which the attitudes and feelings of both management and employees toward each other were so negative that no single positive act on the part of either would change those negative attitudes. Only time and a positive attitude will eliminate or reduce the negativeness and suspicion that may



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exist between the management and non-management personnel.

In the three brief articles, the author has tried to emphasize several points relating to the understanding and motivation of employees. First, managers should recognize that there are no easy steps to motivation. To motivate people we must have a thorough understanding of the goals that employees carry into the work environment. Managers and non-managerial employees have formulated many misleading and common attitudes toward each other and some of these are very negative. These negative attitudes influence their decisions and generate negative reactions from those affected by the decisions.

Second, we are all goal achievers and establish goals in every environment in which we operate, including the work environment. The goals we establish provide us with direction,

guidance, continuity and consistency in life.

Third, the major importance of the goals we establish is that their achievement will result in the satisfaction of one or more needs. It is the needs of man that we must thoroughly understand if we are to acquire a knowledge of what must be done to motivate employees in the work environment. It is a lack of understanding of the need structure of man that creates most human problems in organizations. Many employees are demotivated inadvertently by managers.

Fourth, with a better understanding of the goal/needs concept of human behavior, the author recommended the use of certain motivational techniques that should result in establishing a more positive work climate. It was not the intent of the author to provide or suggest specific motivational methods as it was to make the reader more aware

of the type of thinking that should prevail in considering the needs of employees in the environment.

Fifth, the author tried to impart the idea of the importance of people as a resource in the organization. The success of any organization is completely dependent upon its people. The success of any manager is dependent upon his subordinates. From the experiences of the author in organizations (public and private, large and small), managers are not acquiring the best possible utilization of their people resource in the achievement of organizational objectives. People in the organization are not being motivated to achieve organizational objectives. And the greatest waste in our society stems from management's failure to understand and motivate the human resource. □

¹The Human Side of Enterprise, Douglas McGregor, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, New York, 1960.

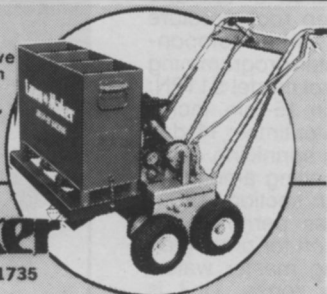
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