

The Interface between Motivation, Leadership and Work

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ABSTRACT

The concept of motivation encompasses understanding of various cultures across the globe. Workers see work as an activity that is part of their life, growth, and self-expression. Their needs are determined largely by the cultural context of values and attitudes along with the national variables in which they live and work. A firm's capital without human agency is inert. Leaders with international perspective must have the ability to juggle multiple and potentially conflicting roles. Such roles are compounded by the interaction of the content, the context, decisions made and the attributes of the leader. The interconnectedness of the world offers a tremendous opportunity for organizations as they seek ways to respond to rapid shifts in customer demands and increasing globalization of markets. This interplay determines productivity and quality. While employees gain satisfaction, actualization and a positive work climate. The results from these outcomes then act as a feedback injected into the cycle of the motivation and leadership process.

Keywords: Motivation, Work as an activity that is part of life, growth, Cultural context of values and attitude, Leaders with International perspective, Multiple and potentially conflicting roles, both content and context, The Interconnectedness of the world, Globalization of markets, Productivity and Quality.

INTRODUCTION

This conceptual paper considers what motivates people. Do we have to understand their needs, goals, value systems, and expectations? No matter what their nationality or cultural background, people are driven to fulfill their needs and to achieve their goals. It is important to first understand what work means to people from different global backgrounds. For most people, the basic meaning of work is tied to economic necessity. However, the meaning of work can also be thought of more subjectively. For instance, the Thai word for work is *ngan*, which is the same as the word for play.

THE MEANING OF WORK

The broader implications of what work means to people are derived from considering the total cultural context. This includes what workers do, what workers need, and how jobs interface with other jobs within an organization (Mello, 2011). Workers attitude is often related to worker involvement. Studies have shown correlation between employee's involvement with management and their attitude. Also, as work-life balance improves, worker's attitude towards work changes; they see work as an activity that

is part of one's life, growth, and self-expression. This, according to De George (2010), is the ideal. In modern society, work provides the material wherewithal for life and well-being (Waddell & Burton 2006).

In the Middle East, religion plays a major role in most aspects of life. Responses by Saudi Arabian managers on Islamic work ethics include: life has no meaning without work, work enables man to control nature. Besides, creative work is a source of happiness and accomplishment (Sepehri, 2011). As for South African women, the meaning of work changes when they experience work autonomy (Mello, 2011). The women also have a sense of identity and self-worth, meeting instrumental needs, achieving social relatedness, and being of service to others (Person et al., 2016). Kenya's workplace pace is generally slower compared to that of Canada. Though punctuality is expected, many Kenyans regard 30 minutes' lateness to be acceptable. In most African countries, deadlines, punctuality, productivity and absenteeism are issues taken seriously in the private sector where the pace is faster. However, the pace is slowed in the public sector (Global Affairs Canada, 2017). Superiors in the Kenyan private sector owe their positions to experience, education and

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technical skill required in specific sectors. The Kenyan economy can't support jobs for the entire population, hence, there's a giant informal sector of expertise, the Juakali sector for example. Where professional education is scarce, expert niche experience and hands-on learning is what takes over (Global Affairs Canada, 2017).

Ronen (1994), in his research, found three common clusters of needs across nationalities: (1) job goals, such as working area, working hours, physical working conditions, benefits, and job security; (2) relationships with co-workers and supervisors; and (3) work challenges and opportunities for using skills (Sepehri, 2011). IBM instituted job enlargement program and found a significant increase in product quality and a reduction in downtime (Mello, 2011). Logically, human resources come before financial or capital resources. In other words, capital without human agency is inert (Alford et al., 2006). When considering the cross-cultural applicability of Maslow's theory, it is not the needs that are in question as much as the hierarchical ordering of such needs. Other hierarchies might better reflect other cultures. For instance, Nevis (1983), proposes this hierarchy as reflecting the needs of the Chinese, where individual needs are intermeshed with the needs of society. While Mexicans emphasis on family means that loyalty and commitment to family and friends often underlies personnel decisions (Sepehri, 2011). Cropanzano and Wright (1999) did considerable research on relationship between psychological well-being and performance at work. Positive and happy people were found to have better physical and mental outcomes and behavior, and had more resilience in the face of hardship, with stronger immunity and general sense of happiness.

EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

Research into employee motivation and psychological contract (Guest et al., 1996; Guest & Conway, 1997) found out that work remains a central interest in the lives of most people. Asked to cite three most important things they look for in a job, 70 per cent of respondent cited pay, 62 per cent wanted interesting and varied work and only 22 per cent were looking for job security. Meanwhile, Workplace Employee Relations Survey (WERS, 2005) revealed the job-related well-being was higher in small organizations and work places than in large ones. Mello (2011) argues that emotional support helps a person feel cared for, esteemed,

valued, and belonging to a network of communication and mutual obligation. Vineet Nayar, former CEO HCL Technologies, concurs, to spur innovation, we need to invert the pyramid in communication removing barriers between employees and managers (Spector, 2013).

In sum, motivation is situational (Vallabhaneni, 2018). Savvy managers use all they know about the relevant culture or subculture to design strategies for staff motivation. Managers consistently consult local cultural dimensions to infer the best means of motivating within a specific human resource context. An employee's needs are determined largely by the cultural context of values and attitudes along with the national variables in which he or she lives and works (Spector, 2013). Rateb (2015) argues that management should be based on principles rather than values, only a culture that fosters such principles-based leadership will eventually lead to effectiveness. Indeed, leadership cannot be a prime directive.

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

Many writers have reiterated the role leadership plays in organizational, public, formal and informal administration. Indeed, there is no substitute for leadership. Neither does leadership require a genius-only application. Leadership is lifting of vision to higher grounds. It is raising performance to higher standards. It is also building of a man's personality beyond its normal limitations (Drucker, 2006). Leaders on international assignments often find themselves juggling multiple and potentially conflicting roles. As such, the leader's role comprises the interaction of both the content: the attributes of the leader and the decisions made and context: the variables are customized to particular situations (Sepehri, 2011).

As to whether leadership in e-businesses differs from leadership in traditional organizations, managers who have worked in both realms think so. Big difference that the e-environment has created is the greater workforce connectivity. The interconnectedness of the world offers a tremendous opportunity for organizations as they seek ways to respond to rapid shifts in customer demands and increasing globalization of markets (Avolio et al., 2003). Another group of challenges is that communication in the e-environment is more indelible than before. Drawn by the convenience of e-mail, a leader may memorialize remarks that he or she would normally make only in a private conversation

behind closed doors, by sending them over e-mail to others. The above examples suggest that leaders and followers need to adapt to this new “nervous system” being configured within and across organizations.

CONCLUSION

Workers attitude is often related to worker involvement. As a worker’s work-life balance improves, their attitude towards work changes; they see work as an activity that is part of one’s life, growth, and self-expression. Positive and happy people are often found to have better physical and mental outcomes and behavior and they are more resilient in the face of hardship. Also, they most of the time have stronger immune systems whereas work remains a central interest in the lives of such people. Cultural context and variables shape the content of the immediate local and global leadership situation. The leader-follower interaction is then further shaped by the leader’s characteristics and behavioral qualities, and by the subjects’ attitudes toward the leader (Chatwani, 2017). Leadership is a complex process involving the interactions of leaders, followers and situations. In addition to high levels of intellectual intelligence (IQ), and emotional intelligence (EQ), twenty-first century leaders also need cultural intelligence (CQ) to navigate the unique complexity of a global environment (Chin et al 2006).

Incentives and disincentives are also key determinants of interaction. As the main lubricant for all the systems, and relationships in the human resource processes, motivation affects various levels of effort, performance, and satisfaction of an individual and a group. This interplay determines the outcomes for the organization, which includes productivity and quality. On the other end the employees gain satisfaction, actualization and a positive work climate. The results from these outcomes then act as a feedback injected into the cycle of the motivation and leadership process (Sepehri, 2011).

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