

WORK MOTIVATION 3



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Welcome to lecture 3 of the work motivation lecture series. In lecture 1 we talked about Maslow's Need Hierarchy theory, Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory, need for achievement theory, incentive learning theory, and so on. If those words do not mean much to you I refer you to lecture 1. Lecture 2 can be summarized with keywords like Vroom's Valence, Instrumentality Expectancy theory, Adams's Equity Theory and Rousseau's Psychological Contract. Let us embark onto lecture 3 now.

SELF-EFFICACY AS A MOTIVATIONAL FACTOR



Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory

Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory is another cognitive process theory that offers the important concept of self-efficacy for explaining employee's level of motivation. Self-efficacy or self-confidence is an individual's belief in his or her ability to achieve results in a given scenario. Empirically, studies have shown a strong correlation between self-efficacy and performance. Self-efficacy is seen to mediate important aspects of how an employee undertakes a given task, such as the level of effort and persistence. An employee with high self-efficacy is confident that effort he or she puts forth has a high likelihood of resulting in success. In anticipation of success, an employee is willing to put forth more effort, persist longer, remain focused on the task, seek feedback and choose more effective task strategies. In short, more important than ability in affecting performance is one's belief regarding one's ability to perform a given task. Given the same low level of performance, people with high self-efficacy exert effort and persist until they have mastered the task, whereas those with low self-efficacy view their poor performance as a reason to abandon their goal. This belief system is the foundation of human agency, argued Bandura. Unless people believe they can attain their goal through their actions, they are unlikely to persevere when confronted by difficulties. Thus, self-efficacy is a cognitive judgment that has motivational consequences.

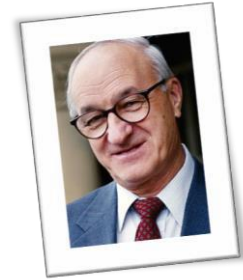
FAMILY OF EFFICACIES



General
Means
Group

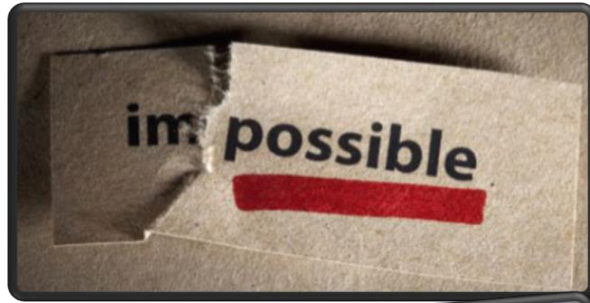
Self-efficacy has two dimensions, namely magnitude and strength. Magnitude refers to the number or levels of performance (e.g., 1, 3, 5 publications this year) that the person believes he or she can attain, while strength refers to the person's confidence in attaining a given level of performance. Note too that self-efficacy and self-esteem are not interchangeable concepts. Self-esteem is a trait, and hence is trans-situational. How much you like yourself in Tallinn is pretty much the same as how you like yourself in Tartu. However, self-efficacy is a judgment of how well you can perform a specific task. You can have high self-esteem and low self-efficacy with regard to repairing the engine in your car; Conversely you can have low self-esteem and high self-efficacy that you can pass this course. That is, self-efficacy is a state variable rather than a dispositional trait, while self-esteem is more like a personality trait. Nevertheless, Eden has validated a measure of general rather than task-specific self-efficacy. General self-efficacy, he stated, represents one's belief about general self-competence across a variety of different situations. Eden and his colleagues found that general self-efficacy is distinct from self-esteem in predicting important outcomes in organizational settings. Furthermore, a person's belief in the efficacy of the resources available to perform the requisite work can be as motivating as task specific self-efficacy. Eden and Sulimani called it means efficacy, which is a cousin to self-efficacy, as the aggregate subjective judgment of the utility of the means (e.g., tools, equipment, resources) available for performing one's job. The concept of self-efficacy has also been extended to group efficacy, which is a group's belief that it can achieve success with a given task or project.

SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY & PYGMALION EFFECT



Social cognitive theory also states that a person's self-efficacy is affected by persuasion from a "significant other." People tend to behave in accordance with the expectations of those who are significant to them. Persuasion by those who are significant to us can be a powerful source of a behavior change. To the extent that a leader is held in high regard, lest the leader "gets what the leader says" (e.g., "you are awful at this" vs. "you have the ability to master this"). Merton brought to prominence the concept of the self-fulfilling prophecy. Specifically, a self-fulfilling prophecy "is in the beginning a false definition of the situation evoking a new behavior which makes the originally false conceptions come true." In short, a person's actions sometimes fulfil their own prophecies/expectations or the prophecies/expectations of significant others. The Pygmalion effect is a special case of a self-fulfilling prophecy. It refers to the effect of non-conscious mental processes that lead a person (e.g., teachers) to treat others (e.g., students) in accordance with his or her expectations. People tend to respond in accordance with the way they are being treated. Self-expectations are a mediator of the Pygmalion effect. As Bandura's research has shown, high self-expectations lead to high performance. Thus, many studies in this area have essentially been exercises in ways to increase self-efficacy through persuasion by a "significant other" (e.g., the leader). In the typical self-fulfilling prophecy experiment, Eden, as an eminent behavioral scientist, effectively misleads managers within 5 or so minutes into believing that some subordinates, namely those he randomly assigned to the experimental group, have high potential. These managers then become unwitting prophets who fulfill their own subsequent expectations of these people. That is, a manager subsequently spends more time with the designated high potentials to facilitate them achieving more than those people who were assigned to the control group. The process works as follows: High leader expectations result in improved leadership of the person, which, in turn, increases a person's self-efficacy, resulting in greater motivation that includes intensification of effort, which is manifest as an increase in performance. With regard to steps one and two, non-conscious mental processes result in leaders treating subordinates in accordance with their expectations of them. The practical significance of this technique, however, is limited in that it is based on deception. As Eden and Sulimani acknowledged, few psychologists or consultants are likely to base their relations with clients on an intervention that deceives people no matter how worthwhile the performance outcomes. Furthermore, when the leader has had prior experience with an employee, the Pygmalion effect does not occur.

EFFECTS OF SELF-EFFICACY



Because self-judgment of one's capability is a major determinant of the goal one sets, the two are obviously positively correlated. The higher one's perceived self-efficacy, the higher the goal one sets, and the stronger one's commitment to it. Conversely, goals assigned by a leader can also affect self-efficacy in that they are an expression of confidence in an employee. In contexts where no learning is possible from one task to the next, the benefits one can expect from increases in self-efficacy are indeed attenuated. Thus, high self-efficacy with regard to playing a roulette wheel is likely not to prove beneficial for the gambler. But note, we are talking about performance here, not motivation, the gambler will still be more motivated if he or she has high self-efficacy with regard to playing the roulette wheel. Further evidence that high self-efficacy does not always lead to desirable outcomes has been shown by Whyte and Saks. They found that it can be the source of inappropriate task persistence. Dysfunctional persistence has been shown to be the result of high goals, self-efficacy, and satisfaction with one's past performance. The result was less rather than more seeking of information following a radical change in the environment. The correction for the downside of seeking success, however, is not to diminish a person's self-efficacy. As Bandura noted, a resilient belief that one has of what it takes to succeed provides the necessary staying power in the face of repeated failures, setbacks and criticisms. The correction for inappropriately high self-efficacy lies in developing ways that help people identify practices that are no longer useful rather than ignoring the environment in a self-confident manner. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory has additional parts to it beyond self-efficacy (and self-fulfilling prophecy), but we will not look into them as we were primarily concerned with self-efficacy as a motivator here.

EXTRINSIC & INTRINSIC MOTIVATION



Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation refer to broad categories of what type of reward causes the motivation, distinguished by an outside influence or person providing the reward in focus, or not. Intrinsic motivation is the desire to perform an activity out of the enjoyment derived from the activity itself. In performing an intrinsically motivated activity, an individual expects no external reward; the activity is a reward in itself. An example of an intrinsically motivated activity would be one that a person does as a hobby or in his or her free time. Extrinsic motivation is the motivation to perform an activity because the activity leads to something else. The desire to perform an extrinsically motivated activity comes not from the activity itself, but from rewards or benefits associated with the activity. An example of an extrinsically motivated activity would be chores that are performed for an allowance. The chores themselves are not pleasurable, but the cash that results from completing them, is. However, there are a number of critics against the concept of intrinsic motivation. For instance, identifying the existence of intrinsic motivation on the basis of persistence of behavior in the absence of noticeable extrinsic incentives is no easy task. It may not be possible to find situations that completely lack external inducements. Nevertheless, the distinction of extrinsic and intrinsic motivators appears to be a useful way to group motivators, because these groups have some distinguishable properties. Meanwhile, the categories should not be used at a very detailed level, because lots of grey areas appear when employing these concepts at high resolution. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that extrinsic motivations are a continuum rather than one discrete box. And it is that continuum that we will unpack next.

EXTRINSIC CONTINUUM



At one end of the spectrum is what is called Amotivation. And what that means is, you have no motivation one way or the other. You are totally indifferent to the activity, that's called being amotivated. At the other end of the spectrum is Intrinsic Motivation. Here, you do the thing for no reason other than that you love it. You do the thing because it is rewarding in and of itself. Intrinsic motivation is regarded to be the strongest form of motivation because it takes nothing external at all to get you to do the activity. You're not doing it for money, you're not doing it for fame, you're not doing it for status, you're doing it because it's fun. In the middle, there is the broad category of Extrinsic Motivators. And that is actually a spectrum from the most external to the most internal forms of extrinsic motivation. So, closest to amotivation, the most external is called External Regulation. At this point, you really don't want to do something or maybe you are indifferent to it. The only thing that makes you do it is someone tells you to. Someone else says, do this, and you do it simply because you feel like you have to. You have no perceived locus of control as psychologists talk about. There's no you in wanting to do this thing, it's just doing it for some external cause. But that doesn't mean it's bad or it doesn't mean that motivation never works, but it does mean there is no sense of doing it because you personally value it which makes that motivation less powerful. The second sub-category is called Introjection. And the idea here is, sometimes, we take external motivators and make them our own. So, this is typically where we would find status. Status says, I may not really want to do this but other people will value me. They'll think I'm cool. They will like me so I'm going to do it for that reason. So, it's something about me. It's not saying I'm doing it purely for those other people but it's saying, I am introjecting, I'm taking their view about status and somehow appropriating it to make me want to do the thing. Next in line is called Identification. At this point, I've taken the external motivator and I've somehow made it my own. It's not just because other people will think I'm cool, it's because I can see some value in it. I don't really enjoy learning math but I can see that knowing something about math is important to success so I'll do it. It somehow is aligned with my own personal goals. I identify, I can somehow logically say there's value to me in doing this but I still don't really want to. And then finally, the closest to intrinsic motivation is called Integration. And here, there is a complete alignment internally between my goals and the thing. This is, for example, the way many people feel about exercise. I really want to exercise. It's good for me. I know I should do it. I can say yeah, I want to exercise and yet, I don't like exercising. It's just not fun for me. I still need some push. I still won't do it just because of the love of the thing itself. And again, when we get all the way to intrinsic, the activity has reached that stage where it is worthwhile and motivating in it of itself.

OVERJUSTIFICATION EFFECT

One reason that makes the concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation useful is that if you know you are using an extrinsic motivator then you should be careful, because it may cause an overjustification effect. The overjustification effect occurs when an expected external incentive such as money or prizes decreases a person's intrinsic motivation to perform a task. People come to pay more attention to the external reward for an activity than to the inherent enjoyment and satisfaction received from the activity itself. The overall effect of offering a reward for a previously unrewarded activity is a shift to extrinsic motivation and the undermining of pre-existing intrinsic motivation. Once external rewards are no longer offered, interest in the activity is lost; prior intrinsic motivation does not return, or extrinsic rewards must be continuously offered as motivation to sustain the activity. In other words, you start to focus so much on chasing the reward that you think the external reward is the reason to do the activity and you no longer have the intrinsic motivation to do it that was there before. The ultimate result is you are less motivated than when you started. Bear in mind though, that the type of reward and how the extrinsic reward is presented matters a great deal to how strongly the overjustification effect occurs (if at all). So for example, tangible rewards tend to be where the largest demotivating effects happen. Because those are things that are purely substituting something extrinsic. Something external to the activity for the intrinsic motivation that's there. Tangible rewards are the ones that you might think are the best possible rewards. We'll give you a bonus or some thing of value in return for this activity. But those have the greatest risk of substituting for the intrinsic motivation. Conversely, if the reward is unexpected, if it's a surprise reward, "hey guess what, we just decided to give you a bonus for your good performance", then that does not have as much of an effect on intrinsic motivation. When the person was doing the thing, they were doing it for the intrinsic reason and they were surprised by the reward. So random, or chance rewards that come about without expectation don't tend to have as much of this kind of problem. Decreases in performance often reflect reactions to how incentives are presented rather than to the incentives themselves. Incentives can be used coercively e.g. "you will not get any money until you do x", as an expression of appreciation e.g. "this is in recognition of your doing y", or to convey evaluative reactions "this is what this performance is worth to us". The same incentive can have differential effects on an individual's behavior depending on the message conveyed. If the reward is simply saying, the whole point is the end point, then the person tends to think that this is really not about me and my accomplishment but this is about some external thing, then the extrinsic reward tends to be demotivating. On the other hand, if the reward is seen as purely informational. It's saying, "You did a good job." This is recognizing the fact that you achieved something. Your performance was great. The reward is just a marker of what you did. Then, we don't see the same effect. Then, there's not the demotivation. In summary, the overjustification does not always occur with extrinsic rewards, and it is significantly stronger or weaker depending on many factors. As with all the material presented, the effect is not a golden rule but a complex phenomenon with important conditionals attached. As Bandura noted, it is unlikely that concert pianists lose interest in the keyboard just because they are offered high recital fees.

INTRINSIC MOTIVATORS

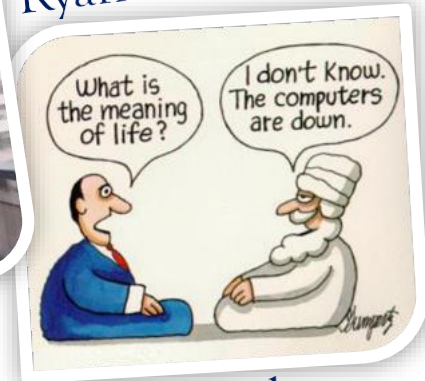


Autonomy



Ryan and Deci's

Competence



Self-Determination Theory

Relatedness

Under Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory there are three characteristics that tend to cause intrinsic motivation. Three factors that when they are present, suggest that an activity will be worthwhile to people in and of itself. So very briefly: The first one is Competence which has to do with the person's sense of ability. Their sense that they are accomplishing something. Solving problems, surmounting obstacles. They are achieving something within the activity. The second one is Autonomy, which says the person feels like they are in control. I'm the one making the choices, it's not someone else telling me to do this. It's me, doing it by my own free choice. And the third one is Relatedness. And by this Deci and Ryan, mean something like your activity is connected to something beyond yourself that could be some sense of meaning or purpose. It could be, I am doing this because I'm using less energy and that's good for the planet. It could be, I'm doing this because it will help my company, and I believe in my company and want to be a good team player in the organization. Eudaemonia, as the ancient Greeks put it. Additionally, it could be, I'm doing this with friends. Social interaction is an element of relatedness. So now you know, broadly speaking, what could be used to induce intrinsic motivation.

KEY POINTS

Self-efficacy as a reusable motivational factor
showcased in Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory

Intrinsic motivation and the extrinsic spectrum

Overjustification effect:

a potential problem when using extrinsic rewards

Intrinsic motivators of competence,

autonomy and relatedness

as per Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory

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