

# Bite-Sized Training™ Motivating Your Team



# Motivating Your Team

## Bite-Sized Training

This e-book is published by:

Mind Tools Ltd.

Copyright © Mind Tools Ltd, 2006-2011. All rights reserved.

Version 3.1

This e-book is protected by international copyright law. You may only use it if you are a member of the Mind Tools Club™. If you have any queries, please contact us at [members.helpdesk@mindtools.com](mailto:members.helpdesk@mindtools.com).

Cover image © iStockphoto/ermingut

# Contents

Introduction .....	4
1. Motivation In Theory.....	6
2. Practical Steps to Improve Motivation .....	8
3. Key Learning Points.....	14
4. Further Reading .....	15



## Introduction

---

You may have heard of the expression “you can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make it drink.” While, in the short term, you can sometimes compel people to do certain things, there are many things you can’t make them do – and this includes getting them to do their very best.

At the best, compulsion brings grudging acquiescence to your will. At the worst, it breeds quiet and undetectable sabotage (it really can!).

So when we’re thinking of motivating people to do their best, we’re thinking of something very different from compulsion: We’re thinking about getting the very best from members of our team by providing an environment that is rich with motivating factors. When you do that, the people working with and around you are free to draw on the elements they each find the most motivating and rewarding.

Human beings are pre-wired to be motivated. Something gets us up every morning – whether it’s the need for a morning coffee, or the need to eat something – we’re motivated to satisfy those needs. So motivation is what brings people to work every day, even if it’s just to get a paycheck. But if you want to build a great and productive work environment, you need people who are motivated to achieve more than their basic needs.

As an employer or manager, the type of motivation you want to encourage in your employees is the desire to do much more than show up for work each day: You want people to do a great job once they are there! People who are motivated to a higher level get involved in their work, and they’re interested in making work – and the world – a better place. And it’s your job to inspire and develop this kind of motivation.

Here’s a simple equation that shows the importance of motivation:

*Job performance = ability x motivation*

When your team is motivated you can expect a myriad of benefits to follow: People will have:

- Renewed morale, and meaning at work.
- Improved personal performance.
- Deepened appreciation for internal and external customers.
- Increased energy and resilience to stress.
- An enriched quality of work.
- Increased creativity and good humor.

You will see the benefits also in terms of:

- Better employee retention.
- Decreased absenteeism, burnout, and turnover.
- Improved customer care and service delivery.
- Enhanced teamwork, with more trust, and more fun at work.

That’s a pretty extensive list of workplace improvements, both for managers and members of their teams! And this **Bite-Sized Training** session is designed to help you achieve some of them.

In this session we’ll help you understand the theory behind motivation, and then use this to identify how you can create a richer motivational environment for your employees. Specifically, you’ll

- Learn about Maslow’s and Herzberg’s theories of motivation in the workplace.
- Assess your current motivational environment to identify areas where you are currently motivating and satisfying members of your team, and perhaps inadvertently de-motivating or upsetting them.
- Learn some tools and strategies to help you increase workplace motivation that you can start applying today.

By the end of this workbook, you'll have an outline plan to improve workplace motivation. Motivation comes from within your employees, and armed with your plan, you will feel more confident in paving the road towards higher levels of motivation, with all the benefits that it can bring.

So put aside the next hour or so, and let's think about how you can better motivate your team and the people around you!

# 1. Motivation in Theory

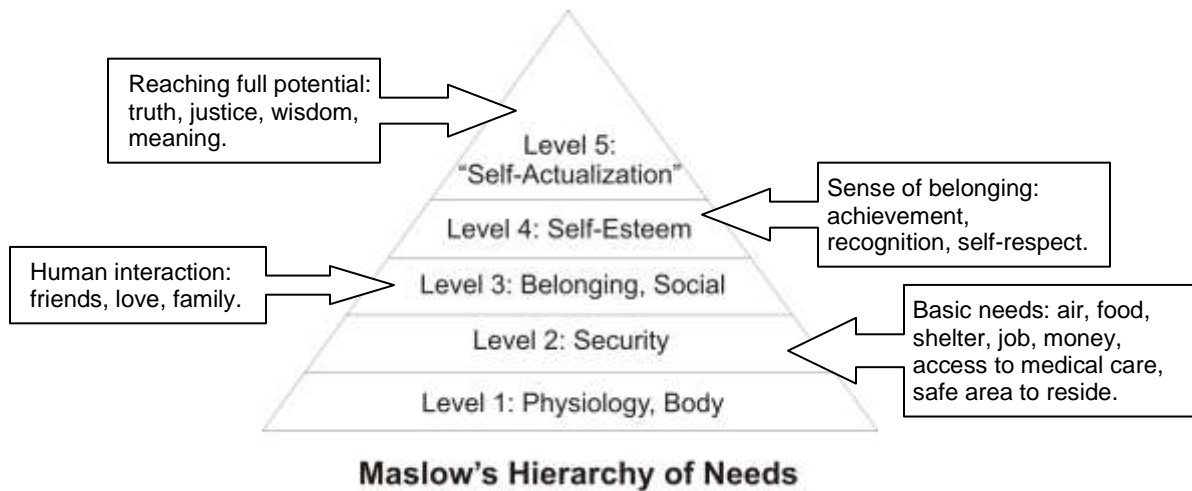
## 1.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

There are many theories that examine the source of human motivation. Perhaps the best-known is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Maslow grouped the various needs that people have into needs for Survival, Safety, Social, Self-Esteem and Self-Actualization, and these are represented as five distinct levels in a pyramid format:

**Tip:**

Get more information on each of the levels in Maslow's Hierarchy here:

[http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newLDR\\_92.php](http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newLDR_92.php)



Maslow's theory says that we seek out the things that will satisfy our current needs, and that these change at each level of motivation. Maslow's theory also says that in order to move up to the next level of motivation, our needs lower down the pyramid must also be fully satisfied. Thus, even when we reach the higher levels of motivation, our motivation is at risk if our safety or survival is threatened.

While other hierarchies exist, and no individual is quite this rigid, this is a useful idea.

With half our waking lives spent at work, many of our motivational needs must be fulfilled through

our work and our work environment. When work satisfies our needs, we're free to be fully productive and satisfied. When it doesn't, we're likely to become preoccupied with finding other ways to satisfy our needs, and so we lose interest in our work. Our productivity, engagement, morale, enthusiasm, and enjoyment all suffer.

So clearly, motivation in the workplace is very important, but *how* do you provide a motivating environment for everyone when everyone's needs are so individual?

This is where Frederick Herzberg comes in...

## 1.2 Herzberg's Hygiene and Motivational Factors

Herzberg extensively researched human needs at work. His theory centers on the notion that humans have two types of needs:

- Hygiene needs (simple base-line, factors).
- Motivational needs.

Hygiene factors are those elements of a job that are related to working conditions, while motivational factors relate to elements that enrich one's job. (See the table below.)

Herzberg introduced the terms "job satisfaction" and "dissatisfaction." And surprisingly **they aren't polar opposites of one another.**

Peoples' dissatisfaction comes from the hygiene factors: If something's wrong with these, then team members experience dissatisfaction. While sorting these hygiene factors out won't actively

improve motivation, there's little point in trying to motivate people until you've dealt with them.

Team member satisfaction comes from the motivational factors. These higher-level factors are what provide long-term motivation. Once the hygiene factors are satisfied, then people are motivated by things like added responsibility or opportunities for advancement.

When the work environment is rich in motivational factors, members of your team will experience job satisfaction. When their needs are satisfied by their work, then they're free to contribute fully to your team, organization and its goals.

**Tip:**

Learn more about Herzberg's motivators and hygiene factors in this article:

[http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newTMM\\_74.php](http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newTMM_74.php)

<b>Herzberg's Hygiene and Motivational Factors</b>	
<b>Hygiene Factors (Examples)</b>	<b>Motivational Factors (Examples)</b>
Badly fitting policies and practices.	The quality of work itself.
Inadequate compensation.	Recognition for achievement.
Uncertain job security.	Opportunity for advancement.
Uncooperative coworkers.	Responsibility.
Unpleasant supervision.	Personal development.
Uncomfortable working environments.	Training.
Insufficient safety in the workplace.	

## 2. Practical Steps to Improve Motivation

Now it's time to move on to the steps you can take to improve motivation.

During this part of the session, we'll start to look at how you can improve team member motivation. While you probably won't complete this fully in the time available, you'll be off to a great start!

Here are the six steps of assessment and planning that we'll cover:

1. Assessing hygiene factors.
2. Solving any hygiene factor issues.
3. Recognizing achievements!
4. Investigating other options to help motivate people.
5. Looking at Compensation.
6. Taking action!

### Step 1: Assessing Hygiene factors

Spend a few moments now thinking about your current work environment. Remembering the principles we saw in Herzberg's Theory, work through the hygiene factors listed on the previous page, and think about how these could affect each and every member of your team.

Use the list of examples on the previous page to help you think through all the factors.

Then, list the hygiene issues that may be affecting your team on the table on the next page.

#### Tips:

1. If you find this exercise difficult, try considering your own needs now, or before you were promoted to your current role. Alternatively, have a quiet chat with someone you trust on your team to find out what people are thinking.
2. Remember that different people in different situations and at different stages of their lives have different needs. As you think about this, think about the hygiene factors that would affect each member of your team.
3. Also remember that there may be issues that we just can't capture with our general list of hygiene factors on the previous page. Think about your specific industry or situation, and make sure that you bring in issues that you know about that we haven't listed.



### Motivational Hygiene Factors

*List any issues that may be objectively problematic, may be undermining morale or may be causing team members unhappiness. Use the table on page 7 as a starting point, but make sure that you think about other factors specific to your team's situation.*

You might also want to think about improving satisfaction and motivation. However, don't spend too long on it now – we'll come back to this later when we explore other ways of increasing motivation.

### Step 2: Resolving any Hygiene Factor Issues

Once you've identified hygiene issues, make an entry in your diary or schedule to address them, and set aside a suitable chunk of time. This is an

essential, easily justifiable task – after all, as a manager it's your responsibility to get the best performance from your team, and dealing with hygiene issues is an essential first step.

And remember that as we saw from Herzberg's theory, it's important to come back and address these hygiene factor issues first; otherwise your efforts to increase motivation will be in vain. After all, employees with well-founded grudges will most-likely be unmoved by any other efforts to improve motivation!

### Step 3: Recognizing Achievements

We're going to shortcut the next stage of analyzing motivational factors, and go straight to the most important thing you can do: Recognizing achievements. (We'll do the proper, formal analysis in a few minutes time.)

Recognizing achievements is the simplest motivational tool available to you: It shockingly under-used in many workplaces. Giving a simple thank you or compliment is something you can do everyday – it costs **nothing** and it means **everything!**

A warm hello, a sincere thank you, a brief corridor chat, or an impromptu speech about a recent achievement: All these ways of recognizing achievements go a long way, and help your employees feel valued and motivated, so they *want* to keep on performing well.

When you regularly recognize peoples' achievements, it becomes second nature. If like most people you could do it more often, write down a list of all the people who work for you or with you, and think of the things they have done well or beyond expectations. Have you recognized their achievements? Are you sure the person knows you value what he or she has done? If in any doubt, add an action to your Motivation Improvement Plan to make sure that they know.

It seems so obvious, but so many people get caught up in their own work and issues that they forget the simple courtesy of recognizing a job well done. Don't assume Pete knows he's done a great job – tell him! He'll appreciate it. (Wouldn't you?)

Make it your personal policy that as soon as you notice that someone's done something well, you tell them. Don't assume they know – tell them. Don't be quietly pleased – tell them...

Here are some tips on ensuring your recognition efforts are effective. Recognition should have the following six qualities:

**Genuine:** It should not forced or have an ulterior motive. Find something genuinely good, so you won't feel that you have to qualify your praise.

**Spontaneous** is best, as over-planned efforts may seem forced.

**Personal:** It must mean something special to the person it's given to and he or she should be singled out for praise. (Not – "You guys did a great job controlling media today." Say instead, "Tom, the way you handled those reporters was awesome.")

**Specific:** It is more than "good job" or "way to go;" it's a thank-you or acknowledgement for something specific that has been done. (Not, Tom "way to go man – that was awesome." Tell him how well he answered the hard questions thrown at him.)

**Timely:** Make it as close to the event as possible – this reinforces spontaneity.

**Public:** Recognition is often reinforced by public acknowledgement. But be aware that some people feel uncomfortable about public praise, and choose the right moment.

**Note:**

People can be motivated (and demotivated) by the expectations you have of them. And how you recognize achievements is one of the signals that show your expectations of other people.

Be aware that if you convey an expectation of someone, people may live up (or down) to those expectations. This is called the Pygmalion effect. For more information on this, see:

[http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newLDR\\_88.php](http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newLDR_88.php)

Why not put a regular reminder about recognition in your organizer or desk diary?

Ask yourself each week what has been achieved and who deserves praise and recognition for it. Go for it! It's a rare gift that costs so little and offers so much!

## Step 4: Investigating Other Options to Help Motivate People

Now we're going to look at the other positive things you can do to motivate people.

Instinctively managers reach for compensation and benefits as an answer here. Unfortunately, these are rarely an option. Usually the reality is that managers have very limited discretion to improve compensation. The reason for this is that it's often the managers' manager's jobs to contain costs: If, as a manager, you go to your boss and suggest significantly raising team members'

compensation, you'll most likely get a very unsympathetic reception.

So your job is to use as many of the motivational factors listed on page 7 as you can to motivate people.

We've already talked about recognition. However, you can now use your knowledge of Maslow's Hierarchy and Herzberg's Motivational Factors to brainstorm how you can motivate individual members of your team.

Brainstorm your opportunities to motivate below:

### Motivational Factors

*Based on Maslow's Hierarchy and Herzberg's Motivational Factors, brainstorm what you can do to improve motivation. Then extend your thinking to include factors specific to your individual industry and situation.*

Make sure that you've considered the following possible options:

- Entrusting individuals with new responsibilities.
- Organizing a team social event to celebrate a project success.
- Encouraging people to make suggestions and implement their own ideas to improve the workplace.
- Brightening up the office with a new coat of paint and some pictures chosen by the team.

## Step 5: Looking at Compensation

OK, so lazy managers look at compensation as an easy answer, before they look at the opportunities for motivation we've looked at in step 4.

However, whatever the theory says, compensation is important, and top performers have to be recognized as such. And as the leader of a team, sometimes you have to fight for team members to get the (financial) recognition they deserve.

In the final part of our lesson, we'll look at some other strategies for motivating members of your team. Some motivation options may only be open to you if you can directly influence or make HR policy. If you manage a small team within a global organization, you may have limited discretion over compensation and performance-related pay. If you run a small business, on the other hand, such options may be within your reach.

Let's look first at some of common compensation and benefits practices that people can find motivating.

Compensation related:

- Performance based pay - this can include performance related pay, profit related

bonuses, stock option plans, and profit sharing.

- Paid leave banks.
- Achievement-based rewards – such as dinner certificates, tickets to cultural events, and so on.

Working hours related:

- Flexible schedules.
- Compressed workweeks.
- Job sharing.
- Telecommuting.
- Phased retirement.
- Sabbaticals and unpaid leave.

Training and development related:

- Developmental opportunities – rotation, skills training.
- Career planning.
- Internal advancement opportunities.

Different things motivate different people. This is why personal rewards programs, which offer personal choice in compensation and rewards, are popular and effective. Some people are highly motivated by the opportunity for career development, whilst others may value more highly flexible hours. And people usually value the choice.

Consider whether any of these might be useful or interesting to individual members of your team.

### Tips:

1. Be very careful here. Pay increments are expected, and their motivational impact can be very short-lived. Reflect on your own past increments – didn't you feel that they were normal and deserved? And did they actually have any motivational impact? Pay and conditions are often hygiene factors, not motivational factors.

2. There may be big cultural differences here. It's easy to be focused on the higher levels of Maslow's Hierarchy if you're in a secure position in a strong employment market. If you're not, money quickly becomes very important.

## Step 6. Taking Action!

All of this work so far is valueless unless you use it.

Make an entry in your diary to think about and decide how you'll apply what you've just learned.

After all, as a manager, this is a key part of your job.



### 3. Key Learning Points

---

- Motivated employees are satisfied employees and satisfied employees tend to be much more productive.
- Herzberg's Hygiene and Motivational Factors theory helps you identify sources of employee satisfaction and dissatisfaction.
- First of all, deal with any hygiene factor issues, as employees must have their basic needs satisfied before they can become more highly motivated.
- Employee recognition is the ultimate source of employee motivation. It is free and easy: just keep reminding yourself and it will become a good habit.
- With an intelligent application of Herzberg's motivational factors, you can often do a lot to motivate team members without great expense.
- However, compensation is an important hygiene factor. If high performers on your team aren't being paid enough, you need to fight, rationally, on their behalf.

## 4. Further Reading

---

This workbook has explored motivation theory and how to apply it to your team using Maslow's Hygiene Factors and Herzberg's Motivators. You can enrich your understanding of motivation by exploring further models:

Alderfer's ERG Theory of motivation is based on Maslow's hierarchy but also takes account of the simultaneous nature of Maslow's five needs. See: [http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newTMM\\_78.php](http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newTMM_78.php)

Sirota's Three-Factor Theory is based on surveys from over four million workers around the world, and was laid out in his 2005 book. See: [http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newTMM\\_57.php](http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newTMM_57.php)

McClelland's Human Motivation Theory examines whether individuals' primary motivation is for achievement, affiliation or power. See: <http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/human-motivation-theory.php>

Theory X and Theory Y examines how your management style is influenced by your beliefs and assumptions about what motivates members of your team. See:

[http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newLDR\\_74.php](http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newLDR_74.php)

Expectancy Theory motivates your team by linking effort with outcome. See:

[http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newTMM\\_73.php](http://www.mindtools.com/community/pages/article/newTMM_73.php)