



Motivation at work isn't just about a paycheck—it's a complex dance between what keeps us from quitting and what drives in this intricate interplay of factors has fascinated psychologists and managers for decades, leading to numerous theories and studies on workplace motivation. One of the most influential and enduring models in this field is Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation. Imagine walking into your office on a Monday morning. The air conditioning is working perfectly, you still feel a gnawing sense of dissatisfaction. Why? Because while these factors might prevent you from feeling unhappy, they don't necessarily make you jump out of bed, eager to start your workday. This scenario perfectly illustrates the core concept of Herzberg's theory. Frederick Herzberg's theory. Frederick Herzberg's theory in the late 1950s. His work revolutionized our understanding of Employee Motivation Types: Effective Strategies for Boosting Workplace Engagement and continues to influence management practices today. But before we dive deeper into the theory, let's take a moment to appreciate why employee motivation is so crucial in the workplace. minimum to get by. Now contrast that with an organization buzzing with energy, where team members are passionate about their work and constantly striving to improve. The difference in productivity, innovation, and overall success between these two scenarios is stark. That's the power of motivation. Herzberg's theory is like a coin with two distinct sides: hygiene factors and motivation factors. These two elements work together to create a comprehensive picture of employee satisfaction and motivation. Let's break them down: Hygiene Factors: Think of these as the bare necessities of a job. They're the aspects that, when absent or inadequate, can make employees unhappy. However, their presence doesn't necessarily lead to satisfaction or motivation. It's like having a comfortable chair at your desk - you might not notice it when it's there, but you'll certainly feel its absence if it's taken away. Motivation Factors: These are the elements that truly drive employees to excel. They're the aspects of a job that, when present, can lead to high levels of satisfaction and motivation. Imagine the thrill of completing a challenging project or receiving recognition for your hard work - that's the power of motivation. Imagine the thrill of completing a challenging project or receiving recognition for your hard work - that's the power of motivation. employee satisfaction and performance. Employee Motivation and Productivity: Strategies for a High-Performing Workplace often hinge on understanding and managing this balance effectively. Let's dive deeper into hygiene factors. These are the elements that, while not directly motivating, can prevent dissatisfaction when properly managed. They're like the foundation of a house - you might not see them, but without them, everything else falls apart. 1. Company policies and administration: Ever worked in a place where the rules seemed arbitrary or unfair? That's a classic example of poor hygiene in this area. Fair, transparent policies can prevent a lot of grumbling and discontent. 2. Supervision and leadership: A micromanaging boss or an absent leader can quickly turn a dream job into a nightmare. Good supervision doesn't necessarily motivate, but bad supervision can certainly demotivate. 3. Working conditions and job security: From a comfortable office temperature to the assurance that your job won't disappear overnight, these factors play a crucial role in preventing dissatisfaction. 4. Salary and benefits: While money isn't everything, it's certainly something. Fair compensation is a key hygiene factor. It's worth noting that while a pay raise might provide a temporary boost, its motivational effect often wears off quickly. 5. Interpersonal relationships in the workplace: We spend a significant portion of our lives at work. Positive relationships with colleagues can make that time much more bearable, while toxic relationships can make even the best job unbearable. It's important to note that these factors are not motivators in themselves. They're more like the oil in a machine - necessary for smooth operation, but not the fuel that drives it forward. That's where motivation factors come in. Now, let's shift gears and explore the factors that truly drive satisfaction and performance. These are the elements that make people excited about their work and push them to go above and beyond. 1. Achievement and recognition: Remember that rush of pride when you completed a challenging project? Or the warm glow when your boss praised your work in front of the team? That's the power of achievement and recognition at work. 2. The work itself and responsibility: Engaging, meaningful work that allows employees to take ownership can be incredibly motivating. It's the difference between feeling like a cog in a machine and feeling like a vital part of the organization. 3. Advancement and growth opportunities: The prospect of climbing the career ladder or expanding one's skill set can be a powerful motivator. It taps into our innate desire for progress and self-improvement. 4. Personal development and learning: Similar to advancement opportunities, the chance to learn and grow as a person can be highly motivation. While a bonus check might provide a temporary boost, the satisfaction of doing meaningful work or learning a new skill can fuel motivation for much longer. Understanding Herzberg's theory is one thing, but applying it effectively in the workplace is another challenge entirely. Let's explore some strategies for putting this theory into practice. to identify potential sources of dissatisfaction. 2. Ensure that company policies are fair, transparent, and consistently applied. 3. Invest in leadership training to improve supervision quality. 4. Regularly review and adjust compensation packages to remain competitive. 5. Foster a positive work environment that encourages healthy interpersonal relationships. Enhancing motivation factors: 1. Implement a robust recognition program to celebrate achievements. 2. Design jobs to be engaging and meaningful, with clear responsibilities. 3. Create clear career paths and provide opportunities for advancement. 4. Offer training and development programs to support personal growth. Balancing hygiene and motivation factors is crucial for optimal results. It's not enough to focus solely on one aspect - both need attention. For instance, a company might offer exciting work and growth opportunities (motivation factors), but if the pay is unfair or the work environment is toxic (hygiene factors), employees are still likely to be dissatisfied. McClelland's Human Motivation Theory: Unlocking the Drivers of Workplace Behavior offers another perspective on motivation that can complement Herzberg's theory. By understanding both, managers can develop a more comprehensive approach to motivation. Case studies of successful implementation abound. For example, Google is famous for its approach to employee satisfaction and motivation. They address hygiene factors through competitive salaries and excellent working conditions, while also focusing on motivation factors like the "20% time" policy, which allows employees to spend a portion of their work time on projects that interest them personally. While Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory has been influential, it's not without its critics. Let's take a balanced look at some of the challenges and limitations of this model. Comparison with other motivation. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, for instance, offers a different perspective, suggesting that people are motivated by fulfilling a series of needs in a specific order. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: Boosting Employee Motivation in the Workplace provides an in-depth look at this alternative approach. Critiques of the Two-Factor Theory often focus on its methodology and generalizability. Some argue that the theory oversimplifies the complex nature of human motivation. Critics point out that factors Herzberg classified as hygiene might actually be motivators for some individual differences in motivation present another challenge to the universal application of Herzberg's theory. What motivates employees in one culture or industry might not have the same effect in another. For instance, job security (a hygiene factor in Herzberg's model) might be a significant motivator in cultures with high uncertainty avoidance. Modern adaptations of the theory have attempted to address some of these limitations. or to account for individual and cultural differences. Others have suggested combining Herzberg's insights with other motivation theories for a more comprehensive approach. Employee Motivation Testing: Unlocking Drive and Performance in the Workplace can be a valuable tool in understanding how Herzberg's theory applies to your specific organizational context. By assessing what truly motivates your employees, you can tailor your approach more effectively. Despite its limitations, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory continues to have a significant impact on organizational psychology and management practices. Its core insight – that preventing dissatisfaction is not the same as creating satisfaction - remains highly relevant in today's workplace. The theory has influenced numerous management practices, from job enrichment programs to the design of recognition and reward systems. It has encouraged managers to look beyond simple hygiene factors and consider how they can create truly motivating work environments. Two-Factor Theory of Motivation: Herzberg's Approach to Employee Satisfaction remains a cornerstone in the study of workplace trends, such as remote work and the gig economy, impact the relevance and application of Herzberg's theory. There's also potential for exploring how artificial intelligence and behaviors. Expectancy Theory of Motivation: Unveiling
Its Impact on Employee Performance offers another perspective that could be integrated with Herzberg's insights for a more comprehensive approach to motivation. As we look to the future, it's clear that understanding and fostering employee motivation will remain crucial for organizational success. While the specific theories and strategies may evolve, the fundamental challenge remains: how do we create workplaces where people not only avoid dissatisfaction but are genuinely excited and motivated to excel? Valence Theory of Motivation: Exploring Its Impact on Human Behavior and Decision-Making provides yet another lens through which to view this complex topic, highlighting the multifaceted nature of human motivation. In conclusion, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory offers a valuable framework for understanding the dual nature of workplace satisfaction and motivation. By addressing both hygiene and motivation factors, organizations can create environments where employees are not just content, but truly engaged and driven to perform at their best. Leadership and Motivation Theories: Enhancing Organizational Success underscores the critical role that leaders play in implementing these motivational strategies effectively. As we continue to grapple with the challenges of motivating a diverse, multi-generational strategies effectively. continue to evolve and adapt. The key for managers and leaders is to stay informed, remain flexible, and never stop asking the crucial questions: Unveiling the Secrets to a Thriving Workforce. After all, in the grand dance of workplace motivation, it's not just about avoiding missteps - it's about creating a performance that inspires and energizes everyone involved. References: 1. Herzberg, F. (1968). One more time: How do you motivate employees? Harvard Business Review, 46(1), 53-62. 2. Miner, J. B. (2005). 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Unpublished paper presented at The 2011 Student Research Conference: Exploring Opportunities in Research, Policy, and Practice, University of Minnesota Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy and Development, Minneapolis, MN. 9. Ruthankoon, R., & Ogunlana, S. O. (2003). Testing Herzberg's two-factor theory in the Thai construction industry. Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management, 10(5), 333-341 10. Dartey-Baah, K., & Amoako, G. K. (2011). Application of Frederick Herzberg's Two-Factor theory in assessing and understanding employee motivated to complete our work tasks day in and day out can sometimes feel difficult. There are so many factors that influence our motivation, whether or not we procrastinate, and if we feel satisfied by the work we are completing. Herzberg's motivates people), which recognizes that these factors are both internal and interact in complex ways. In Herzberg's motivation theory is a type of content theory is a type of content theory (a theory that focuses on what motivates people), which recognizes that these factors are both internal and interact in complex ways. In Herzberg's motivation theory is a type of content theory (a theory that focuses on what motivates people), which recognizes that these factors are both internal and interact in complex ways. theory, these internal and external factors are referred to as motivation factors, respectively. Motivation factors, which include having recognition, or being interested in the work, all contribute to satisfaction. Hygiene factors, such as work conditions, salary, and company policies, do not necessarily cause an employee to be more satisfied, but if they are absent, they will cause an employee to be dissatisfied. Herzberg occasionally refers to hygiene factors, with KITA being an acronym for Kick In The Ass.12 These factors motivate someone to act either through incentives or the threat of punishment. Examples include reducing time spent at work (incentive) or losing a bonus (punishment). However, they only provide short-term success. It is the motivation factors that actually determine when there is satisfaction in the job. One novel component of Herzberg's motivation theory is that job satisfaction is not seen as the opposite of job dissatisfaction. 1 The two are separate phenomena influenced by different factors. Dissatisfaction is impacted by hygiene factors, while satisfaction is obtained through motivators. Following this logic, the opposite of job satisfaction is obtained through motivators. Following this logic, the opposite of job satisfaction is obtained through motivators. opportunities. Suppose a company offers low salaries, poor job security, and an unpleasant work environment. These are hygiene factors, and their absence will likely cause employees will no longer be dissatisfied. However, that does not necessarily mean they will be truly satisfied or motivated. To achieve employee job satisfaction, the company needs motivating factors, such as recognizing employee achievements, offering career development opportunities, and providing meaningful, challenging work. This demonstrates Herzberg's idea that eliminating dissatisfaction does not create satisfaction; it only brings employees to a neutral status, while true motivation is very complex and multidimensional. What we do know about it is relatively little, considering how much it impacts our lives. Herzberg's theory is one of several theories of motivation, each one providing a different lens through which to understand human behavior and its influencing factors. "It's the job of a manager not to light the fire of motivation, but to create an environment to let each person's personal spark of motivation blaze. Businesses and organizations have long sought for answers on how to boost employee production, and therefore, profits. Fortunately, many researchers have extensively studied human motivation to try and understand what drives humans to work. Herzberg's two-factor theory outlines that humans are motivated by two things: motivators and hygiene factors (see Figure 1). These two factors are both critical to motivation: motivators encourage job satisfaction and hygiene factors prevent job dissatisfaction. They are related to workplace satisfaction. They are related to workplace satisfaction. cover intrinsic needs such as achievement, recognition, and advancement. Motivation factors allow employees to be content in their jobs and promote growth. Hygiene factors: factors that are not related to workplace in order to prevent dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors cover extrinsic needs such as pay grade, workplace policy and relationships with their peers. See also: Model of Motivation: ARCS Instructional Design Figure 1: Motivators & Hygiene Factors Many are familiar with Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which outlines the basic, psychological and self-fulfillment needs of humans. His theory explored the needs that human have, particularly growth and connection with others. Herzberg conducted his studies at the same time as Maslow, and built on his theory to address motivation (Figure 2). He made some interesting discoveries, including the lack of linear relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic needs. His most dramatic discovery, however, was that the result of his studies was reliant on what the researcher was looking for. He then changed his factors and Motivators Diagram There is one key idea that one must keep in mind when using Herzberg's theory: intrinsic needs and extrinsic needs are distinct things. An individual will not suddenly become satisfied with their job if you make the work more enriching (Figure 3). Figure 3. Herzberg's Theory Terminologies: Categories Root cause Connectors Byproducts Hygiene Factors do not contribute to workplace, one must examine the hygiene factors. As stated above, hygiene factors do not contribute to workplace satisfaction but must be present in order to prevent workplace dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors are closely related to extrinsic needs: Hygiene factors consists of a set of 10 factors: company policies and administration, guality of technical supervision, guality of technical s personal life, working conditions, and status. If any of these factors are lacking or missing, a worker is much more likely to be dissatisfied with their job. Workers who consistently file complaints often have one or more of their needs that is not being met. Similarly, examples of dissatisfiers would be poor workplace policy, aggressive management, or a negative workplace environment. Managers can often increase workplace satisfaction by simply having a conversation with their colleagues to find out what they are unhappy with. Some problems have easy solutions, such as keeping supplies organized or having more materials in stock. An employee's pay is often a more challenging issue to rectify but supervisors should still evaluate their business plan and compensation strategy. Supervisors should also reach out to employees are rarely productive or happy. It is vital that workplaces offer emotional support and relationships with their employees. There is a small play in words in the use of "hygiene" factors. Medically speaking,
this means maintaining good personal hygiene in order to prevent disease in your organization, maintaining good "hygiene" means that your employees remain productive; it does not mean that you will grow. Hygiene factors allow corporations to maintain their employees. This leads us to the second part of the two-factor theory: motivated to brainstorm new ideas or take on a new project. The dating of the two-factor theory is believed to be particularly important. Like Maslow, Herzberg established his traditional idea, believing that it was actually the content, not the context, of a job that caused satisfaction. If a corporation is looking to develop new products and expand into new areas, they need to understand what motivators that fulfill employee intrinsic needs: achievement, recognition, growth, advancement, responsibility, and the work itself. Essentially, managers will need to reevaluate the 'human' aspect of their employees, including their goals, values and hobbies. They will need to invest emotionally into the relationship by taking the time to talk to them, thank them for their loyalty, or send a card acknowledging their hard work. Managers can also celebrate an employee's creativity or an important milestone in their career. Above all, they need to be good leaders by helping their subordinates develop to their full potential. Like the hygiene factors, the motivation factors do not lower the level of dissatisfaction. Even if employees are motivated to work on new projects, they are still affected by extrinsic needs. Potential problems, such as pay rate or low amounts of office supplies, still need to be addressed. This is why both factors are necessary in the two-factor theory. See also: Gagne's Nine Events of Instruction In 1959, Frederick Herzberg, a behavioural scientist proposed a two-factor theory or the motivator-hygiene theory. According to Herzberg, there are some job factors that result in satisfaction" is "No satisfaction" is "No bissatisfaction. According to Herzberg's view of satisfaction" is "No bissatisfaction" is "No bissatisfa factors into two categories-Hygiene factors- Hygiene factors are those job factors which are essential for existence of motivation at workplace, then they lead to dissatisfaction. In other words, hygiene factors are those factors which when adequate/reasonable in a job, pacify the employees and do not make them dissatisfied. These factors are extrinsic to work. Hygiene factors are extrinsic to work. Hygiene factors are extrinsic to work. Hygiene factors are extracted the provide the state of the provide the state of the provide the providet the provide the p physiological needs which the individuals wanted and expected to be fulfilled. Hygiene factors include: Pay: The pay or salary structure should be appropriate and reasonable. It must be equal and competitive to those in the same domain. Company Policies and administrative policies: The company policies should not be too rigid They should be fair and clear. It should include flexible working hours, dress code, breaks, vacation, etc. Fringe benefits: The employee help programmes, etc. Physical Working conditions: The working conditions should be safe, clean and hygienic. The work equipments should be updated and well-maintained. Status: The employees with his peers, superiors and subordinates should be familiar and retained. Interpersonal relationship of the employees with his peers, superiors and subordinates should be appropriate and acceptable. There should be appropriate and acceptable and acceptable. The organization must provide job security to the employees. Motivational factors are inherent to work. These factors are inherent to work. These factors are inherent to work. These are factors involved in performing the job. Employees find these factors intrinsically rewarding. The motivators symbolized the psychological needs that were perceived as an additional benefit. Motivational factors include: Recognition: The employees should be praised and recognized for their accomplishments by the managers. Sense of achievement: The employees must have a sense of achievement. This depends on the job. There must be a fruit of some sort in the job. Growth and promotional opportunities: There must be growth and advancement opportunities in an organization to motivate the employees to perform well. Responsibility: The employees must hold themselves responsible for the work. The managers should give them ownership of the work. They should minimize control but retain accountability. Meaningful ness of the work. The work itself should be meaningful, interesting and challenging for the employee to perform and to get motivated. Limitations of Two-Factor Theory is not free from limitations: The two-factor theory overlooks situational variables. Herzberg assumed a correlation between satisfaction and ignored productivity. The theory's reliability is uncertain. Analysis has to be made by the raters may spoil the findings by analyzing same response in different manner. No comprehensive measure of satisfaction was used. An employee may find his job acceptable despite the fact that he may hate/object part of his job. The two factor theory is not free from bias as it is based on the natural reaction of employees when they are enquired the sources of satisfaction and dissatisfaction at work. They will blame dissatisfaction on the external factors such as salary structure, company policies and peer relationship. Also, the employees will give credit to themselves for the satisfaction factor at work. The theory is acceptable broadly.Implications of Two-Factor TheoryThe Two-Factor theory implies that the managers must stress upon guaranteeing the adequacy of the hygiene factors to avoid employees are motivated to work and perform harder and better. This theory emphasize upon job-enrichment so as to motivate the employees. The job must utilize the employee's skills and competencies to the maximum. Focusing on the motivation, developed by Frederick Herzberg in a practical way. Next to what this theory is, this article also highlights how to apply this theory, the Critique on the Herzberg Two Factor Theory about motivating your employees. Enjoy reading! What is the Herzberg Two Factor Theory of Motivation? This theory, also called the Motivation-Hygiene Theory, was penned by Frederick Herzberg, who was very interested in people's motivation and employees job satisfaction, came up with the theory. He conducted his research by asking a group of people about their good and bad experiences at work. He was surprised that the group answered questions about their good experiences. Based on this, Frederick Herzberg developed the theory that people's job satisfaction depends on two kinds of factors. Factors for satisfaction (motivators / satisfiers) and factors for dissatisfaction (hygiene factors / dissatisfiers). Performance, recognition, job status, responsibility and opportunities for growth all fall under motivators/ satisfiers. Hygiene factors / dissatisfiers are about salary, secondary working conditions, the relationship with colleagues, physical work place and the relationship between supervisor and employee. In his theory, Frederick Herzberg claims these factors function on the same plane. In other words, satisfaction - for example by offering a higher salary - doesn't necessarily mean the employee will then be satisfied. The employee is just no longer dissatisfied. Figure 1 - Factors Affecting Motivation 4 different combinations of motivation Employees have few complaints, but they're not really motivated, their job is challenging, but they have complaints about salary or work conditions. 4: Low hygiene and low motivation Figure 2 - Two Factors Theory of Motivation in Practice (Herzberg) This is the worst possible situation, employees are not motivated and have a lot of complaints. KITA Adjusting the hygiene job factors, also called the KITA (Kick in the Ass) factors by Frederick Herzberg, often have a short-term effect that doesn't last very long. Changing the motivation factors on the other hand often has a more lasting, long-term effect on employee performance. How to apply the Herzberg Two Factor Theory of Motivation? Organisations and their managers want teams with the best possible performance. But how do you motivate that team? There's not much point in motivating employees if the hygiene factors aren't taken care off. Motivating people really works when the things that bother them - the things they complain about -disappear. Take away the job dissatisfaction To do this, it's important to figure out all the important to figure out all the important factors first. What are the complainds about, what's going on, how do the employees interact with each other? Generally speaking, the following aspects are important: Work on the bureaucracy within the organisation (company policy and administrative aspects) Make sure there's supportive and effective supervision Create a work environment where all employees are respected Pay an honest salary Make sure there's supportive and effective supervision Create a work to build up the status of their functions Give job guarantees (job security) When the dissatisfaction is taken away, the organisation can focus on motivating its employees effectively. Create conditions for satisfaction For motivation within the organisation, think about: Create conditions for good performance Appreciating your employees' talents and abilities Giving each team as much responsibility as possible Offering opportunities for growth within the organisation offering training and development opportunities organisational structure that much. A higher salary, better work conditions etc. Measures for motivation require bigger investments and changes to the organisational culture. Critique on the Herzberg Two Factor Theory is widely used, but there are a few points issues with it. One issue is the fact that humans tend to
look at the aspects of their work that they like and project them onto themselves when things are going well. When times are bad, external factors seem to play a larger part. Another point of criticism is that the Two Factor Theory assumes that job satisfaction equals higher productivity. Herzberg didn't take this into account while researching and coming up with his theory. Herzberg's Two Factor Theory has been replaced by many newer theories over time. This is largely due to the above-mentioned critiques. However, Herzberg's Two Factor Theory still influences new popular management theory. Summary of the Herzberg Two Factor Theory of Motivation The Herzberg Two Factor Theory assumes on the one hand, that employees. This theory assumes on the one hand, employees can be dissatisfied with their jobs. This often has something to do with so-called hygiene factors, such as salary and work conditions. On the other hand, employees satisfaction has to do with so-called motivation factors. These factors have to do with development opportunities, responsibility and appreciation. Frederick Herzberg claims these factors exist side by side. Taking away the dissatisfaction factors, the hygiene factors need to be taken care of first. Now it is your turn What do you think? Could you use the Herzberg Two Factor Theory and do you have tips and tricks, or would you like to add anything? Share your experience and knowledge in the comments box below. More information DeShields Jr, O. W., Kara, A., & Kaynak, E. (2005). Determinants of business student satisfaction and retention in higher education: applying Herzberg's two-factor theory. International journal of education and retention in higher education and motivation. Behaviour science concepts and management application: Studies in personnel policy, 216. Herzberg, F. (1969). Job enrichment pays off. Harvard Business Review, 47(2), 61-78. Herzberg, F. (2005). Motivation-hygiene theory. Organizational behavior one: Essential theories of motivation and leadership, eds JB Miner, ME Sharpe Inc, New York, 61-74. How to cite this article: Kuijk, A. (2018). Herzberg Two Factor Theory of Motivation. Retrieved [insert date] from Toolshero: Original publication date: 02/20/2018 | Last update: 05/13/2025 Add a link to this page on your website: Toolshero: Herzberg Two Factor Theory of Motivation. Retrieved [insert date] from Toolshero: Original publication date: 02/20/2018 | Last update: 05/13/2025 Add a link to this page on your website: Toolshero: Herzberg Two Factor Theory of Motivation. extrinsic motivators in Herzberg's two-factor theory American psychologist Frederick Herzberg is regarded as one of the great original thinkers in management and motivational theory. Herzberg set out to determine the effect of attitude on motivation, by simply asking people to describe the times when they felt really good, and really bad, about their jobs. What he found was that people who felt good about their jobs gave very different responses from the people who felt bad. The results from this inquiry form the basis of Herzberg's "Two Factor Theory"). Published in his famous article, "One More Time: How do You Motivate Employees," the conclusions he drew were extraordinarily influential, and still form the bedrock of good motivational practice nearly half a century later. He's especially recognized for his two-factor theory, which hypothesized that there are two different sets of factors governing job satisfaction: "hygiene factors," or extrinsic motivators and "motivation factors," or intrinsic motivators, tend to represent more tangible, basic needs in the ERG theory or in the lower levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs included in the existence category of needs in the ERG theory or in the lower levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. fringe benefits. It's important for managers to realize that not providing the appropriate and expected extrinsic motivators, tend to represent less tangible, more emotional needs—i.e., the kinds of needs identified in the "relatedness" and "growth" categories of needs in the ERG theory and in the higher levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Intrinsic motivators include challenging work, recognition, relationships, and growth potential. Managers need to recognize that while these needs may fall outside the more traditional scope of what a workplace ought to provide, they can be critical to strong individual and team performance. The factor that differentiates two-factor theory from the others we've discussed is the role of employee expectations. According to Herzberg, intrinsic motivators and extrinsic motivators tend to increase motivators and extrinsic motivators and extract the role of employee expectations. while extrinsic motivators tend to reduce motivation when they are absent. This is due to employees' expectations. Extrinsic motivators (e.g., salary, benefits) are expected, so they won't increase motivators (e.g., salary, benefits) are expected. on the other hand, can be a source of additional motivation, they should be concerned with the nature of the work itself—the opportunities it presents employees for gaining status, assuming responsibility, and achieving self-realization. If, on the other hand, management wishes to reduce dissatisfaction, then it must focus on the job environment—policies, procedures, supervision, and working conditions. To ensure a satisfied and productive workforce, managers must pay attention to both sets of job factors. Herzberg's two-factor theory suggests that job satisfaction is influenced by two factors: motivators and hygiene factors. Motivators, like recognition and achievement, lead to higher satisfaction but don't necessarily motivate. According to Herzberg, both sets of factors are needed to create a productive work environment. The two-factor theory (also known as Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory) argues that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction exist in two different ways, each with its own set of factors. This contradicts the traditional view of job satisfaction, which posits that job satisfaction are interdependent. Herzberg and his collaborators investigated fourteen factors relating to job satisfaction in their original study, classifying them as either hygienic or motivation factors. Motivation factors increase job satisfaction, while hygiene factors prevent job dissatisfaction. Although largely replaced by newer theories of motivation in academia, the two-factor motivation theory continues to influence popular management theory and the methodology of studies in some areas of the world. Herzberg identified two distinct sets of factors that influence job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, while motivation factors (e.g., recognition, autonomy, and opportunities for growth) are what drive true engagement and fulfillment. They are called "motivators" because they lead to job satisfaction and motivation when present. (e.g., achievement, responsibility, personal growth). These relate to the content of the work and personal growth. They are called "motivators" because they lead to job satisfaction and motivation when present. challenge, and achievement. These are intrinsic to the job itself. They relate to the content of the work. They are essential for creating job satisfaction and motivation. Achievement: Feeling a sense of accomplishment from completing challenging tasks. Recognition: Being acknowledged and appreciated for one's contributions. Advancement: Opportunities for promotion and career growth. The Work Itself: Finding the work interesting, challenging, and meaningful. Responsibility: Being given autonomy and control over one's work. Personal Growth: Opportunities for learning and development. When motivators are present, employees feel satisfied and motivated. The absence of motivators are present and development. does not necessarily lead to dissatisfaction, but it does result in a lack of satisfaction. Prevent dissatisfaction when adequate (e.g., salary, supervision, company policies). They do not create satisfaction when improved; they just stop people from being unhappy. job is performed. Examples include salary, working conditions, supervision, and company policy. Company Policies and Administration: Fair and clear policies, efficient administration. Salary: Adequate and competitive pay. Interpersonal Relations: Positive relationships with colleagues and supervisors. Working Conditions: Safe, comfortable, and adequate work environment. Supervision: Competent and fair supervision. Job Security: Feeling secure in one's employees become dissatisfied. Improving these factors reduces dissatisfaction, but it doesn't necessarily lead to satisfaction. It simply brings employees to a neutral state of "not dissatisfied." Their presence keeps employees from being unhappy, but only motivators can make them truly satisfied. Herzberg's theory emphasizes that satisfaction are not opposite ends of the same spectrum. Managers must address both hygiene factors and motivators to create a truly motivating work environment. Simply focusing on hygiene factors (e.g., higher pay) will not necessarily lead to increased motivation. To motivate employees, managers should focus on providing opportunities for achievement, recognition, responsibility, and growth. In other words, improving hygiene factors only brings employees from dissatisfaction to a neutral state; to reach higher levels of satisfaction. According to Herzberg, these motivators are intrinsic to the job and lead to job satisfaction because they satisfy the needs for growth and self-actualization (Herzberg, 1966). In his original paper, Herzberg examines 14 motivational and hygiene factors, of which there are notable examples: Advancement as the upward and positive status or position of someone in a workplace. Meanwhile, a negative or neutral status at work represents negative advancement (Alshmemri et al., 2017, 2017). The work itself: The content of job tasks can
positively or negatively affect employees. The job's difficulty and level of engagement can dramatically impact satisfaction or dissatisfaction o exist in the same vein as Maslow's self-actualization; they are opportunities for a personal growth and promotion in the workplace. Personal growth and promotion in the workplace. Personal growth and promotion in the workplace. Responsibility encompasses both the responsibilities held by the individual and the authority granted to the individual in their role. People gain satisfaction from being given the responsibility and level of authority to make decisions. Conversely, a mismatch between responsibility and level of authority to make decisions. 2017). Recognition: When employees receive praise or rewards for reaching goals or producing high-quality work, they receive recognition involves criticism or blame for a poorly done job (Alshmemri et al., 2017, 2017). Achievement: Positive achievement: Positive achievement: Positive achievement can involve, for example, completing a difficult task on time, solving a job-related problem, or seeing positive results from one's work. Negative achievement includes failure to progress at work or poor job-related decision-making (Alshmemri et al., 2017, 2017). Hygiene Factors Hygiene factors are those which decrease job dissatisfaction. Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman used the term hygiene as "medical hygiene. [which] operates to remove health hazards from the environment" (1959; Alshmemri et al., 2017). Herzberg also states that hygiene factors are extrinsic to the job and function in "the need to avoid unpleasantness" (Herzberg, 1966). Hygiene factors such as interpersonal relations, salary, company policies, and administration, relationship with supervisors, and working conditions. Below is the typical hierarchy of hygiene factors as identified in Herzberg's original research, starting with the factor most frequently cited as a source of dissatisfaction: Refers to the rules, procedures, and overall management style that guide an organization. Poorly defined or overly strict policies can frustrate employees and lead to dissatisfaction. 2. Supervision fosters guidance and mentorship, while poor supervision can create mistrust and stress. 3. Relationship with Supervisor Focuses on the quality of one-on-one interactions between an employee and their immediate boss. A supportive, respectful relationship promotes loyalty, whereas conflict or lack of communication often causes dissatisfaction. 4. Working Conditions Involves the physical aspects of the job environment, including workspace, safety measures equipment, and amenities. Comfortable and safe conditions can reduce stress, whereas uncomfortable surroundings increase frustration. 5. Salary Refers to the monetary compensation an employee receives. While fair pay can help minimize dissatisfaction, simply increasing salary does not always lead to higher motivation or long-term satisfaction. 6. Relationship with Peers Deals with how employees interact with their colleagues. Positive peer relationships can foster teamwork and camaraderie, while interpersonal conflicts or cliques can erode morale. 7. Personal Life Encompasses how job demands intersect with an individual's home life and personal responsibilities. Employers who respect work-life balance can reduce stress, whereas excessive job pressures may spill over and create dissatisfaction. 8. Relationship with Subordinates Pertains to how managers or supervisors engage with the people who report to them. Fair, transparent communication and mutual respect build trust, whereas dictatorial or dismissive behaviors breed resentment. 9. Status Reflects an employee's standing or perceived level of importance within the organization. Being overlooked or feeling undervalued may erode motivation, while clear recognition of rank or role can boost self-esteem. 10. Job Security Involves the sense of stability or assurance that one's position is not at risk. High job insecurity involves the sense of stability or assurance that one's position is not at risk. can lead to anxiety and lower morale, while a secure position can help employees focus on their tasks. This ranking reflects the relative frequency with which each factor is for every individual. However, it does underscore that poor policies, inadequate supervision, and negative relationships with one's boss often top the list of potential dissatisfiers. This illustration is a two-dimensional grid showing how different combinations of hygiene factors (vertical axis) and motivation factors (horizontal axis) and motivation factors (horizontal axis) and motivation is a two-dimensional grid showing how different combinations of hygiene factors (vertical axis) and motivation factors (horizontal axis) and motivation factors (vertical axis) Ranging from Low (bottom) to High (top). Hygiene factors are the basic conditions of a job, such as pay, company policy, or safety. Adequate hygiene factors prevent dissatisfaction, but by themselves do not create strong satisfaction, but by themselves do not create strong satisfaction. Motivation factors—such as pay, company policy, or safety. challenging work, recognition, and growth - can lead to genuine satisfaction and engagement when present in higher amounts. Each quadrant represents a different kind of workplace scenario based on how these two categories of factors intersect: The basics (pay, working conditions) are acceptable, so employees aren't dissatisfied. However, because there aren't strong motivators (e.g., recognition or challenging tasks), the job lacks excitement or a sense of purpose. Employees have both solid working conditions and engaging, growth-oriented tasks. This is the ideal combination that brings minimal dissatisfaction and high job satisfaction. Poor working conditions or policies cause dissatisfaction, and there's little to motivate employees on a deeper level. This quadrant represents the worst overall experience-employees are both dissatisfied and unmotivated. Workers may face tough conditions or insufficient pay (leading to some dissatisfied and unmotivated). fulfillment and keep them engaged. How to Implement Herzberg's Theory in Three Steps By systematically addressing hygiene issues to remove common dissatisfiers, and then adding motivators that tap into an individual's desire for meaningful work and personal development, organizations can create a more satisfying and productive environment overall. 1. Evaluate the Workplace Gather Data: Use surveys, interviews, or focus groups to uncover both hygiene factors (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and motivators (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and working conditions) and working conditions (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and working conditions) and working conditions (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies, working conditions) and working conditions (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies) and working conditions (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies) and working conditions (e.g., pay scale, administrative policies) and working conditing conditions (e.g., or cramped workspaces? Are they motivated by certain tasks but not others? Prioritize Findings: Rank the most critical issues. For instance, if salary dissatisfaction is prevalent, this needs more urgent attention than a minor complaint about parking. 2. Address Hygiene Issues compensation, decent facilities, safe environments) meet or exceed acceptable standards. This can mean updating compensation packages, clarifying job descriptions, or revising unclear policies. Foster Better Relationships: Train supervisors to provide consistent feedback and support, ensuring employees feel respected and informed. This can reduce dissatisfaction stemming from poor leadership or unfair treatment. Monitor Progress: After making improvements, follow up with another round of feedback. Evaluate whether changes have effectively reduced dissatisfaction or if further adjustments are needed. 3. Reinforce Motivators Promote Growth and Achievement: Provide opportunities for skill development, leadership roles, and creative problem-solving. Encourage employees to set goals and celebrate when they reach them. Recognize Contributions: Implement formal and informal methods of recognition—such as employee-of-the-month awards, public acknowledgments in team meetings, or small gestures like handwritten thank-you notes. Build Autonomy and Responsibility: Gradually expand employees' decision-making power. For instance, allow them to choose or lead projects,
or involve them in planning and strategy. This sense of ownership can boost engagement and loyalty. Hygiene Factors: The startup offers generous salaries, ergonomic workstations, and flexible hours. These measures prevent dissatisfaction by ensuring employees are comfortable and well-compensated. Motivators: However, employees notice there are few opportunities for advancement or challenging projects. Over time, even with good pay and perks, a lack of personal growth leads to stagnation and lowered enthusiasm. Outcome: Satisfaction is limited because strong hygiene factors alone do not provide the intrinsic rewards that spark genuine engagement and loyalty. Hospital Unit with Positive Team Culture Hygiene Factors: The hospital has decent facilities, fair scheduling policies, and safe working conditions, minimizing typical nurse frustrations such as burnout or pay disputes. Leadership also promotes recognition programs—publicly applauding outstanding patient care—and offers continuing education, giving nurses a sense of autonomy and professional development. Outcome: High satisfaction results from fulfilling both basic needs (clear policies, fair pay) and deeper needs (achievement, growth), aligning with Herzberg's recommendation to address both factors. Retail Chain with Strict Rules and High Turnover Hygiene Factors: The company's policies are rigid (e.g., dress codes, timed breaks), and compensation is minimal. Workplace conditions are safe, but frontline workers feel that policies are too controlling. Motivators: Little is done to recognize employees' effort or provide career-building opportunities (e.g., team leaders often lack decision-making authority). Outcome: Employees frequently leave because, while the store meets basic standards (safe, stable), the lack of respect, growth, and recognition fosters dissatisfaction and drains motivation. Design Agency Emphasizing Creativity and Recognition Hygiene Factors: Each designer has a comfortable workspace, and management addresses any concerns about equipment or resource shortages innovative design challenges, celebrates successes in weekly reviews, and provides mentorship for career progression. Outcome: Designers remain enthusiastic and loyal, as the presence of meaningful challenges and recognition drives motivation beyond the baseline of adequate working conditions. Large Corporation Implementing "Job Enrichment" Hygiene Factors: Employees receive stable salaries, comprehensive health benefits, and clear organizational policies. These provisions minimize day-to-day frustrations. Motivators: In a bid to boost engagement, management implements job enrichment strategies—adding tasks that require creative input and decision-making power—so employees gain a sense of accomplishment. Outcome: The combination of well-handled hygiene factors and new, more fulfilling roles leads to higher morale, demonstrating dissatisfaction is only the first step; building in motivators is what creates lasting satisfaction. Origins and Research Methodology Frederick Herzberg and his colleagues, Mausner and Snyderman, developed the motivation-hygiene theory in their book Influenced by Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg concluded that satisfaction and dissatisfaction could not reliably be measured on the same continuum. He therefore conducted a series of studies to determine which aspects of work environments cause satisfaction. and dissatisfaction, examining each factor's frequency and duration of impact. Herzberg interviewed thirteen laborers, clerical workers, foremen, plant engineers, and accountants, asking them to describe situations in which they felt exceptionally good or bad about their jobs. In general, respondents who reported feeling good cited intrinsic job elements (such as the work itself or recognition), while those who felt bad pointed to extrinsic factors (like salary or company policy). Herzberg (1959) proposed two categories of factors that either enhance or reduce job satisfaction: hygiene factors and motivators. center on the need for self-growth and self-actualization. Traditionally, job satisfaction and dissatisfaction is not dissatisfaction, but rather no satisfaction. By placing satisfaction and dissatisfaction on two separate continua, Herzberg's theory allows that employees might be content with certain parts of their jobs yet unhappy with others. It also suggests that simply removing "dissatisfiers" (does not necessarily create satisfaction, but may only bring temporary relief. These so-called "satisfiers" (does not necessarily create satisfaction, but may only bring temporary relief. dynamic and can vary greatly by individual circumstances. Depending on a person's context, some factors may carry more weight than others. Ultimately, whether dissatisfiers outweigh satisfiers of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory 1. Practical Emphasis on Job Design Herzberg's theory drew attention to intrinsic job features, encouraging managers to redesign roles for greater challenge and autonomy. Because organizations often focus on external rewards (e.g., salary, benefits), Herzberg's work highlighted how elements like recognition and personal growth could be more effective in motivating long-term engagement. This insight led to innovations like "job enrichment" and "job redesign," shifting management practice toward improving the quality of work rather than simply modifying pay structures. roles. This can increase employee retention, satisfaction, and creativity. On the flip side, if managers implement job redesign poorly - overloading staff without proper support -it can lead to confusion or burnout, undermining Herzberg's original intent. 2. Clear Distinction Between Preventing Dissatisfaction and Promoting Satisfaction Herzberg separated the idea of eliminating negative conditions from actively encouraging positive engagement. Before Herzberg, many believed that addressing complaints -like low pay or harsh policies - would automatically generate satisfaction. Herzberg clarified that even if "hygiene factors" remove dissatisfaction, they do not inherently motivate people to excel. Conversely, motivators (e.g., challenging projects) produce deeper satisfaction. Consequences: Organizations applying this distinction often avoid assuming that simply raising salaries or adding perks will spur commitment. Instead, they work on both preventing dissatisfaction (through fair policies and conditions) and promoting genuine satisfaction (through recognition and personal growth opportunities). However, a poor understanding of this dual approach may cause companies to overlook one side or the other, resulting in minimal improvement in overall motivation. 3. Empirical Foundation Herzberg's conclusions emerged from extensive interviews and qualitative data, giving the theory a concrete empirical grounding. Unlike purely theoretical constructs, Herzberg's (1959) findings came from real workers (engineers, accountants) asked to describe moments of high and low job satisfaction. The critical incident technique revealed consistent patterns, suggesting that motivators and hygiene factors truly do operate on separate dimensions. Consequences: This grounded approach provided credibility and made the theory appealing to practitioners. Even so, the methodology can be vulnerable to biases in self-reporting. Had Herzberg used a broader range of participants, the theory might have become even more robust across diverse job types and cultures. 4. Ongoing Influence and Adaptability Herzberg's model remains a popular reference point for understanding workplace morale and engagement. Decades after its introduction, many HR strategies still draw on Herzberg's language of "motivators" and "hygiene" to diagnose and solve satisfaction issues. Researchers have applied it in sectors as varied as healthcare, education, and tech, adapting the core idea to modern contexts. Consequences: This enduring relevance suggests the framework's flexibility. However, continuous reinterpretation can dilute its clarity, if organizations overly simplify or misuse the model, they may ignore important nuances, like individual differences or cultural factors. In that case, relying on Herzberg's categories alone might fail to capture the complexity of workplace motivation. Research et al. (2005) and Jones (2011) both assert that while hygiene factors (e.g., salary, policies) are less critical for nurses' overall job satisfaction, motivational factors (e.g. challenging roles and autonomy) strongly influence how satisfied they feel. For instance, Kacel et al. (2005) studied 147 nurse practitioners in the Midwestern United States, using Herzberg's ideas to explore why some nurses become nurse practitioners. The researchers employed the Misener Nurse Practitioner Job Satisfaction Scale (Misener & Cox, 2001), a 44-item questionnaire covering six Herzberg-related factors: collegiality, autonomy, professional growth, time, and benefits and community interaction, professional growth, time, and benefits and compensation. more fully, led many nurses to seek advanced positions, aligning with Herzberg's concept of motivation. Specifically, they noted that salary and administrative policies, in particular, drove dissatisfaction. Herzberg's theory continues to influence studies across various cultural contexts. Robbins and Judge (2013) note its ongoing use in Asian workplaces, including Vijayakumar and Saxena's (2015) research in India. In their study, 144 mid-level managers were surveyed on the factors that most affected their job satisfaction. The results indicated that job content, organizational context, and rewards and working conditions were key, whereas monetary compensation appeared to function as a separate factor. This distinction highlights that while pay is important, it may not entirely explain or drive satisfaction on its own. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory proposes that two sets of factors influence job satisfaction: hygiene
factors and motivators. Hygiene factors, like salary and working conditions, don't motivate but can cause dissatisfaction and motivate employees to perform better. These include meaningful work, recognition, responsibility, opportunities for growth, achievement, and advancement. These factors are intrinsic to the work and are related to an individual's need for personal growth and self-fulfillment. According to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, the "motivators" are the most potent in driving job satisfaction and motivation. These include intrinsic aspects such as achievement, recognition, work, responsibility, advancement, and growth opportunities. Herzberg suggests these factors promote higher performance as they fulfill individuals' deep-seated needs for personal growth and self-fulfillment. However, the exact factor motivating most would vary based on the individual's values and personal needs. Alderfer, C. P. (1972). Existence, relatedness, and growth: Human needs in organizational settings. Alshmemri, M., Shahwan-Akl, L., & Maude, P. (2017). Herzberg's two-factor theory. Life Science Journal, 14(5), 12-16. Bassett-Jones, N., & Lloyd, G. C. (2005). Does Herzberg's motivation theory have staying power? Journal of management development. Desurvire, H., & Wiberg, C. (2009). Game usability heuristics (PLAY) for evaluating and designing better games: The next iteration. Paper presented at the International conference on online communities and social computing. Dion, M. J. (2006). The impact of workplace incivility and occupational stress on the job satisfaction and turnover intention of acute care nurses: University of Connecticut. Evans, M., & McKee, D. (1970). Some effects of internal versus external orientations upon the relationship between various aspects of job satisfaction. J Appl Psychol, 2(1), 17-24. Herzberg, F. I. (1966). Work and the Nature of Man. Herzberg, F. I. (1970). Avoiding pain in the organization. Industry Week. Dec, 7. Herzberg, F. I. (1971a). More on avoiding pain in the organization. Industry Week. Jan. 18. Herzberg, F. I. (1974). The wise old Turk. Harvard Business Review, 54(5), 70-80. Herzberg, F. I. (1982). The managerial choice: To be efficient and to be human (2nd ed., Rev.). Salt Lake City, UT: Olympus. Herzberg, F. I. (1991). Happiness and unhappiness: A brief autobiography of Frederick I. Herzberg, F. I., & Hamlin, R. M. (1961). A motivation-hygiene concept of mental health. Mental Hygiene, 45, 394-401. Herzberg, F. I., Mausner, R., Peterson, R., & Capwell, D. (1957). Job attitudes: Review of research and opinion. Pittsburgh, PA: Psychological Services of Pittsburgh. Herzberg, F. I., Mausner, B., & Snyderman, B. (1959). The motivation to work (2nd ed.). New York: John Wiley. Jones, T. L. (2011). Effects of motivating and hygiene factors on job satisfaction among school nurses. Walden

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