

MOTIVATION AND WORK MOTIVATION: CONCEPTS, THEORIES & RESEARCHES

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Motivation is a term that refers to a process that elicits, controls, and sustains certain behaviors. Motivation is a group of phenomena which affect the nature of an individual's behavior, the strength of the behavior, and the persistence of the behavior. For instance: An individual has not eaten, he or she feels hungry, as a response he or she eats and diminishes feelings of hunger. There are many approaches to motivation: physiological, behavioral, cognitive and social. It's the crucial elements in setting and attaining goals- and research shows you can influence your own levels of motivation and self-control. According to various theories, motivation may be rooted in a basic need to minimize physical pain and maximize pleasure, or it may include specific needs such as eating and resting, or a desired object, goal, state of being, ideal, or it may be attributed to less-apparent reasons such as altruism, selfishness, morality, or avoiding mortality. Conceptually, motivation should not be confused with either volition or optimism. Motivation is related to, but distinct from, emotion.

Employee motivation has always been a central problem for leaders and managers. Unmotivated employees are likely to spend little or no effort in their jobs, avoid the workplace as much as possible, exit the organization if given the opportunity and produce low quality work. On the other hand, employees who feel motivated to work are likely to be persistent, creative and productive, turning out high quality work that they willingly undertake. There has been a lot of research done on motivation by many scholars, but the behavior of groups of people to try to find out why it is that every employee of a company does not perform at their best has been comparatively unresearched. Many things can be said to answer this question; the reality is that every employee has different ways to become motivated. Employers need to get to know their employees very well and use different tactics to motivate each of them based on their personal wants and needs.

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**Research Guide

The dictionary Webster's defines motivation as something inside people that drives them to action. This motivation varies in different people. We can also say that motivation is the willingness to work at a certain level of effort. Motivation emerges, in current theories, out of needs, values, goals, intentions, and expectation. Because motivation comes from within, managers need to cultivate and direct the motivation that their employees already have.

Motivation comes from within us such as thoughts, beliefs, ambitions, and goals. The people who are most interested in motivation studies are managers of people because they may provide insights into why people perform at work as they do, and as a result provide managers with techniques to improve worker productivity.

MOTIVATION CONCEPTS

Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation that is driven by an interest or enjoyment in the task itself, and exists within the individual rather than relying on any external pressure. Intrinsic motivation is based on taking pleasure in an activity rather than working towards an external reward. Intrinsic motivation has been studied by social and educational psychologists since the early 1970s. Students who are intrinsically motivated are more likely to engage in the task willingly as well as work to improve their skills, which will increase their capabilities. Students are likely to be intrinsically motivated if they: attribute their educational results to factors under their own control, also known as autonomy, believe they have the skill that will allow them to be effective agents in reaching desired goals (i.e. the results are not determined by luck), are interested in mastering a topic, rather than just rote-learning to achieve good grades.

Extrinsic motivation refers to the performance of an activity in order to attain an outcome, which then contradicts intrinsic motivation. It is widely believed that motivation performs two functions. First one is often referred to the energetic activation component of the motivation construct. The second one is directed at a specific behaviour and makes reference to the orientation directional component. Motives can be divided into two types: external and internal. Internal motives are considered as the needs that every human being experience, while external indicate the presence of specific situations where these needs arise. Social psychological research has indicated that extrinsic rewards can lead to over justification and a subsequent reduction in intrinsic motivation. In one study demonstrating this effect, children who expected to be (and were) rewarded with a ribbon and a gold star for drawing pictures spent less time playing with the drawing materials in subsequent observations than children

who were assigned to an unexpected reward condition. For those children who received no extrinsic reward, self-determination theory proposes that extrinsic motivation can be internalized by the individual if the task fits with their values and beliefs and therefore helps to fulfill their basic psychological needs.

Incentive theory

A reward, tangible or intangible, is presented after the occurrence of an action (i.e. behavior) with the intent to cause the behavior to occur again. This is done by associating positive meaning to the behavior. Studies show that if the person receives the reward immediately, the effect is greater, and decreases as duration lengthens. Repetitive action-reward combination can cause the action to become habit. Motivation comes from two sources: oneself, and other people. These two sources are called intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation, respectively.

Reinforces and reinforcement principles of behavior differ from the hypothetical construct of reward. A reinforce is any stimulus change following a response that increases the future frequency or magnitude of that response, therefore the cognitive approach is certainly the way forward as in 1973 Maslow described it as being the golden pineapple. Positive reinforcement is demonstrated by an increase in the future frequency or magnitude of a response due to in the past being followed contingently by a reinforcing stimulus. Negative reinforcement involves stimulus change consisting of the removal of an aversive stimulus following a response. Positive reinforcement involves a stimulus change consisting of the presentation or magnification of an appetitive stimulus following a response. From this perspective, motivation is mediated by environmental events, and the concept of distinguishing between intrinsic and extrinsic forces is irrelevant.

Applying proper motivational techniques can be much harder than it seems. Steven Kerr notes that when creating a reward system, it can be easy to reward A, while hoping for B, and in the process, reap harmful effects that can jeopardize your goals.

Incentive theory in psychology treats motivation and behavior of the individual as they are influenced by beliefs, such as engaging in activities that are expected to be profitable. Incentive theory is promoted by behavioral psychologists, such as B.F. Skinner and literalized by behaviorists, especially by Skinner in his philosophy of Radical behaviorism, to mean that a person's actions always have social ramifications: and if actions are positively received people are more likely to act in this manner, or if negatively received people are less likely to act in this manner.

Incentive theory distinguishes itself from other motivation theories, such as drive theory, in the direction of the motivation. In incentive theory, stimuli "attract", to use the term above, a person towards them. As opposed to the body seeking to reestablish homeostasis pushing it towards the stimulus. In terms of behaviorism, incentive theory involves positive reinforcement: the stimulus has been conditioned to make the person happier. For instance, a person knows that eating food, drinking water, or gaining social capital will make them happier. As opposed to in drive theory, which involves negative reinforcement: a stimulus has been associated with the removal of the punishment-- the lack of homeostasis in the body. For example, a person has come to know that if they eat when hungry, it will eliminate that negative feeling of hunger, or if they drink when thirsty, it will eliminate that negative feeling of thirst.

Drive-reduction theory

There are a number of drive theories. The Drive Reduction Theory grows out of the concept that we have certain biological drives, such as hunger. As time passes the strength of the drive increases if it is not satisfied (in this case by eating). Upon satisfying a drive the drive's strength is reduced. The theory is based on diverse ideas from the theories of Freud to the ideas of feedback control systems, such as a thermostat.

Drive theory has some intuitive or folk validity. For instance when preparing food, the drive model appears to be compatible with sensations of rising hunger as the food is prepared, and, after the food has been consumed, a decrease in subjective hunger. There are several problems, however, that leave the validity of drive reduction open for debate. The first problem is that it does not explain how secondary reinforcers reduce drive. For example, money satisfies no biological or psychological needs, but a pay check appears to reduce drive through second-order conditioning. Secondly, a drive, such as hunger, is viewed as having a "desire" to eat, making the drive a homunculi being—a feature criticized as simply moving the fundamental problem behind this "small man" and his desires.

In addition, it is clear that drive reduction theory cannot be a complete theory of behavior, or a hungry human could not prepare a meal without eating the food before he finished cooking it. The ability of drive theory to cope with all kinds of behavior, from not satisfying a drive (by adding on other traits such as restraint), or adding additional drives for "tasty" food, which combine with drives for "food" in order to explain cooking render it hard to test.

Cognitive dissonance theory

Suggested by Leon Festinger, cognitive dissonance occurs when an individual experiences some degree of discomfort resulting from an inconsistency between two cognitions: their

views on the world around them, and their own personal feelings and actions. For example, a consumer may seek to reassure himself regarding a purchase, feeling, in retrospect, that another decision may have been preferable. His feeling that another purchase would have been preferable is inconsistent with his action of purchasing the item. The difference between his feelings and beliefs causes dissonance, so he seeks to reassure himself.

While not a theory of motivation, per se, the theory of cognitive dissonance proposes that people have a motivational drive to reduce dissonance. The cognitive miser perspective makes people want to justify things in a simple way in order to reduce the effort they put into cognition. They do this by changing their attitudes, beliefs, or actions, rather than facing the inconsistencies, because dissonance is a mental strain. Dissonance is also reduced by justifying, blaming, and denying. It is one of the most influential and extensively studied theories in social psychology.

PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDIES OF MOTIVATION

Motivation figured prominently in the earliest studies of animal psychology around the end of the nineteenth century. The improvements in our knowledge of physiology fostered a significant increase in physiological and psychological studies of motivation around the middle of the twentieth century. A library search on “motivation” will uncover numerous writings published in the forties and fifties. Motivation played a significant role in many theories of behavior, especially Hull’s theory (described below). Behavioral studies of motivation frequently focus on basic functions related to survival, such as eating, drinking, and avoiding harmful stimuli. Other motivated behaviors that have been studied, such as sexual behavior or social interactions, do not seem as closely related to immediate survival. Hunger has been frequently studied in psychological studies of motivation, as the food intake of the animal can be easily controlled. The motivation to eat is not directly controlled by feelings of hunger; when presented with the opportunity to eat, animals eat in anticipation of hunger and continue to eat after satiation to maintain themselves until the next meal. Motivation is also influenced by the subjective value assigned to the rewards arising from motivated behavior, and this subjective value can in turn be influenced by learning. In an elegant experiment Crespi (1942) demonstrated that rats’ motivation to obtain food, measured as the speed with which the rats ran down an alley toward food, can be altered not only by changing the absolute “magnitude” of the reward (the amount of food), but also by changing the amount of reward relative to what the rat expected at the end of the alley. In Crespi’s experiment, three groups of rats were trained to run down an alley to receive 1, 16,

or 256 food pellets. Motivation was measured as the running speed with which the rats approached the food. Initially the running speed was proportional to the size of the reward, with the rats receiving 256 pellets showing the greatest speed. In the second part of the experiment, all three groups of rats were provided 16 pellets at the end of the alley. The rats switched from 256 down to 16 pellets exhibited less motivation (ran slower) than those that had remained constant at 16 pellets, while the rats that were switched from 1 to 16 ran significantly faster. We can sympathize with the rat's behavior by imagining how differently we would react if our salary was cut from a high level to some lower level, as opposed to it being raised to from an initially lower level.

PHYSIOLOGICAL STUDIES OF MOTIVATION

Research on motivation has focused on the physiological basis for hunger, thirst, and other biological drives (see review by Grossman, 1988). Animals and humans possess complex mechanisms for homeostasis, that is, for maintaining an efficient balance between internal needs and environmental affordances to satisfy these needs. Taking for example the need for food, the mechanisms involved in maintaining blood glucose level encompass neural, endocrine, and other physical and chemical mechanisms whose purpose is to monitor continuously the internal need for energy, and whose state affects motivated behavior aimed at finding and consuming food.

A significant amount of motivation-related neural circuitry appears to be located in the hypothalamus (see Ch.48 by Kupferman in Kandel, Schwartz, & Jessell, 1991). In particular, there appear to be discrete hypothalamic areas that play significant roles in the control of homeostatic signals relating to feeding, drinking, and temperature regulation. Most of these areas are organized in opponent pairs, that is, areas having opposite effects on the function they regulate. For example, the control of body temperature is jointly regulated by the anterior hypothalamus, responsible for the generation of temperature-lowering behaviors such as dilation of skin blood vessels, and the posterior hypothalamus, responsible for the generation of temperature-increasing behaviors such as shivering. Electrical stimulation of these areas leads to an enhancement of the corresponding behavior, while lesion of each area leads to a suppression of the corresponding behavior. For example, electrical stimulation of the anterior hypothalamus produces panting, while lesions in the same area lead to chronic hyperthermia.

The control of homeostasis and motivated behavior is not relegated to hypothalamic areas. For one thing, there exist many brain areas that are involved with the control of motivated

behavior, so that, for example, feeding behaviors may be disrupted by stimulation or lesion of areas outside of the hypothalamus. In a similar vein, animals subjected to hypothalamic lesions sometimes exhibit gradual but marked recovery of the functions that were disrupted by the lesions, suggesting the existence of other neural centers capable of performing regulatory tasks. These observations are not surprising when one considers the complexity of a seemingly simple behavior such as feeding, which requires the ability to seek out, identify, and consume food, all tasks that involve the coordination of sensory, cognitive, and motor skills.

NEURAL NETWORKS OF MOTIVATED BEHAVIOR

As reviewed in various chapters of this Handbook, most types of neural networks suppose that learning involves correlation between input and output, or require the presence of an explicit error signal paired with each input. However, these networks learn without reference to the internal state of the network or the external state of the environment. In other words, there is generally no concept in neural network learning that parallels the idea of motivation. The idea of motivation has been used explicitly only by a handful of neural network researchers. The work of Grossberg and his colleagues (see the collections of Grossberg, 1982, 1986, 1989), whose efforts to model animal and human behavior with dynamic neural networks span the past three decades, provides a computational neural framework within which it is possible to give a natural interpretation to the concept of motivation, and to the role of drives and incentives in the generation of purposive behavior.

Grossberg (1971) proposed a neural model of instrumental and classical conditioning (see **CONDITIONING** and **EMOTION AND COMPUTATIONAL NEUROSCIENCE** in this Handbook) that embodies many of the concepts discussed in this chapter. Grossberg's model simulates neurons that represent sensory stimuli from the environment, as well as neurons that represent internal drive signals. Reinforcement acts to focus attention on relevant environmental stimuli, and allows the organism to learn what stimuli have value as reinforcers. In his later work, Grossberg expanded the notion of drive neurons to what he termed a sensory-drive heterarchy, in which both appetitive and aversive drives combine with sensory stimuli and compete to determine which behavior will be emitted in response to a given combination of internal needs and environmental stimuli.

The joint action of drives and reinforcers in Grossberg's network embodies Hull's intuition that drives and incentives combine in a multiplicative fashion (Eq. 1). However, Grossberg's model extends Hull's ideas by including both drive induction and drive reduction, and by

describing dynamic aspects of behavior and learning, rather than static relationships. A detailed discussion of the relationship between Hull's drive reduction theory and Grossberg's neural theory of conditioning can be found elsewhere (see especially Ch.1 Grossberg, 1986).

DISCUSSION

We have described motivation as the internal force that energizes behaviors, and that determines which particular behavior will be emitted in response to a given set of environmental stimuli and to the internal needs of an organism. Motivation is a complex topic of research that has been studied from many different approaches. We have briefly summarized some of the psychological and physiological experiments that probe the role of motivation in the behavior of humans and animals. We reviewed Clark Hull's drive reduction theory, one of the most influential and rigorous behavioral theories from the field of psychology. We have also looked at neural network models that directly or indirectly utilize the concept of motivation, or related concepts such as drives and homeostasis.

Research done in both psychology and business literature over the past three decades has recorded that motivation varies as a function of different factors in the work environment, including evaluation expectation, actual performance feedback, reward, autonomy, and the nature of the work itself. Moreover, both theory and empirical research have suggested that human motivation toward work can be categorized into two types: *Intrinsic motivation*, which comes from the intrinsic value of the work for the individual, and *Extrinsic motivation*, which comes from the desire to obtain some outcomes that are separate from the work itself.

When employees have high autonomy, receive feedback about their performance, and have an important, identifiable piece of work to do which requires skill variety, they may experience feelings of happiness and therefore intrinsic motivation to keep performing well (Hackman & Oldham, 1980).

Frederick Herzberg, distinguished professor of Management at the University of Utah and Behavioral theorist conducted studies on worker motivation in the 1950's. He developed the Motivation-Hygiene theory of worker satisfaction and dissatisfaction. This incredible researcher concluded that hygiene factors such as salary, fringe benefits, and working conditions can prevent dissatisfaction, but they do not motivate the worker. He found that motivators such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, and advancement increase satisfaction from work and motivate people toward a greater effort and performance. Herzberg and other behavioral theorists were influenced by the writings of Abraham Maslow,

a theoretical psychologist who analyzed what human beings seek in their lives and developed the Needs-Hierarchy concept.

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