Title:
Industrial Psychology And Recognition

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485

Summary:
In his job as an accountant, Anthony Stirling felt that the monetary rewards for his job were as good as he could expect. What he found difficult to understand was the feeling of lack of worth that turning up every Monday morning gave him. The office was highly efficient but people very rarely seemed to have time to talk to each other and his boss was a distant figure who barely knew his name.

The reason why individuals, like Anthony, need recognition, other than money, to...

Keywords:
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Article Body:
In his job as an accountant, Anthony Stirling felt that the monetary rewards for his job were as good as he could expect. What he found difficult to understand was the feeling of lack of worth that turning up every Monday morning gave him. The office was highly efficient but people very rarely seemed to have time to talk to each other and his boss was a distant figure who barely knew his name.

The reason why individuals, like Anthony, need recognition, other than money, to generate motivation in their day-to-day work is not a mystery.
Frederick Herzberg

In 1955 Frederick Herzberg an Industrial Psychologist published his treatise on human relations at work which unraveled the role of influences on motivation at work.

The results were not what logic might dictate. He produced two quite different lists; one showing what satisfied people at work and the other showing what dissatisfied them.

Hygiene Factors

• company policy

- company procedures

- relationship with supervisor

- working environment

- relationship with co-workers

- salary

- status

- security

Motivators

- achievement

- personal growth

- career potential

- job satisfaction

- recognition

The list of features that dissatisfy people at work could not be expected, by themselves, to provide high levels of motivation if they were provided in unrealistic quantities. For example, if your chair is comfortable and reflects your organizational status, you are unlikely to feel a surge of motivation if your boss offers you the same model with an additional cup holder.

The causes of satisfaction included factors like personal growth and recognition. These, it seems, could only be used to motivate if the dissatisfaction list had been rectified. Herzberg does not believe that motivation is absent in organizations with a long "dissatisfiers" list; he merely points out what we should already know; that attempts to motivate may be wasted if dissatisfaction is not addressed first.

Herzberg likened a typical worker to a recovering patient. He concluded that the "dissatisfiers" were actually Hygiene Factors. These are essential for satisfactory recovery of the "patient" but are not, in themselves, able to

guarantee full health. The "satisfiers" list is, in fact, a list of Motivators; those things that really cause the "patient" to push for recovery and to become fully functioning.

This powerful analogy makes it clear that, if the Hygiene factors are deficient in any way, it wouldn't matter how much effort was put into the Motivators, the patient could potentially die anyway.

The conclusion to draw from Fred Herzberg's work is that recognition is an important motivator in the workplace. However applying recognition in a vacuum without ensuring that the Hygiene Factors are effectively managed may produce few returns for the effort made.

Herzberg's findings are amplified by other Industrial Psychologists such as Abraham Maslow and Douglas McGregor so, although these simple truths have been recorded for the best part of 50 years some companies, like Anthony's employer either forgot or never bothered to build in an effective recognition system.