

Do You Treat Your Employees Like Pets

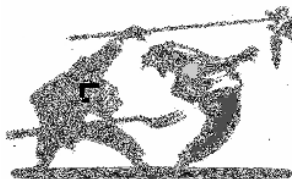


Woof, woof....atta boy, go fetch, bring it here and I'll give you a treat! I am sure anyone of you who have or had a dog can remember saying something along those lines to your pet but have you ever said anything along those lines to your employees?

I never seem to grow tired of my fascination with the human condition, nor do I ever seem to feel that I have finally arrived at an absolute understanding of how it all works and comes together. At least that is almost always the case. Once in a while, I must admit to thinking that I do know it all. Quite amazingly, when this happens it seems that somehow the 'cosmos' senses this, realizes my arrogance and hits me with a dose of reality reminding me again just how little I know and how much more I still have to learn, in fact we all still apparently have to learn. And even though the answers are sometimes right out there in front of us in plain view, we still just don't seem to get it!

Case in point and what has got me all worked up again is our understanding of **motivation** or more precisely motivation in the workplace. The dose of reality; there are still workplaces out there, too many of them, that treat their employees as if they were **PETS!**

And my fear is that they still may be the majority. Yes, organizations, perhaps even yours are still offering the old carrot-stick approach to motivating employees. Do this for me and I will reward you with; money, trips, cars, stock options, you name it and someone out there will try it, all in the interests of getting their way.



Everyone seems to be searching for the magic bullet that seemingly elusive ingredient that will make employees want to do their very best for the company. Quite amazingly, they still think that it has something to do with rewards and punishments. Employers today still try to come up with winning formulas that have money as the chief motivator, or so they think. Profit sharing, bonus systems, big raises, plaques, rings, pictures, trips, executive office furniture, you name it!

Is it working, are we experiencing a resonance in our workplaces? The answer is unequivocally **NO!** Employees are no more motivated today, than they were years ago, probably less!?

When it comes to rewards, psychology has found that employees who are offered rewards tend to choose easier tasks, are less efficient in using the information available to solve novel problems, and tend to be answer

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oriented and more illogical in their problem-solving strategies. They seem to work harder and produce more activity, but the activity is of a lower quality, contains more errors, and is more stereotyped and less creative than the work of comparable non-rewarded subjects working on the same problem.

For those who truly have a genuine interest in what motivates people and who have made a point of studying it at least to some degree, will have likely come across the following names of these men who were at the forefront of research into what motivates us; Abraham Maslow, Douglas McGregor, Frederick Herzberg, Elton Mayo, Chris Argyris, Rensis Likert, David McClelland, and Victor Vroom.

Among the various behavioral theories long generally believed and embraced by American business are those of Frederick Herzberg and Abraham Maslow. Herzberg, a psychologist, proposed a theory about job factors that motivate employees. Maslow, a behavioral scientist and contemporary of Herzberg's, developed a theory about the rank and satisfaction of various human needs and how people pursue these needs. These theories are widely cited in the business literature.

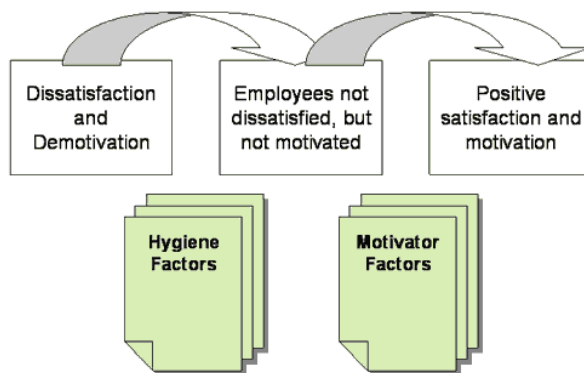
The work of these two men in particular has had the greatest impact on how I have approached my

professional life and most certainly how I approach motivation in my work as a Life Coach and as a Business Coach.

Frederick Herzberg's (Motivation-Hygiene Theory)



Frederick Herzberg proposed the Two Factor Theory of human motivation. Quite simply, according to his theory people were influenced by two factors. Satisfaction and psychological growth were considered motivational factors. Dissatisfaction was a result of hygiene factors. Essentially, hygiene factors were needed to ensure an employee was not dissatisfied.



Hygiene Factors include:

The organization (its policies and administration), the kind of supervision (leadership & management), working conditions, salary, status, security and interpersonal relations.

According to the theory, the absence of hygiene factors can create job dissatisfaction, but their presence does not motivate or create satisfaction.

Motivation Factors Include:

Achievement, achievement recognition, interest in the job, responsibility, advancement and growth.

These motivators (satisfiers) were associated with long-term positive effects in job performance while the hygiene factors (dissatisfiers) consistently produced only short-term changes in job attitudes and performance, which quickly fell back to its previous level.

Both these approaches (hygiene and motivation) must be viewed and addressed simultaneously. Treat people as best you can so they have a minimum of dissatisfaction. Use people so they get achievement, recognition for achievement, interest, and responsibility and they can grow and advance in their work.

In summary, satisfiers describe a person's relationship with what she or he does, many related to the tasks being performed. Dissatisfiers, on the other hand, have to do with a person's relationship to the context or environment in which she or he performs the job. The satisfiers relate to what a person does while the dissatisfiers relate to the situation in which the person does what he or she does.



Abraham Maslow (The Need Hierarchy)

Abraham Maslow theorized that experienced needs are the primary influence on an individual's behaviour.



When a particular need emerges, it determines the individual's behaviour in terms of motivations, priorities and actions taken. Thus motivated behaviour is the result of the TENSION, pleasant or unpleasant, experienced when a need presents itself. The goal of the behaviour is a reduction of this tension or discomfort, and the behaviour itself, will be appropriate for facilitating the satisfaction of the need. Only unsatisfied needs are primary sources of motivation. Therefore understanding behaviours and their goals involves gaining insight into presently unsatisfied needs. Maslow developed a method for gaining insight by providing categories of needs in a hierarchical structure. He placed all human needs, from primitive or immature (in terms of behaviours they foster) to civilized or mature needs, into five needs systems. He believed that there is a natural process whereby individuals fulfill needs in ascending order from most immature to most mature.

If yesterday wasn't so important, today wouldn't exist.¹¹ *Eric Hueneke*

THE FIVE NEEDS

Physiological needs

Have to do with the maintenance of the human body. If we are unwell, then little else matters until we recover.

Safety needs

Are about putting a roof over our head and keeping us from harm. If we are rich, strong and powerful, or have good friends, we can make ourselves safe.



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Belonging needs

Introduce our tribal nature. If we are helpful and kind to others they will want us as friends.

Esteem needs

Are for a higher position within a group. If people respect us, we have greater power.

Self-actualization needs

Have to do with "becoming who and what we are capable of becoming," which would be our greatest achievement.

This progression through the need hierarchy is seen as the climbing of a ladder where the individual must have experienced secure footing on the first rung in order to experience the need to step up to the next higher rung.

The awareness of the need to climb further up the ladder is a function of having fulfilled the need of managing the preceding rung, and only satisfactory fulfillment of this need will allow the individual to deal with the new need or rung. Inability to fulfill a lower-order need or difficulty in fulfilling a lower-order need may result in an individual's locking in on immature behaviour patterns or may produce a tendency to return to immature behaviour under stress any time an individual feels a lower-order need not fulfilled to their satisfaction. The individual may also revert to behaviours which fulfilled lower-order needs when the satisfaction of higher needs, are temporarily blocked. That is not to say that any need is ever completely satisfied; rather, Maslow indicates that there must be at least partial fulfillment before an individual can become aware of the tensions manifested by a higher-order need and then have freedom to pursue its fulfillment.

After 35 years of working in the field of organizational development in the private, public and non-profit sectors, as well as the last five years as a Life & Business Coach, I have come to believe more than ever that



the work of Maslow and Herzberg provides the roadmap organizations need to facilitate the creation of a climate motivating to employees.

In my life-time, I have had the privilege of working in just two workplaces that were truly



motivating climates for me. One in particular stands out after all of these years. What separated it from all the rest, beyond just meeting all the hygiene factors was that it was truly an empowered work environment. Power and control were pushed down in the organization, people were encouraged to work in teams, individuals were validated by being given the freedom to experiment, to reach and grow at the same time they were moving the organization forward. In reaching, employees were able to realize their full potential. We couldn't get to work fast enough in the morning and we had fun.

My Advice for What It's Worth

First understand that it is not your job to motivate employees! Rather it is to create an environment where motivation can quite naturally take place and emulate out from the employees themselves.

How is this done?

Logic should tell you that if rewards are not getting the best that the employee is capable of offering, than

rewards are not addressing the root causes or reasons for the lack of motivation on the part of employees. Rewards punish, they rupture relationships, they ignore reason and discourage risk taking. So the solution is not another reward program.

Start by examining your own motivations; for example, are you ultimately trying to teach a skill, provide an opportunity for personal and professional growth, promote a value, boost self-esteem, or are you mostly interested in making someone do what you want?

If it is the former, then you are in a position to create an empowered working environment.

Begin by ensuring that hygiene factors are being met. Be prepared to take a hard look at the organization (its policies & administration), the kind of supervision (leadership & management), working conditions, salary, status, security and interpersonal relations, and if necessary do something about it!! But remember that when these factors are met you are just bringing your employees back to neutral and not actually moving them forward but rather setting the stage for what you are prepared to do next. Once you begin to address Herzberg's hygiene factors which also include Maslow's physiological and safety needs than you can begin to address what Maslow refers to as higher order needs; belongingness, esteem and self-

actualization and Herzberg refers too as motivation factors; achievement, achievement recognition, interest in the job, responsibility, advancement and growth.

This means creating a sense of being a part of something meaningful. Encourage the formation of teams to move the organization forward. Provide opportunities for personal and professional growth to meet employee and organizational goals. Allow employees to stretch, to risk, and to try new things in the search for meaning in their lives both professionally and personally. And validate them in the process.

When you are successful in accomplishing this, you will notice that your employees are leading disciplined lives, that is; taking responsibility for themselves, always telling themselves and others the truth, being willing to delay gratification and to work to lead balanced lives; intellectually, physically, emotionally and spiritually.

This will translate into highly effective employees willing to take the organization that they see themselves as a part of to new heights.

James Ladd

"I never cease to be amazed at the power of the coaching process."

**JOHN RUSSELL MANAGING DIRECTOR
HARLEY DAVIDSON**



"Holding Patterns" are for Planes

by *Lou Anna Roberts*



What does the holding pattern of a human being look like? Waiting in line for clearance from the tower? Tip to tail with the person in front of us? What allows us to leave the procession and do what we've always wanted to do? Our journey. Our way.

We drift through life riding high on waves and sitting through the low tides, patiently waiting for the next opportunity. Sometimes we are content to accept this existence for very long periods. But what happens, when days become weeks, weeks become months and months become years? What if those things "we always wanted to do" didn't happen? **Ever!** That's a thought that most of us don't want to accept.

Did you ever hear of the fellow who said; I didn't become a concert pianist.....because I didn't have a piano? And the one who didn't write poetry because he didn't quite find the time to sit down with pen and paper. How many of you know someone who says they haven't attempted a painting

since grade school or when they did....."It wasn't really very good."

We fall into "holding patterns"....that's why. We make choices at times that get us to a comfortable place. And we sit there for a while. Be it an "OK" job, an "OK" relationship, or an "OK" place of residence. And we dream at night (or worse yet "daydream") of changes we want to make.....someday. When we have the time. We can come up with an abundance of excuses. Justifications are easy to create. But when the soul cries out for some fulfillment that isn't there.....take the time to consider what you could do. That's the power within. It's up to you.

Is it acceptable to you to think of a time when you no longer can make choices and can complacently accept that? Or are you someone who wants the little extras that life offers. A small bit of joy that comes with making a choice to take the road less traveled. Being part of your first dance recital....at the age of 40. Hanging a watercolor on the wall that you painted yourself. Tucking a poem you wrote inside a birthday card for a friend or for family. A poem you wrote because you wanted to express feelings. Writing poetry is a soul-barring experience. Keeping it in private is easy.....by taking the chance to have another it read it? That's courage. Isn't it worth the risk? New experience. New knowledge. That doesn't sound to bad, does it? Take the chance and allow yourself a

choice. Learn a new language.....head to the park and kick a soccer ball as hard and as far as you can.....take up a hobby that you never found time for. Until today.

That's how you can leave a "holding pattern." Holding patterns are for planes. Not people. Only the smallest changes are needed. Tiny changes bring opportunity. And before you know it you're soaring in a new direction. Charting your own course, no longer part of the "holding patterns" of life.



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LIFE &
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COACHING SESSION
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