

MOTIVATION

Having trouble getting the most out of your employees?
First, you should learn the theories of motivation.

by Rudd McGary and Ed Wandtke

Motivation is a word that has a wide variety of meanings for most business people and one that is used a great deal without any real thought as to its implications in a business organization.

Our motivation discussion is divided into three specific topics. This month we will discuss some of the major motivational theories. Next month, we'll look at specific motivational issues in the Green Industry. The third article will cover compensation factors and motivation.

Moving through motivation

Let's examine the idea of motivation. The word means to "move" someone, to get them to do something.

There is a distinct difference between long-term motivation and inspiration (inspiration defined as getting people to do something on the spur of the moment through some action).

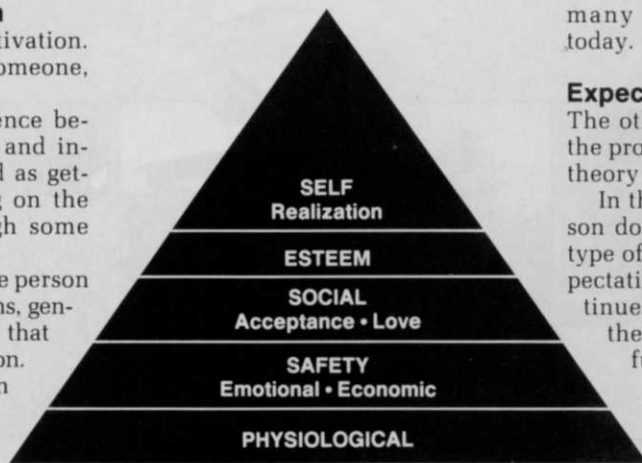
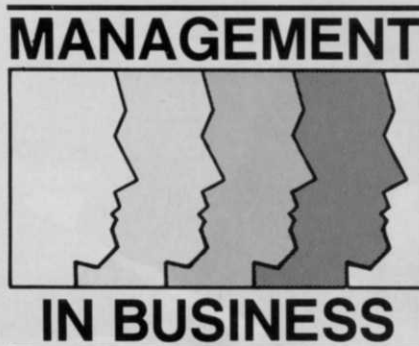
In long-term motivation the person has to feel that there are reasons, generally related to self-interest, that they should perform some action.

One of the facts known about motivation is that only in severe emergencies can a person be motivated to do something they don't want to do. Many managers approach motivation as if there are a set of "buttons" they can push in order to make someone do something.

The simple notion of cause and ef-



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Maslow's Theory of Motivation

fect works well on certain types of laboratory animals but humans are too complex to simply respond the same way to a stimulus each time that stimulus appears.

In order to better understand motivational theories we can divide them into two basic groups—content and process.

The Maslow pyramid

Content theories are best exemplified by Maslow's Theory of Motivation (above). As noted in the table, this theory suggests that we go through stages of need that motivate us.

At the bottom of the pyramid are the physiological needs—food, rest, shelter, etc.—that we need to survive. Maslow suggests that we aren't motivated to do anything else until these needs are satisfied.

Each step of the pyramid works the same way. If the lower levels aren't satisfied we aren't motivated to reach the next level.

Another researcher, Herzberg, offers a view of motivation within organizations that has many uses within the Green Industry.

He suggests there are five major motivators within organizational life: achievement, recognition for accomplishment, challenging work, increased responsibility, and growth.

The five motivators are still seen in many motivational models used today.

Expectations and motivation

The other side of motivation theory, the process side, can best be seen in a theory labeled "expectancy."

In the expectancy theory, the person doing the task expects a certain type of reward for the task. If the expectation is met, the motivation continues. If the expectation is not met, the person turns to other tasks or functions which will meet with his/her expectations.

Certainly, anyone involved in organizational life has seen co-workers leave jobs because it didn't measure up to their original expectations.

The process theories suggest that motivation is ongoing, and that people in organizations change their motivational needs as their own situations change.

The content theories suggest that the variables in motivation—achievement, growth, recognition—always remain the same. Both sides have gained a great deal of use in organizational motivation.

Additionally, both types of motivational theories find people who try to disprove them.

As we continue discussing motivation within the Green Industry, we will use parts of theories from both the content and process sides. That will be the topic of the article that will appear in the November issue of WEEDS TREES & TURF. **WT&T**