

MOTIVATION

CHAPTER 14

INNATE BASES OF MOTIVATION

PERSONALITY

An individual's personality (or disposition) is one factor that shapes what he or she is motivated to do. People's personalities are rooted in their biological make-up much more than in their background or upbringing. Researchers describe personality traits as falling into five broad categories called the "Big Five," as follows:

- **Conscientiousness:** achievement oriented, responsible, persevering, dependable
- **Agreeableness:** good-natured, cooperative, trustful, caring, gentle, not jealous
- **Extraversion:** sociable, talkative, assertive, adventurous
- **Emotional Stability:** calm, placid, poised, not anxious or insecure
- **Openness to Experience:** intellectual, original, imaginative, cultured, curious

Beyond basic job-related issues (that are typically emphasized in FBL and TBL organizations), in SET organizations members are also interested in how personality influences people's motivation to work for social and ecological well-being. It turns out that extraversion and conscientiousness have a positive effect here, but so does openness (which does not have an effect on financial well-being), and agreeableness has a positive effect on enhancing social well-being. Put differently, people who are high on the traits of openness and agreeableness will be more naturally inclined or motivated to enhance social well-being (e.g., people with high openness are more naturally motivated to work with diverse others, which may put them in a better position to address complex socio-ecological problems).

A sixth personality trait that many researchers have recently been studying—honesty-humility—also has a positive effect on social and ecological well-being but is not associated with economic benefit. People high in honesty-humility don't cheat or manipulate others for self-serving purposes, and they lack a sense of entitlement and a desire for a lavish lifestyle.

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Motivation is a psychological force that helps to explain what arouses, directs, and maintains human behavior. People who are highly motivated will persist in behaving in a certain way.

Extrinsic motivation refers to behavior that is exhibited because of the promise of some desired outcomes (reward) from someone else, such as a supervisor or higher-level manager.

Intrinsic motivation refers to behavior that is exhibited because the task is inherently satisfying, enjoyable, or meaningful to the person. The source of motivation is the actual performance of the task.

INNATE NEEDS

In addition to the preferences that are rooted in your personality, people also have basic innate needs.

- Abraham Maslow developed a well-known model of motivation that identified five human needs: 1) physiological, 2) safety, 3) belongingness, 4) esteem, and 5) self-actualization (e.g., realizing one's full potential). Maslow arranged these needs hierarchically, which prompted the view that low-order needs (e.g., physiological) must be substantially satisfied before the motivational value of higher-order needs is activated.
- A subsequent needs theory that enjoys much stronger research support is Clayton Alderfer's existence-relatedness-growth (ERG) theory, which identifies three basic needs that are *not* hierarchically related. These needs are *existence* (e.g., physiological and safety), *relatedness* (e.g., belongingness), and *growth* (e.g., esteem and self-actualization). According to ERG theory, a desire to meet any or all of these needs can motivate someone's behavior at any given time.
- Fredrick Herzberg's two-factor framework—which identifies hygiene factors and motivator factors—may help managers to better understand how to manage each of the three ERG needs to enhance employee job satisfaction and motivation. **Hygiene factors** address issues of work context; they include such factors as working conditions, pay, company policies, and interpersonal relationships. By contrast, **motivator factors** address issues of work content; they include interesting work, autonomy, responsibility, being able to grow and develop on the job, and having a sense of accomplishment. According to Herzberg, whereas motivator factors can increase satisfaction, hygiene factors can simply reduce dissatisfaction (translated into the language of motivation, hygiene factors decrease demotivation but do not increase motivation).

FBL, TBL, and SET approaches to innate needs

All three approaches to management benefit from recognizing that people have ERG needs that they are motivated to satisfy. Similarly, all three approaches suggest that managers should consider how to make sure that employees work in an environment that provides *adequate* pay, safety, and respect (hygiene factors), though there are clear differences among the three approaches in how they understand the word “adequate.”

There are also other important differences among the three management approaches.

- First, a SET perspective may be more inclined to see pay primarily as a hygiene factor (i.e., everyone needs enough, but more than enough does not increase motivation).
- Second, a SET approach is more likely to challenge another assumption embedded in Maslow's hierarchy, namely that *self*-actualization is at the apex of the hierarchy. In contrast, a SET perspective suggests that the apex might better be called “*community*-actualization.” Put in terms of motivation, virtue theory essentially argues that people will be motivated to participate in and contribute to organizations where members practice and experience justice, courage, self-control, and practical wisdom.

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- Third, whereas FBL and TBL approaches have a greater focus on motivating factors for individuals, a SET approach has a greater focus on improving hygiene factors related to socio-ecological externalities, and on motivating factors that enhance a community.

ACQUIRED BASES OF MOTIVATION

In addition to being born with certain personality traits and *innate* needs, over their lifetimes people also acquire certain additional needs. These *acquired* needs are shaped by factors like the national values of the countries where they live, the norms and practices of organizations they work for, and by the values and lifestyles of their family and friends. We will consider four acquired needs.

1. DESIRE FOR ACCOMPLISHMENT

Of the four main acquired needs discussed in the motivation literature, the desire for accomplishment (or achievement) has received the most research attention. The desire for accomplishment is relevant for each of the three approaches to management, but we can expect there to be differences on *what* is desired. For example, an FBL/TBL approach focuses on how the desire to achieve productivity and financial performance-related goals can be very motivational. A SET approach focuses on how seeking to accomplish significant socio-ecological goals can be motivating.

Accomplishment and goal-setting theory

Goal-setting theory is one of the most studied and supported of all management theories. There are at least two reasons why setting goals can have positive outcomes. First, engaging in the planning process and setting goals encourages giving careful thought to what should be accomplished. Second, setting goals motivates people to work harder.

Instead of appealing to people's motivation to accomplish *any* goal, SET management appeals to people's motivation to accomplish goals that are significant, meaningful, agreed-upon, relevant, and timely (SMART 2.0 goals). For example, from a SET perspective as informed by virtue ethics, using money to make more-than-enough money would not be a motivating goal (and in fact, may be a demotivating goal). Rather, goals that are aligned with providing goods and services that nurture overall well-being are motivating because they allow people to meet their desire for significance.

Accomplishment and expectancy theory

Expectancy theory describes how motivation can be increased by increasing employees' expectations that they can achieve certain goals, and that the achievement of those goals will be linked to rewards that they value.

- **Expectancy** refers to the probability perceived by an individual that exerting a given amount of effort will lead to a certain level of performance (i.e., "Can I achieve the goal?"). Research shows

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that the greater the confidence employees have that their efforts will produce desired outcomes, the greater will be their motivation.

- **Instrumentality** refers to the perceived probability that successfully performing to a certain level will result in attaining a desired outcome (i.e., “Will I get something for achieving the goal?”). Employees are more likely to be highly motivated if they think that their high performance will serve as “means” to certain “ends” (outcomes) such as pay, job security, interesting job assignments, bonuses, or feelings of achievement.
- **Valence** is the value an individual attaches to an outcome. To motivate organizational members, a manager needs to determine which outcomes (or rewards) have high valence for each member (i.e., the rewards are highly valued) and make sure that those outcomes are provided when each member performs at high levels. Simply put, the higher the value of the outcome to the employee, the greater the motivation.

As shown in the figure below, a variation of expectancy theory that places less emphasis on individuals replaces an “I can do it” view of expectancy with a “We can do it” view. The difference may appear subtle, but the implications for managing motivation can be profound.



Accomplishment and reinforcement theory

Reinforcement theory provides a closer look at factors related to valence described in expectancy theory. In other words, rather than look at how to manage goals, reinforcement theory focuses on how to manage the rewards linked to meeting goals. While an FBL/TBL approach focuses on an individual’s self-interest, a SET approach takes a more holistic perspective, going beyond individuals and beyond extrinsic motivators. For example, instead of reinforcing a job well done with a pay raise, a SET approach may reinforce a job well done with opportunities to spend a day helping out in a local soup kitchen on company time, or by providing a sample of heartfelt “thank you” cards from customers. Of course, FBL/TBL managers also use non-financial reinforcements, but a SET approach places a greater emphasis on reinforcers that appeal to significance beyond the self-interests of individuals.

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2. DESIRE FOR FAIRNESS

We all have some inherent sense of fairness that influences our thinking about our interactions with others. People's understanding of and desire for fairness can go in at least two directions. The first direction emphasizes people being treated *equitably*, which means getting the results they deserve for the effort they put forward compared with others. The second direction emphasizes ensuring that everyone be treated *justly*, especially those whose best efforts are not rewarded with a living wage.

Equity theory

Equity theory is based on the logic of social comparisons and the idea that people are motivated to seek and preserve social equity in the rewards they expect for performance. Equity theory has a particular focus on the outcomes someone receives for his or her contributions compared to others in the workplace. For example, workers who feel underpaid compared to their co-workers are likely to be demotivated due to a perceived lack of fairness.

Managers in SET organizations typically interpret equity not simply in terms of people's desire for traditional rewards for their contributions, but also in terms of showing concern for others. From the SET perspective the question is not so much: "Am I getting my fair share?" as it is "What can I do to help stakeholders who are not getting their fair share?" This different understanding of equity is closer to the understanding of justice, which is a hallmark of the virtue ethics that the SET approach is built upon.

3. DESIRE FOR RELATIONSHIPS

People have an innate need for interpersonal relationships, and this innate need is elaborated further by the acquired need for relationships that develop based on culture, family, and other life experiences. In the FBL/TBL literature on motivation, the acquired need for relationships is usually referred to as the desire for *affiliation*, while in the SET approach the emphasis is more on the desire for *community*.

A SET approach to relationships extends beyond simple exchanges, and includes building a sense of community, serving others, and treating others with dignity. Moreover, relationships with other people are motivating not only because we need to *receive* love and affirmation, but also because we need to *give* love and affirmation and make sacrifices for others.

4. DESIRE FOR POWER

As we use the term, **power** refers to the potential that one person has to influence and control someone else's behavior or to change the course of events. This definition recognizes the fact that some people have power but never use it, and that someone who is perceived to be powerful, but fails to achieve the control he or she desires, is actually not as powerful as previously thought.

Sources of individual power

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At least five sources or types of individual power have been identified, three of which are related to someone's formal position in an organization (legitimate, reward, and coercive power), and two of which are related to personal factors (expert and referent power).

- **Legitimate power** is the capacity of someone to influence other people by virtue of his or her position in an organization's hierarchy of authority.
- **Reward power** is the ability to influence the behavior of others by giving or withholding positive benefits or rewards.
- **Coercive power** refers to someone's ability to influence the behavior of others through the threat of punishment.
- **Expert power** is the ability to influence the behavior of others based on special knowledge, skills, and expertise that someone possesses.
- **Referent power** is the ability to influence the behavior of others due to the others' loyalty to or desire to imitate or identify with the powerholder.

Sharing power

Sharing power with employees by consulting with them and seeking their input increases their motivation levels. In some organizations—like worker-owned co-operatives kibbutzes—the very structure of the organization ensures that everyone has a share of the power. In other cases, power may be shared on more of a piecemeal basis, such as when a manager empowers workers to participate in making certain decisions, or delegates specific decisions to them.

In environments with high levels of shared power, people are motivated to spot problems, solve problems, engage customers, and satisfy customers because they “own” the work. Organizational members who see themselves as empowered are generally more innovative, less resistant to change, more satisfied, less stressed, and judged as more effective by others. Empowered people also have a stronger bond with the organization, confidence in their abilities, and a clear sense of being able to make a difference.

FBL, TBL, and SET approaches to power

As we have already discussed, FBL and TBL managers are more likely to be motivated to seek power because they see it as an opportunity to serve their own interests and to get ahead, whereas SET managers are reluctant to seek power for their own interests but are motivated to seek it to fulfill their responsibility to other stakeholders.

Similarly, although all three approaches recognize the benefits of sharing power, the nature of those benefits differ. From an FBL perspective, power sharing makes sense only when it results in overall performance gains that serve the organization's financial well-being. While a SET approach also welcomes such performance gains, the SET approach also promotes empowering people who have the expertise to make decisions because it the right thing to do.

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