

## Negative Motivation

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### Abstract

*Employees are the most valuable asset of an organization, and it is very important that they are motivated to work well, with the employer taking full advantage of their time and skills. But before being hired, they are people with their own needs and desires that are not always compatible with the organization's goals. Thus, employees' motivation becomes a key factor in achieving performance. Employee motivation methods are usually divided into positive and negative methods. Through positive motivation factors, employers provide employees with bonuses, rewards, either in cash or otherwise, for the performance of their tasks, and the negative motivation implies a financial or psychological "punishment" for employees, a negative conditioning, for failing in performing their tasks. although positive motivation is more effective than negative, it may be possible that for some employees, who are not involved in their work, rewards or punishments do not count too much.*

**Key words:** employees, motivation, negative, organization.

**J.E.L. classification:** O15; J28.

### 1. Introduction

An important area of human resource management is the study of social relationships within an organization. In this respect, the notion that the quality of social relationships reflects the place occupied by the employees in the organization is accredited, and in order to assess the level of these relationships, the following elements must be taken into account: the employees' motivation and participation and the managers' style of behavior.

The concept of motivation has different meanings: from the economic point of view, it represents „all the factors that determine the behavior of an economic agent”, and from a psychological point of view it constitutes „the action of the conscious or unconscious forces that determine the behavior” (Rey, 1992, p.1223 ).

As a result of a long phylogenetic and ontogenetic development, motivation, in its superior forms, is a very complex phenomenon that guides the conduct of the human factor in a certain direction. Motivation is also the sum of internal and external energies that initiate and direct behavior toward a goal that, once achieved, determines the satisfaction of a necessity. The following aspects should also be considered:

- internal conditions that have the primary role in motivation can not be observed and can not be isolated when a behavior is analyzed;
- many aspects of motivation involve the construction of models and the use of specific terms describing unobservable processes;
- the motivation result is always the action;
- the behavior can not be confused with the motivation.

To motivate employees in their work means, above all, to develop for themselves the usefulness given by the subjective dimension of work, in order to achieve it being necessary to make some progress in the mental representations regarding the work, the organization in which it is carried out and the its products.

## 2. Theoretical background. Definition and purpose of motivation

Motivation is an inner state, a strong desire, a force that moves the employee to achieve a certain goal, and consists in correlating the satisfaction of personal needs and interests with the achievement of the assigned goals and tasks.

Pantelimon Golu (1973) defines the motivation as a „*subjective model of objective causality, psychically reproduced causality, accumulated over time, transformed and transferred through education and learning into person's internal acquisition*” (Popescu-Neveanu et al, 1987, p.144).

Kurt Lewin (1935) explains the behavior of the human factor in a given situation as a result of the fact that when a stimulus acts on the body, it engenders a response behavior. In response to this approach, Joseph Nuttin (1963) says that „*the stimulus-response scheme excludes the notion of previous motivation in a present situation as unnecessary*” and that „*motivation must be seen in its dynamic and directional aspect.*”

The purpose of the motivation is to involve as efficiently and as effectively as possible the execution personnel and the management personnel in accomplishing their tasks, deduced from the objectives of the organization and has a pronounced optional character. In a broader sense, motivation embraces needs, interests, intentions, tendencies and ideals that underlie the human condition and support the realization of certain actions, deeds or attitudes. In the opinion of Paul Popescu-Neveanu (1987), motivation is a trigger for the action, and only the presence of the actual act is conclusive for the reason, as an instigator.

## 3. Classification of motivation

Classification of motivation is based on the following criteria:

- origin of the source that generates motivation (intrinsic, direct motivation, and extrinsic, indirect motivation);
- link with some individuals' immediate needs (cognitive motivation and affective motivation);
- the effects of praise and rewards on those of reprehension and the threat (positive motivation and negative motivation).

Negative motivation is generated by the use of aversive motivational factors (blame, reprehension, punishment, threat) that induce negative feelings and reactions about the position occupied within the organization. The main factors are:

- appearance of the impression of inequity;
- policies and control procedures (entire rules lists, unnecessary rules);
- collective / hierarchical relationships;
- the individual status of a particular position in the organization;
- low salary / salary reduction;
- job insecurity;
- the influence of the job on personal life (free time versus busy time).

Although negative motivation is a primitive type of motivation, that produces unpleasant, unproductive effects for the employee (rejection, abstention, avoidance, fleeing, fear), it must be included with caution in the manager's motivational tools. Precautions in using negative motivation are due to sociometric research that reveals the following:

- employee's awareness of the sanction risk has a motivational effect greater than the sanction itself;
- very severe sanctions have a low motivational effect on both the guilty person and the rest of the employees, as most of them tend to refuse the fairness of the harsh sanction, considering it to be a miserable bad luck;
- when in an organization appears the concept that being sanctioned is not a shame, it is preferable not to resort to sanctions before redesigning the motivation system.

#### 4. Findings

A recent study by Kelly Goldsmith, a professor at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, and Ravi Dhar, a professor at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, provides new information on the subject. The two researchers created a simple test that required a group of students to solve six anagrams; the first group would receive 25 cents for each correct anagram, while the second group would initially receive 1,5\$, but it would lose 25 cents each time it would not solve an anagram. although both groups of students solved the same number of anagrams on average, the negative motivated group needed 5 additional minutes to solve the anagrams than the other group. This suggests that negative motivation was more effective for motivating students.

In a similar experiment, coordinated in 2013 by the two teachers, hundreds of participants with different ages, from amazon's Mechanical Turk crowdsourcing platform, were asked to solve similar anagrams, the results being similar to those of the first experiment. This suggests that negative motives are as active as positive ones, contributing together to balance the employee's behavior. However, it is noteworthy that sub-motivation phenomena are considered extreme on the motivation axis, resulting in employees' low efficiency and the start of a demotivation process.

#### 5. Conclusions

The motivation has a complex structure consisting of interests, motives, needs, desires, aspirations, beliefs, ideals, conceptions about the world, about itself and activity, in its structure acting three categories of factors: 1) *the needs*, 2) *the effective relationships and attitudes* and 3) *the objects and circumstances*. Benjamin Zörgö (1976) lists five components of motivation, namely: a) *the needs*, b) *the impulses*, c) *the intentions*, d) *the valences* and e) *the tendencies*, motivation emerging as a result of conjugation of these motivational phenomena (Popescu-Neveanu et al, 1987, p.145). The system of human motivation appears as a result of the conjugation of these varied factors, which are organized in a multidimensional and hierarchical way.

The motivation is based on neurophysiological complexity (*subcortical-talamic-reticular-cortical*), psychological (*human psychic system, information-value*) and social (*culture, activities, relations with peers*). Being products of learning, the reasons are redefined each time in relation to the above-mentioned factors. On motivation, the goals act through positive or negative feedback. There are countless objects, relationships, models, methods in the socio-cultural environment that can be defined or assimilated as goals, generating the appropriate motivation.

Consequently, it must be admitted that motivation is built both ascendant and descending. Starting from the physiological needs that, after Beverly von Haller Gilmer (1971), for the employee are transforming in motives not only as result of behaviors capable of satisfying them, but also by activating a suitable pulse sublayer for purpose-models of cultural nature, imprinted by environment. Not all cultural motives pass through conscience or are clearly awared.

Generally, human motivation is characterized by variety and hierarchy, and it is natural to identify, at both individual and group level, the diverse and variably organized motivational systems, as diverse as the actions, relationships, models and values organized in the social system. as the naive point-to-point model of the source-motive can not be accepted and the multidimensionality of any motivation must be taken into account, the only way to integrate human motivation becomes the classification, the attempt to encompass motivation through classifying matrices involving, of course, a multitude inputs and outputs, multiple criteria, which should be considered concurrently. In addition to the two criteria provided by Joseph Nuttin (1966), that of intensity or energy and direction or sense, consideration should be given to the motive-action, motive-personality, individual-social relations and the value criteria, the first of the classifications of motives reproducing the classifications of needs. Thus, motives are divided into primary and secondary, substantial and functional, organic and material, spiritual social, and if the needs may be primal or native, the motives defined by action rather than by state require a minimum of learning to develop the behavior that satisfies the need.

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