

# MOTIVATION.



Being able to identify and tap into what motivates and drives people is a powerful leadership tool. It enables us to understand what's important to ourselves and others, and how that influences and impacts individual commitment and performance.

## Needs theory of motivation

Motivation refers to the psychological processes that stimulate excitement and persistence of voluntary actions aimed at some goal. Because motivation can be extremely individualised, as a leader or manager you can use a wide range of techniques to keep employees motivated and happy. Therefore, it's important for you to understand the psychological processes involved in motivation so that you can effectively direct employees towards your organisational goals.

Needs theories attempt to identify internal factors that motivate an individual's behaviour and are based on the premise that people are motivated by unfulfilled needs. Needs are psychological or physiological insufficiencies that provide some type of behavioural response. The needs a person has can range from weak to strong and can vary based on environmental factors, time and place.

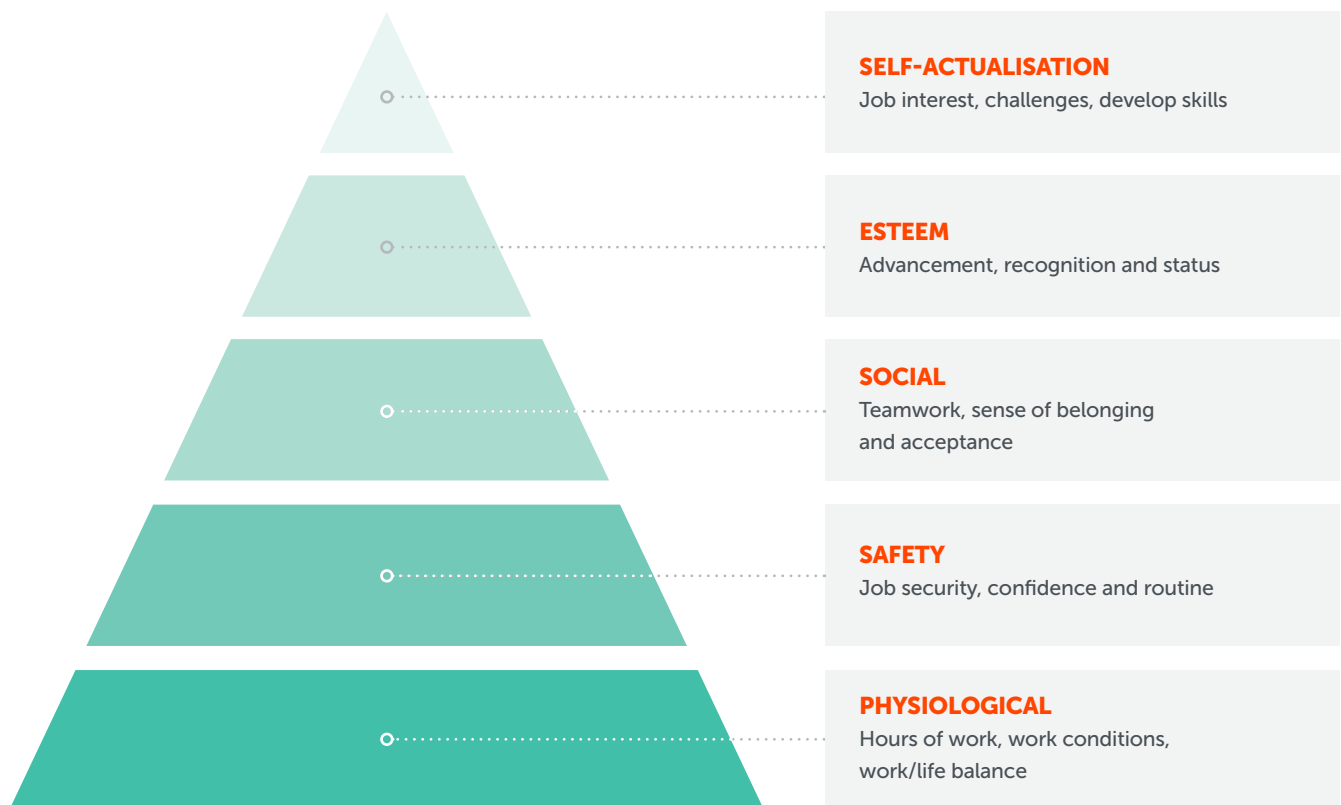
## Maslow's hierarchy of needs and motivation theory

One of the most popular needs theories is Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. Maslow says that motivation is the result of a person's attempt at fulfilling five basic needs: physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualisation.

The basis of Maslow's theory is that human beings are motivated by unsatisfied needs, and that certain lower factors need to be satisfied before higher needs can be satisfied. The deficit principle claims that once a need is satisfied, it is no longer a motivator because an individual will take action only to satisfy unmet needs. So in terms of the pyramid, the needs at the bottom have to be satisfied or met first.

Maslow's theory of needs can be applied to the work environment as shown in the diagram.

## Application of Maslow's theory to work environment



This tool can be used at any time, but may be particularly pertinent in preparing for one-to-ones and performance reviews, or for gauging team engagement during times of uncertainty or change.

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## Application of Maslow's theory to the work environment

Your needs at work also need to be satisfied in a specific order of importance. For example, job interest will not be relevant if you are worried about being made redundant. On the other hand, it can be dissatisfying if you have wonderful working conditions and a secure job, but you do not feel that you are growing and developing in your role.

### 1. PERSONAL

Your needs revolve around your personal life and well-being. You work to live, not live to work. It is important that you have decent surroundings at work and the resources to do your job well.

### 2. SECURITY

It is important to you that your job is safe as you may have various commitments which depend on your salary e.g. mortgage, family etc. At work, you may not like any surprises, as you like to know your objectives and what is expected of you.

### 3. SOCIAL

You enjoy being part of a team and having good working relationships. If you experience conflict with them, you may not be able to concentrate on your work properly.

### 4. STATUS

You like to be given credit and recognition for the work you do. Also, you are keen on gaining advancement as it is a reflection of your achievements. Therefore, it is important that you take roles that provide you with a good opportunity to progress.

### 5. ACHIEVEMENT AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Basically you enjoy your work. You like being given new challenges with the opportunity of using your skills and talents.

It's important to remember that what motivates you will not necessarily be the same for others – our motivators and drivers are unique and very personal. So, your role as a leader is to seek to understand what creates the right environment and culture where you and each of your team members is motivated and energised to perform.

## Autonomy, mastery and purpose (Dan Pink)

Further research by Dan Pink shows that what motivates people at work is not necessarily what we might think. His study shows that, beyond being paid 'fairly' for our work, money or financial reward is not in itself a motivator for most people – in fact his studies found that it can have the opposite effect.

Once money is taken off the table as a potential motivator, he found that there are three factors that consistently lead to better performance and personal satisfaction:

- 1. AUTONOMY** – The desire to be self-directed is critical to people's engagement
- 2. MASTERY** – The urge to get better at what we do is central to people's feelings of personal satisfaction
- 3. PURPOSE** – The need to have a clear rationale and vision for doing what we do has a huge impact on people's motivation and contribution.

Pink believes that this combination provides a win-win for both organisations and individuals, in that it makes us better off individually, and ultimately makes the world a better place.

Watch the animated video listed in the Links & References of Dan Pink's talk and answer the following questions:

- What is your reaction to his theory?
- Do you agree or disagree with his suggestions?
- What do you understand by the three concepts – autonomy, mastery and purpose?
- To what extent do you believe they motivate you at work?
- How much do you believe you have the opportunity to practice each of the three elements at work?
- What helps create those opportunities?
- What gets in the way of you doing more of each?
- What can you do to overcome those blockers?
- How do you create the opportunity for others to practice each of the three elements at work?
- How could you create more of these opportunities?

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## HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

### Constructing your story

1. Use the background material and activities in the tool to identify your own and your teams' drivers and motivators
2. Gain feedback from your colleagues/team on how you currently inspire and motivate – use this feedback to create your development plan
3. Use the key questions to review where you currently are. You can also use these as part of regular conversations with your team
4. Use the 'How is morale in my team?' worksheet to assess how engaged your team is now
5. If you identify an individual who you consider to be demotivated, use the three-step process to re-energising them.

## KEY QUESTIONS

For use with self and others to understand motivation

What really drives and motivates you at work?

What happens when you get this?

What happens when you don't get this?

What factors create the environment/culture where you feel motivated and energised?

How do you understand what makes people tick?

When do you get the best out of others?

What do you do that inspires and motivates others?

What can/do you do to create this environment and culture for yourself and those around you?

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## How is morale in my team?

Complete this worksheet regularly to track how engaged people seem to be and consider how well you are using available strategies to help keep them motivated. Then complete the checklist below to make sure you stay on track.

DATE:

Morale in my team is (up/down/flat/mixed?) because:

Success or major milestones we have achieved so far:

Individuals who have been instrumental in successes to date and what motivates them:

How will we celebrate success?

### CHECKLIST: HOW WELL AM I MAINTAINING MOTIVATION?

YES

NO

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Have I offered feedback and recognition to individuals?                  |  |  |
| 2. Have I communicated successes and how do they relate to the big picture? |  |  |
| 3. Have I celebrated successes and the accomplishments of milestones?       |  |  |
| 4. Have I spoken recently about the team's ability to overcome problems?    |  |  |
| 5. Have I remembered to consider specific rewards for achievement?          |  |  |

If you answered 'no' to any question, consider how you can improve or remedy the situation in the up and coming weeks.

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## Re-energising a demotivated individual

To successfully motivate others, you must uncover their inherent motivations. Everyone has motivational energy – whether it be to run a marathon, stick to a diet or spend quality time with their family – it may just not be directly in the workplace.

As a leader then, your role is not to try and motivate the individual; rather it's to help them motivate themselves. Instead of trying to impose a solution on them, work with them to uncover the barriers that prevent them from achieving desired goals.

### A THREE-STEP PROCESS TO RE-ENERGISING A DEMOTIVATED INDIVIDUAL

#### STEP 1

##### **Flesh out your picture of the individual and the problem.**

Try to gain a better understanding of the issue. Attempt to see the situation from their perspective. Pinpoint any context or relationships that may be influencing their behaviour. Consider these factors individually:

- **The person who lacks motivation.** Through informal conversations, find out their drivers and passions and what could be blocking them at work. Ask yourself what could result if those impediments were somehow removed
- **Yourself.** Ask yourself how you might be contributing to the problem. Then ask the person for some feedback. You may discover that you are the person's chief demotivator. Without knowing it, you might be putting them off with actions that make them feel you don't care
- **The context.** Ask yourself if there is anything about the current situation that might be bringing out the worst in them or you. Is there something happening or that recently happened, which may be adding stress?

#### STEP 2

**Consider a range of outcomes.** Actively switch your mindset from trying to achieve a pre-determined solution to their problem (e.g. he must improve his performance by the end of the month or he will go on an action contract) to considering several different possibilities. Being open to changing your definition of what your solution looks like can yield rich alternatives.

#### STEP 3

**Meet to discuss the issue and reach a solution.** This process culminates in a face-to-face meeting, ideally in a neutral space. During the meeting you should:

- Affirm their value to the team to get the meeting off on the right foot
- Describe the problem from your perspective and point out that it cannot continue
- Ask probing questions to test the assumptions you've made about the situation. These questions aim to expose any differences, as well as areas of agreement.
- Work together to identify possible solutions. Use the insight you have gained into what motivates them to guide the process. The resolution you mutually determine should play to the individual's drivers.

While trying to turnaround a demotivated individual takes time, it is well worth the investment. Your efforts will send a strong message that you are willing to grapple difficulties head on, and that you genuinely want to understand how to get the best out of people.




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## Hints and Tips

Here are some hints and tips for motivating employees taken from Forbes:

-  Act as a role model and help inspire employees to identify what they are passionate about at work; then provide them with some projects in their area of passion or interest – a happy employee is a motivated employee
-  Clearly define the organisation's vision, mission and strategy, as well as the goals and objectives of each employee. Make sure everyone on your team understands the key role they play in contributing to the success of the department
-  Empower your employees to succeed and delegate challenging and meaningful work – in general, people want to succeed and they want to continue learning and growing, so provide them with opportunities
-  Work with each employee to create their own personal development plan. Then, provide them with coaching and mentoring, and help them increase their skills and their sense of competence and accomplishment
-  Monitor the progress of your employees towards accomplishing their goals and objectives – then provide rewards to reinforce positive behaviour, increase their sense of progress and keep them motivated. This can include recognition in front of peers and other rewards that don't cost a lot of money, but are meaningful to the person.

## Links & References

1. Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us (Daniel H Pink) [www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=u6XAPnuFjJc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=u6XAPnuFjJc)
2. 5 Tips for Motivating Employees <http://www.forbes.com/sites/lisaquast/2012/01/10/5-tips-for-motivating-employees/#2fac6106e3da>