

THE IMPORTANCE OF STAFF MOTIVATION TO INCREASE PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT: *People are the most important factor in shaping an organisation, so motivating them is an important aspect in developing an organisation's performance.*

In this paper I want to highlight how important employee motivation is for the performance of the organization. Motivating employees can change their perspective. HR managers try different ways to succeed in motivating staff.

In order to be able to meet the proposed objectives in the development of this research a qualitative approach was chosen. The research instrument used is the semi-structured interview, which is a universal method, offering the freedom to explore the subject in more depth during the interview depending on the answers received.

The overall objective of the research is to identify the motivational factors that lead to employee performance and to identify the link between motivation and job performance among employees.

Keywords: *motivation; satisfaction; performance; human resources;*

1. Introduction

The term motivation comes from the Latin *movere*, meaning movement. By motivation we mean the internal state of desire of an organism that directs and influences behaviour towards its satisfaction. Motivating employees is based on satisfying the needs of employees, thus increasing their productivity and thus their performance within the organisation. Preda mentioned that motivation is the result of a consequence that an individual achieves as a result of the interaction between the individual and the task he or she has to accomplish. (Preda,2006)

In the Larousse dictionary (1998) we find the following definition: "Motivation is a set of dynamic factors that determine the conduct of an individual".

M. Vl sceanu called motivation as a process: "individual decision making by which people choose the type of behaviour they will adopt in order to achieve their objectives".

A motivated employee will achieve positive results, reaching performance. Performance is the sum of ability and motivation, which is why motivation is very important in the field of human resource management. (Gary, Latham 2007)

Motivation is an important factor in achieving job performance, it does not only take into account a person's intelligence, but also their desire to surpass themselves. The success of the proposed activities is achieved due to the inner states of the employee, which pushes him to achieve his goals. A formula for professional success is mentioned:

SUCCESS = APTITUDE · TRAINING · MOTIVATION · FATIGUE

Fig. 1. Professional success
(M. Zlate 2007)

There are countless motivating factors with a positive impact on employees. Financial remuneration should be mentioned. Financial bonuses stimulate performance and lead to the achievement of more goals in the organisation. However, financial rewards are not the main thing that motivates employees. In the employee's view, money is just a way for them to provide for all the necessary needs they have, it is their reward for the work they have done, it is a factor that determines their professional fulfilment, as well as a proof of appreciation from their bosses for the work they have done in the company.

The more satisfied the employee is with his monthly salary, the more satisfied he is with the company in general, and the more his trust in

management increases (D. Sirota, 2010).

In addition to the salary that employees receive, there are other ways to be rewarded: individual bonuses, bonuses for reaching the target, bonuses obtained by the work group due to the profit made by the company, bonuses for holidays, Easter, Christmas or birthday, special bonuses for valuable employees of the company so that they do not leave the company.

When employees carry out work activities, the working environment is critical. By focusing on a positive work environment or providing settings that boost motivation, employers can influence an employee's enthusiasm or passion for work (Sunyoto, 2015). As a description of the critical nature of paying attention to the work environment to support performance demonstrates, to develop high-performing teams, a combination of team skills and process instruction, familiarity with the physical environment features that support the team, and instruction about how their use is necessary (Torrington, Hall, & Taylor, 2002). Even in a stable workplace, what inspires employees can change over time. However, even measures aimed at improving working conditions and incentives have not always had the desired effect on system effectiveness. Workers frequently exhibited 'odd' patterns of behaviour, indicating a failure to internalise reform and organisational goals (Franco et al., 2002). Employees will learn about the factors that influence motivation among themselves and their peers in the industry. Motivation has essential rules that aim to make effective use of all available human resources to incorporate a wide range of pay incentives that encourage individuals to improve their performance in many ways, whether they are material or moral incentives.

2. Analysis and results

Based on the general objective of the research, presented above, other specific objectives were established:

- to identify the ways in which motivation is used in organisations;
- to identify the link between motivation and job performance among employees.

People working in the Romanian labour

market were chosen for this study, taking into account the field in which they work, i.e. public, private or entrepreneurial field. This research focused on their experiences in the field of work in different organizations in Romania according to the function they have at work, as well as people with different functions and from different fields, because it gives me a broader understanding of the research topic. The responses obtained will be observed and compared and we will see if there are similarities between the respondents' answers.

The functions of the respondents that are found in this research are diverse: Nurse, HR Recruiter, Internship Communication and Employer Branding, HR Specialist, Project Manager, Programmer, Assembly Operator, Injector, Logistics Methods Technician, PVC Joinery Contractor.

The seniority intervals of the participants are: 0-5 years, 5-10 years and two people who have more than 10 years of working experience in Romania.

2.1. Labour market activity

The research aims to identify the link between employee motivation and performance, so to participate in the study we selected people working in the Romanian labour market. People from different fields of activity and different positions participated in the study, taking into account how many years they have been active in the labour market. So the first and second questions we asked were "How many years have you been active in the labour market?" and the second question was "What is your current position?". What is your current job?",

2.2. Motivation at work

The first question that introduced participants to the research topic „ What motivated you to change your job in the past? If so*/ What would motivate you to change your job?", this question aimed to discover the reasons that lead employees to leave a job, so we could observe common points in their answers, most respondents referred to: unattractive salary and unpleasant atmosphere, „ the environment in which we were and the

methods in which we proceeded at work,, (M.D) ,,... honestly the benefits offered by the new company,... even the salary was more motivating compared to my former job,...and people very much,, (Z.M) ,,...but also because of the difference in income, although the job of a teacher is a very nice and pleasant one, the salary was not commensurate with my daily needs,, (R.A) Another reason often encountered in the participants' answers was the desire to evolve, mentioning that at the previous company they were not offered the chance to promote, so they chose to look for a job at another company where their work was appreciated ,,The desire to evolve more, I had worked for 5 years in the same company before joining Continental, and there were not many changes, so there is no motivation for me to stay in a place where I do not feel appreciated.,, (L.M)

Nothing works better than motivation. Motivation acts as a catalyst for a person's success. Team leaders and managers need to constantly motivate employees to bring out the best in them. If an employee has performed exceptionally well, appreciate it. Simple words like "Well done", "Good", "Keep it up" actually go a long way in motivating employees. Employees need to feel indispensable to the organisation. It is essential for employees to be loyal to their organisation to give their best. Thus, to the question „What do you think you lack at work to work motivated?/What demotivates you at work?“, some respondents mentioned that they lack communication and understanding between superiors and employees, the atmosphere at work being an important factor that often succeeds in demotivating employees,,... understanding between employees and superiors. The bond between employees and bosses is very cold, lacking communication. I am demotivated by the atmosphere and the fact that sometimes you don't get what you deserve, in some cases we work more than necessary and we are not properly rewarded,, (S.R) „What demotivates me? Basically this, lack of communication, lack of understanding, after all we are all human,, (R.A). Communication is fundamental for the good functioning of an organisation, but from the answers we received we can see that it is not

something that all employees put into practice. Lack of communication forms an imbalance in the company and leads to lower employee performance.

Next we asked the question; „Do you think you are motivated enough by your superiors at work?“, the answers received to this question revealed the importance of the involvement of superiors and how employees are motivated by their superiors, so most of them answered that they are motivated by their superiors, and that this has improved their motivation at work ,, we spend 8 hours a day that is, 33% of our life time working and we have to like what we do and feel motivated... and I think that the superiors and.. er.. those in the top management of the company do their best to keep us motivated.,, (T.C) „Yes, yes, they are quite involved in our activities and they always try to motivate us so that every project is carried out properly and without incidents.,, (L.M), some respondents said that they are not motivated by their superiors, for example S.R mentioning that their attitude is authoritarian and they are not understanding towards the employees' needs. „No, I don't think I'm so motivated, uh.. no, I don't think I am, my superiors are more authoritarian and don't really understand the needs of the employees,, (S.R) in the same opinion is C.S., the unfriendly attitude and uninvolved of the superiors is one of the reasons why she would quit her current job ,,... no, those who are our superiors are not so friendly and that's what I said that would demotivate me to continue at this job,,

When asked , "What are the means of motivating employees in the organization where you work at the moment?", we found similar answers, the majority of respondents mentioned as means of motivation in the company where they work at the moment the benefits they receive, among them: financial bonuses, performance bonuses, Christmas and Easter bonuses, days off when there are legal holidays, medical insurance, life and accident insurance, discount packages, 13th salary, meal vouchers,. "A means of motivation would be the salary, even the work schedule, and also bonuses, Easter and Christmas bonuses, 13th salary, free annual check-ups" (R.A). Also as a means of motivation T.C. mentioned the team he works

with, he said that working with an energetic and sociable team makes him enjoy working more and he would feel bad to let them down ,...another factor is the team I work with, they are very energetic, very nice people that you enjoy working with more and you feel bad to let them down in front of such a team,, during the discussion I asked the following question „do these means motivate you to perform better at work?“, all the participants in the study except T.L were of the opinion that the means of motivation used in the company where they work contribute to the performance of the employees,, Yes, these means motivate me to perform better, you work more willingly when you are appreciated for your efforts at work. Although it's not only the financial part that matters, it's an important factor in the end.,(RA) C.S claims that without the benefits offered by the company at least 40% of employees would quit ,... Yes, of course, of course if we didn't have these benefits at least 40% of the company's employees would probably quit, if we're honest, we're all motivated by discounts, by offers, by a better salary package, of course,,,, (C.S.) Without motivation, it's not fair to expect the best from employees. Nobody likes to leave an organisation where they are treated well.

2.3. Employee performance

In order to better understand the subject of the research, the second part of the interview started with the question "What do you mean by performance?" Participants associated performance with quality and quantity. "Certainly quality and quantity, as long as you do your tasks properly, you meet the deadlines, you can consider that you have achieved performance, it is very important to respect our tasks," (L.M) ,, quality and somewhat quantity, but the most important is quality,, (S.D) Another aspect often mentioned was the achievement of objectives in the workplace and the effort that employees put into the tasks,, I think it is the total ability to achieve your objectives, to be creative, and if you don't get to be the best try to be the best,, (C.S) to this question T.L brought up the need to work with pleasure, because if you do what you like

performance comes naturally,, I mean to excel in something without disliking that thing, if I like what I do I know that performance comes by itself,,, In addition to these answers C.A also added the importance of overcoming daily obstacles, arguing that performance means that every day you are better than the day before,, ...performance also means that every day you are better than yesterday...,

Next I discussed the impact that motivation can have on an employee's performance, so I asked the question „Does the level of motivation affect your performance at work?“, from the participants' accounts I could see the impact that motivation has on an employee's performance at work.

Subjects stated that lack of motivation leads to reduced interest that employees present it in relation to the tasks they have to do „Yes. If I were not motivated enough I would certainly not show as much interest in solving tasks,, (Z.M) C.A also states that motivation impacts her work, finding that when she is unmotivated she performs her tasks more efficiently, „Yes the level of motivation affects my performance. On days when I feel my motivation is low, there are days when I do few tasks and stick to comfortable things, but when my motivation level is high I accomplish tasks and do things better and better,, (C.A). T.L. also agrees, he believes that it is not necessary to give 100% of what he can, if the company he works for does not appreciate his work and is not rewarded according to his efforts, "Of course, if I'm not motivated enough, I'm not interested in giving 100% of what I can, there are times when I'll try to find time to do something else, because I have no reason to do more if I'm not offered more....," (T.L).

On the responses we also found cases where candidates do not consider that performance is impacted by employee motivation, claiming that at work they have to perform their tasks to the best of their ability, they try not to let the motivation they feel influence how they perform their tasks. "Personally, I don't think the level of motivation can affect job performance, for me, because I know how I work and I am very determined that everything I do is done well and on time....," T.C.

The interview continued with the question

„In the organisation where you work, is the performance of the employees evaluated?“, to this question seven of the ten interviewees said that in the company where they work their performance is evaluated annually, mentioning the importance of this evaluation in increasing productivity and quality of work „Yes, performance is evaluated annually, through this they aim to establish the productivity of employees.....As a result of the evaluation they aim to increase the quality of work...., (L.M) „... yes, once every 6 months a professional evaluation is done. Following this evaluation, it is determined whether the person is doing the job and is performing, and if so, a raise and salary bonus is given. „, (C.A). Three of the respondents mentioned that they work in a company with a small number of employees, so there is no need for a performance appraisal, because the superiors interact directly with the employees and can easily see which of them are doing their job properly,, „Being a small company, we are always around the employees and ...clearly you see who works better, who is more interested, who is more lax, you see all these things,, (O.C).

During the interview, the gaps that employees may feel at work were highlighted, so I asked the question „What do you think is missing in the company you work for? Among the respondents' answers, there is one thing that is lacking and that they believe would reduce performance, namely communication and understanding, "I think there is a lack of communication and understanding, not only between colleagues... even superiors do not show understanding towards us employees. This lack of communication I think reduces performance. (S.D) „Understanding between departments, there are always misunderstandings,, (L.M) „I think there is a lack of understanding and communication, and these are very important for a pleasant working environment. I don't know if it necessarily reduces performance but it certainly has an impact on it, maybe not a major one, (R.A)

The question "If you could, what else would you add to motivate employees to perform?" prompted a list of bonuses and perks they would like to see in the workplace. Following the answers received, among the most frequent

bonuses they would add are salary bonuses, also for a better motivation of the employees they would add activities they could do together with colleagues, team-building, so they also mentioned vacation days, but also more frequent appreciation from superiors, "Well, besides salary bonuses, I would add extra paid vacation days and more frequent appreciation from people around them for what they do" (C.A). "I think I would add team building...let's all go out and get to know each other better, see those parts that we can't see at work" (.....). Yes, it would be very cool and it would improve the accomplishment of tasks, we could get to know each other better and we would certainly feel better at work too,, (C.S) Moreover two of the participants in the study. T.C and Z.M mentioned that there are no things they would add to increase their performance, since the organisations they belong to provide them with everything they need, „I honestly don't know, we really have everything, we didn't miss anything,,(Z. M) „Honestly I don't know what could be .because I already think that there are many aspects that we do within Vitesco....certainly there are things that we could implement, there are always new ideas that could be implemented, but I don't know now what could be added,, (T.C).

Employees have different personalities and these differences influence how they react to the external and internal pressures that exist in any organisation, so each employee may perceive the causes that reduce performance in a different way.

To the question „What do you think are the causes that reduce performance?", the answers were varied, they mentioned: lack of communication, lack of interest, too high work level, lack of knowledge. R.A underlines the lack of involvement and lack of interest of some colleagues at work „The causes that reduce performance I think are lack of involvement, lack of interest, lack of care of some...., C.A and T.C argue that the level of work much too high is an impediment to achieving performance, being overloaded with responsibilities there is the possibility of not performing your tasks with the best quality „Among the causes I think are an exaggerated number of tasks...., (C. A) „Probably the level

of work... could be an issue to reduce performance, when you are overloaded with responsibilities it is possible that the things you do are not of the highest quality..., (T.C) In contrast, Z. M and L.M indicate that lack of knowledge can be one of the causes, moreover L. M mentions that it is not only because of the individual that performance is reduced but also because of the company because of scarce resources or even sanctions,, .the causes that reduce performance can be both because of the individual... and because of the company, an employee who does not have the necessary skills, or the skills are not very well developed will not have the same performance as a competent employee, but there are still other factors that reduce performance, scarce resources, obstacles encountered from outside, sometimes even the lack of sanctions can lead to lower performance from employees., (L.M)

People need new information in order to keep developing. Learning is a continuous process and it does not stop, but personal development can be time consuming, but this process has many advantages, that is why we asked the following question „At your current workplace you are given the opportunity to develop personally, to complement this question we added the question „Do you think this has improved/increases the performance of employees, here we listed several ways of personal development made available to employees by the company such as: courses and trainings.

But as T.C. reported every job involves personal development, Yes, I definitely think every job involves personal development, from every job we learn something, of course there are trainings as well all the things we learn definitely impact on the performance we have at work,, (T.C.) Personal development helps the employee to accumulate as much knowledge as possible this also benefits the company, L. M states that an employee who has more knowledge will perform his tasks more easily, which leads to improved performance of both the employee and the organization ,, In the company where I work there are various courses, trainings that you can attend, which helps you to develop personally, it is also an advantage for the company, the more

knowledge you have, the easier you will perform your tasks.

So yes, being offered the benefit of personal development through training is of great benefit to the company and also improves performance, (L.M) A unique case is the case of T. L who says that he is not given the opportunity to develop personally and because of the high level of work and the fluctuating schedule he hardly finds time to read a book when he gets home, "Honestly you are not given the opportunity, the working hours are quite long, there is a lot of work, few employees and when to develop personally, you don't have time when you get home to read a book or try to do another course or whatever...," (T.L)

At the end of the interview we asked the question „Are you satisfied and do you have satisfaction with your work at work,, Most of the employees said they were satisfied with the work they do at work, although they claimed that there is room for improvement most of them said they like what they do at work „Yes, I am satisfied with the work I do, there is always room for improvement, both for me and for the people around me, but it is important to have satisfaction when you go to work.,,, (R.A) L.M highlights the impact that the satisfaction you feel with your work can have on performance. „Yes, I am very satisfied with my job, and I think that the degree of satisfaction and the satisfaction you feel at work also influences the performance you have.,, (L.M) „Yes, I am currently satisfied and satisfied with my job and everything I do. I quite like my job and all aspects of it, but there is always room for improvement, (C.A) „yeah, I'm satisfied with my work.,, (M.D) Also two of the subjects who participated in the study did not declare themselves fully satisfied with their work, T.L claims that he does not like what he is doing at the moment but he does his best to do his tasks as well as possible, „No, I mean, I don't like what I do, but I do my best to do my tasks as well as possible.,,, (T.L). Also S.R. on a personal level is not 100% satisfied with his job because of his superiors, but also because his income does not meet his needs, "On a personal level... honestly I am not 100% satisfied, because of my superiors and because of my salary".

3. Conclusions

This research was conducted with the aim of discovering which motivational factors in an organization lead to performance and identifying the link between employee motivation and the performance they achieve at work.

The company cannot completely stop the quitting process of employees, but it can control it to a large extent. An employee seeks a change when his job becomes monotonous and offers nothing new. It is essential that everyone enjoys what they do. That's why performance appraisals are important to find out whether employees are truly happy with their work or not and to try to meet the needs they have at work.

Data collection found that employees are influenced by the motivations they have at work and that these motivations impact their performance. As could be seen, there is a difference between those with higher positions in the organisation's hierarchy and those with a position lower in the hierarchy. Those with higher positions stated that they did not experience many shortcomings in their company and that their performance at work was not entirely impacted by the level of motivation they felt at work, but that the benefits they received in a company made them want to stay. On the other hand, most interviewees said that the higher the level of motivation, the higher the level of performance they achieve.

Thus, based on the collected responses we can identify numerous motivating factors as well as factors that demotivate employees to

perform their tasks in line with the company's requirements.

Among the most frequently encountered motivating factors are: salary, salary and performance bonuses, benefits and discount package offered by the company, team building, possibility of personal development within the company (courses, trainings), days off when there are legal holidays, Christmas and Easter bonuses, health and life insurance, promotion opportunities. As the participants in the study also argued, when you are offered all these advantages, you are more motivated to perform your tasks as well and as quickly as possible, with performance ultimately being reflected in both the quality and quantity of the tasks performed.

The most frequently mentioned factors that demotivate employees and reduce performance are: an unpleasant atmosphere, lack of communication between colleagues, and lack of communication between superiors and employees, too high a level of work, few resources, lack of sanctions, lack of knowledge, little appreciation from others, and doing something you do not enjoy.

For an organisation to do well and make a profit, it is essential that high-potential employees are motivated to stay with the company for longer and contribute effectively. Employees who are motivated to the extent that they are expected tend to be loyal and committed to management and have always decided in favour of the company.

In conclusion, the main objective of the research has been achieved, after interpreting the data we can say that there is a link between employee motivation and the performance they achieve at work.

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