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MODELS FOR IMPLEMENTING CHANGES IN MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS

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Abstract. *Purpose* – the purpose of this article is to present a practical model for supporting motivation in an organization and to demonstrate how aligning employees' needs with strategic objectives increases work effort, engagement, and overall performance.

Research methodology – Conceptual development at the intersection of theory and practice has been examined through a narrative review of the relevant literature, in which the significance of Taylor's and Weber's theories, along with contemporary approaches advanced by Stoner and Wankel and by Schermerhorn, is emphasized and integrated with the authors' empirical managerial experience.

Findings – effectiveness hinges above all on the correct sequencing of steps in diagnosing needs and implementing motivational changes. A deep understanding of employees' unmet needs enables the precise selection of support mechanisms, while a tailored, multi-level managerial approach sustains motivation and more closely aligns individual and organizational goals.

Research limitations – the model is conceptual and grounded in literature and the authors' experience; it lacks systematic, large-sample empirical testing and thus may have limited generalizability across industries and cultural contexts.

Practical implications – managers can use the model as a step-by-step guide to: assess employee needs, choose appropriate motivational tools, implement changes in the right order, and maintain motivation as an ongoing, continuous process across all organizational levels.

Originality/Value – this contribution integrates classic and contemporary motivation theories into a single, actionable process model. Also emphasizes the often-overlooked importance of implementation sequence and continuity, bridging theoretical insights with practical application.

1. Introduction

One theory of motivation suggests that there are various factors that can stimulate employees. These include the task situation, changes in the work environment, recommendations, persuasion, consensus, workplace equipment, elements of company culture and the stimulation of individual characteristics of employees. Therefore, it can be seen that the motivation system and the implementation of change in it are interrelated and affect the performance of companies. Change is often met with resistance from a variety of backgrounds. To implement change effectively, it is important to have an adequate motivational system in place to encourage employees to perform their duties better and to support the acceptance of the change being introduced. Employee motivation should be framed by a multi-factor system, linked to the human resources policy, which could include remuneration, opportunities for

education and qualification improvement, promotion prospects and internal career planning. This will help to create the conditions for a direct impact on employee commitment. It is only through an adequate work motivation system that the company can ensure the efficiency of its tasks, which in turn has a direct impact on the achievement of its objectives.

When approaching the topic of motivation, it would be beneficial to consider the issue itself and the definition of action, which is the human behaviour with which acting persons associate a certain subjective meaning. This current has been spread thanks to the theories and publications of the German sociologist Max Weber (1864), who in his work "Economy and Society" defines this process in detail as "Action means human behaviour (an external or internal act, omission or drift) if and insofar as the acting person, or many acting persons, associate a certain subjective sense with it". This theory suggests that all social phenomena can be understood by examining the individual actions that give rise to them. These actions, in turn, contribute to the formation of more complex social structures.

In order to explain social phenomena, it would be beneficial to consider the subjective senses of acting individuals. Weber's theory distinguishes between four types of ideal actions, although it is important to note that real-life actions may exhibit characteristics of more than one type.

(1) Goal-oriented action – the actor is guided by instrumental rationality: from a set of values, the actor chooses the ends and, considering alternative costs and benefits, selects the appropriate means.

(2) Value-rational actions – the actor is not guided It could be said that actions are guided by the calculation of the consequences of the action, which could be considered to be "the ends justify the means" (3) or by the current emotional state (4).

With regard to the models (*Latin: motivus = movable*), it seems that those activities which can be called social will be of relevance, as their meaning relates to the behaviour of other people and should be directed at them in order to be able to speak generally about the issue of motivation itself. It is also worth noting that Weber's observations regarding the limitation of the issue under consideration in terms of the simultaneous action of many people or influencing the behaviour of other people (Le Bono's crowd psychology) may be of interest here.

It is proposed that the concept of motivation may be defined as a set of implemented actions in response to an unmet need that induces, directs and sustains people's behaviour, enabling them to achieve their goals. In pursuing management objectives in the company, motivation also represents the ability to link the goals of each employee with those of the company. It could be said that human capital is the most important value of any organisation, as the success of an organisation depends on its capabilities and work efficiency, which should be supported by adequate motivation.

It would be beneficial to consider the continuous involvement of employees in the realisation of all the strategic, tactical and operational goals of the enterprise, while also encouraging them to improve their qualifications and competences. This could be achieved by giving them job satisfaction. This phenomenon is all the more complex if the motivation system is effectively designed. For it to be effective, the enterprise will require an adequate level of social capital resources, where there is a sharing of implicit vision in an open and continuous process. Schermerhorn (2008) suggests that in management theory, motivation

is a factor that determines both the level, direction and persistence of efforts at work. On the other hand, Kostera et al. (2007) suggest that motivation can vary depending on the specific tasks a person is involved in, which may not always be related to their professional work. The theories described by Borkowska (1985) view motivation as the totality of motives influencing a person's decision to behave, to undertake a particular behaviour, to maintain it or its direction. On the other hand, Stoner and Wankel (1997) define motivation as a factor that causes, directs and sustains human behaviour. The considerations adopted in the article define social action as a fundamental element in the formation of all structures, i.e., groups, departments, teams and social institutions, i.e., enterprises, associations, societies or organisations. The purpose of this article is to present a practical model for supporting motivation in an organization and to demonstrate how aligning employees' needs with strategic objectives increases work effort, engagement, and overall performance. In other words, the objective is to present a model for introducing changes in motivating factors, created as a result of a clash between theory and practice. This was achieved by conducting a review of the literature on the subject and drawing on the authors' empirical experience.

2. Literature review

2.1. Selected theories on employee motivation

Theories in defining motivation and approaches to motivation are evaluating and transforming under the influence of many factors. The issues surrounding the topic are closely related to both geo-economic and local conditions, involving leading industries that set the stage for economic expansion as well as craft industries directed at meeting local needs (Małecka, 2018).

Weber's theory (1864) was further developed by Parsons, who, searching for solutions among the thoughts of Pareto and Durkheim, created a vision of social roles, defining interests, norms and values that can be both stimulants and constraints to action (M. Weber, 1978, 1999, 2002, 2015). Also noteworthy is the Theory of Rational Choice (TRW), or rational cost-benefit calculations, and its inclinations with methodological individualism, as well as the notion of human behaviour based on social structure. All of these developed in the 19th century and are still a topic of discourse today. The denominator common to all theories is the assertion that it is motivation that constitutes the meaning: of being, of existence, of action, and that it enriches the life of every human being. Motivation is the reason for any action, but always directed towards the realisation of a set goal, which can be either one-off, repetitive or even continuous.

The traditional model refers to the theory of Taylor (1856) and the school of scientific organization – scientific management called Taylorism in the literature, where the use of an incentive-based pay system and the importance of a job hierarchy were central. Indeed, the main motivating force in this theory is money (Taylor, 2022).

Unfortunately, despite the fact that already Smith (1723) treated man in economic aspects (*Latin: Homo Oeconomicus*), i.e., as a being guided by rationality, aiming to maximise profits and oriented primarily by the value of the economic results of the choices made, both theories failed, as the omission of the human aspect in the organisation created gaps that evolutionarily required more attention (Smith, 2016, 2020).

There has been a shift in the socio-economic paradigm from the rational to the emotional human, as evidenced by the emergence of the behavioural (human relations) school, which has become another direction that identifies human relations as the most essential. Such an organisation is primarily made up of people in friendly relationships. This element of human relations and the humanisation of work is a consequence of the Hawtrone effect, which was introduced into the literature by the Australian psychologist and sociologist, who taught at the University of Queensland, the University of Pennsylvania and the Harvard Business School – Mayo (1880). In an experiment conducted by him, it was found that the feeling of being in control of one's own destiny, influenced employees' appreciation and satisfaction, which directly implied an increase in work productivity (Mayo, 2010; A. Weber, 2002).

The tools for motivating employees can range from meeting the expectations zone, satisfying the need to belong or giving development prospects to pay, promotions and praise (see also: Cialdini, 2021). Hence, two main types of motivation are distinguished in the literature: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. The former is triggered by stimuli that appear, as it were, spontaneously. These include responsibility, sovereignty of action, the prospect of developing competences and qualifications, as well as an increase in social status and self-satisfaction with one's work. The second, on the other hand, is mainly based on the principle of penalties and rewards. Thus, it takes into account: salary reductions, reprimands and criticism, up to disciplinary action versus salary increases, individual and public praise, promotion within the company structure or individual professional qualification programmes (Armstrong, 2001). A work environment is then created, termed by Reykowski (1979) as an environment of positive and negative motivation, which either creates conditions conducive to the realisation of the employee's goals or threatens what has already been achieved by the employee. That is, in other words, positive or negative motivational incentives are applied.

Behavioural economics researcher Gneezy of the University of California, San Diego, has published findings on the impact of rewarding behaviour change (Gneezy & List, 2006). He showed that appropriately tailored incentives can help to develop new behavioural patterns, give up unfavourable habits, and can also remove barriers that stand in the way of a goal.

However, Skinner (1904), one of the most influential behavioural psychologists, developed the theory of instrumental conditioning, according to which the addition of a reinforcing stimulus after a desired behaviour increases the likelihood of its recurrence. He showed that this stimulus need not have a material dimension if it is strongly linked to an internal value system. He found that positive reception received as feedback, as well as appreciation in the workplace, can also act as a reward and incentive for further behaviour change and development. This mechanism has been called positive reinforcement (Skinner, 1988).

One theory published by Reykowski, which has been widely discussed in the literature and originated in the 1970s, states that requirements placed on employees can be justified by: (1) explaining their importance for the functioning of the organisation, (2) exercising the authority of the person who formulates them, (3) the threat of sanctions for non-compliance, (4) promises of rewards for their fulfilment (Reykowski, 1979).

Researchers representing this current, which also included Armstrong, emphasise the criticality of the action of all organs and levels of the organisation for the effective implementation of change, since the effectiveness of the whole process is determined by their positive

attitude, enthusiasm for implementation and readiness to modify the change process under the influence of others (Armstrong, 2001). All these elements are useful in the process of reducing resistance to change. For it is those changes that lead to a better identification of employees with the organisation's goals that are most desirable in an organisation.

It is stated in the literature that three basic categories of motivational mechanisms are created by the situation of change. The first category is identified as the drive to survive and secure existence. Fear is often generated by change as a threat, and resistance to change is influenced by strong fear. Therefore, the motivational mechanism to remove the threat is considered particularly important (Małecka, 2023; Duháček Šebestová et al., 2025). The second mechanism is defined as the search for self-benefit, i.e., the usefulness to satisfy one's own needs. Every change is considered from this point of view, and a rational action leading to maximisation of utility is triggered by this motivation. The last mechanism is referred to as social interest. Because every human action is endowed with social significance, the social interest drive is elevated when change is considered from the perspective of group membership (Serafin, 1996). Prosocial action, directed at achieving social benefit, has been found to be most desirable in an organisation, as better identification of the employee with organisational goals is facilitated by it. By knowing these three categories of motivational mechanisms, the factors influencing employees' attitudes towards change and the measures required to motivate their acceptance and implementation of reorganisation processes can be better understood.

Also noteworthy is Masłyk-Musiał's theory of several steps, influencing employees' enthusiasm to work together for the success of the organisation by:

(1) creating a sense of urgency, i.e., making employees aware that change is necessary and requires an immediate response;

(2) identifying the real forces for change and describing them clearly so that employees can understand what principles and processes are involved;

(3) establishing consequences for not responding to new situations or responding to them in an unchanging way, i.e., the so-called "old way";

(4) implementing a new way of responding to strategic change;

(5) delegating authority to those who are responsible for implementing change;

(6) assigning people to projects and providing them with the resources necessary to implement change;

(7) establishing clear rules for sharing the benefits achieved from responding appropriately to new situations;

(8) modelling the right behavioural patterns;

(9) thinking ahead about actions that benefit employees and the organisation and avoiding theoretical approaches to change (Masłyk-Musiał, 1996).

Upon implementing organizational change, employees' motivational attitudes are categorized as "do" or "from" attitudes (Filipowicz, 1998). While the former is characterized by readiness to undertake new tasks, the latter is marked by avoidance of such situations. Consequently, the "do" attitude is to be reinforced through sustained encouragement, whereas the "from" attitude is to be mitigated via strategies – such as open communication – that foster active participation in the change process (Filipowicz, 1998; see also: Burleigh, 2020).

Several measures have been proposed for motivating employees exhibiting an "away" attitude:

(1) it has been recognized that the threat of punishment and sanctions may exert greater influence than direct praise or rewards, which have limited effect on individuals with a "from" attitude;

(2) it has been suggested that decisions should be confirmed and difficulties acknowledged to help overcome fear of repeated failure;

(3) it has been observed that scepticism characteristic of such employees can be addressed by discussing their concerns in a rational manner;

(4) it has been determined that incremental involvement in the change process constitutes the preferred strategy for engagement (Table 1).

Table 1. Tools for motivating employees according to attitude (source: own elaboration)

Motivating employees according to attitude:			
FROM		TO	
– praises	– advancement	– threats	– demotion
– reward	– opportunity to improve the qualifications	– sanctions	– lack of renewal of licences and permits
– decisiveness	– opportunity to improve competences	– scepticism	– no additional training

According to the authors of the book Managing the Change Process, Carr et al. (1998), during a period of change in an organisation, there should be a direct link between reward procedures and the achievement of change process objectives. All employees should be familiar with the company's internal policies and reward and punishment system, which should be awarded in a fair and impartial manner (Carr et al., 1998).

Referring to publications on organisational change processes, which emphasise the crucial importance of adequately motivating employees for the success of such a process, it is important to bear in mind the application of several guidelines in this regard. Firstly, it is important to realise that implementing change requires the involvement of top management and middle managers, who should be convinced of the need for such changes. It is also important that the remuneration system is linked to the success of the change implementation. The leader of the change process should also consult his or her decisions with employees who are directly affected by the change, and be open to making possible adjustments to the change implementation plan (Duháček Šebestová et al., 2025).

2.2. Selected models for the change implementation process in a company

The motivational system allows for the formation of positive attitudes and the reduction of resistance that often occurs during organisational change. This resistance can jeopardise the entire reorganisation process and lead to the failure of both individual and comprehensive measures. Therefore, it is important to stimulate employee motivation, which can help minimise the negative effects of resistance and accelerate the introduction of change (Małecka, 2023; see also: Schermerhorn, 2008; Kostera et al., 2007; Borkowska, 1985).

The most widely used model of the change process is the three-phase model of the pioneer of social psychology, work psychology and applied psychology, Lewin (1890), which assumes that change is a process consisting of three consecutive stages. Lewin's work forms an important basis insofar as he was a mentor to many respected psychologists who influenced the further development and direction of research in this field, such as Leon Festinger (1919–1989 – creator of the cognitive dissonance theory), Roger Barker (1903–1990), Bluma Zeigarnik (1901–1988 – observed the Zeigarnik effect), Morton Deutsch (1920–2017 – creator of modern conflict resolution theories).

Over time, the model has been developed and its many applications described in the literature, including by Penc (1999) and Clarke (1997). The first stage, termed "thawing", involves the creation of the need and motivation to change within individuals. Once the need for change is understood and accepted, resistance is reduced. Next comes the change stage, in which designed modifications are introduced, supported by a qualified change agent to facilitate internal assimilation of new values and attitudes. The final "freezing" stage consolidates new behaviours through reinforcement mechanisms to ensure their institutionalisation (Figure 1) (Lewin, 2007, 2008; Penc, 1999).

Figure 1. Kurt Lewin's three-phase model (source: Clarke, 1997)

Lewin (1890) also developed an action research model consisting of three fundamental assumptions. For change in an organization to be effective, a systematic and rational analysis must be conducted, and the foundation of the change process is the learning process. Additionally, members of the organization must feel the need for change. During the stage of analysis, hypothesis formulation, and solution seeking, three groups of actors emerge: management, employees directly affected by the change, and those responsible for executing the change process. These three groups collaborate with one another, which leads to the development of new and better solutions and reinforces the phenomenon of learning, resulting in a shift in participants' behavioral patterns toward greater adaptability to change (engagement in the change process = reduction of resistance to it).

Lewin also developed a model based on stabilising forces, according to which behaviour results from the simultaneous action of driving and restraining forces. The importance of this factor is also emphasised by Stoner and Wankel in their publications (1997). Both forces are important in undertaking actions, but they have opposite directions. Managers can achieve goals by strengthening the driving forces or reducing the restraining forces, but they must bear in mind that too much strengthening of the driving forces may result in an increase in the restraining forces, which will prevent the goal from being achieved. Planned change programmes most often aim in two directions: (1) to remove/weaken restraining forces or (2) to create/strengthen driving forces within the organisation (Stoner & Wankel, 1997, 2011; Lewin, 2007, 2008; see also publications: Hamilton-Ibama & Ihunwo, 2022; Simeo & Hamilton-Ibama, 2022; Tamounomiebi & John-Eke, 2021; Major, 2020; Ramya et al., 2019; Stoner et al., 2013).

The 'several steps' method, on the other hand, involves a step-by-step analysis to identify a pattern of activities that strengthen the process of employee engagement in the change process by generating enthusiasm for the process itself and the idea of implementation (Figure 2).
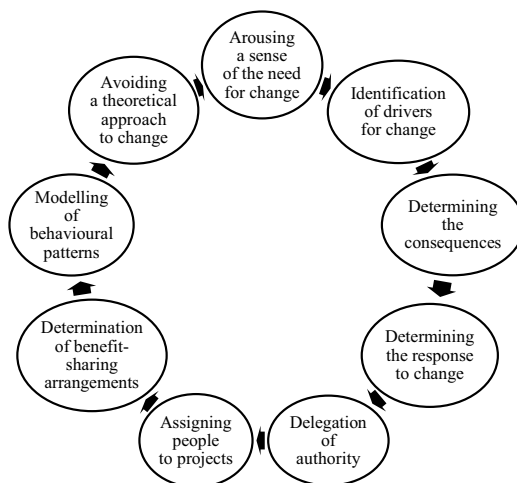
Figure 2. Generating enthusiasm among the organisation's employees
(source: own elaboration)

Choosing the right method to implement change in a company is very important, as it affects the success or failure of the change process. This is especially true for manufacturing companies, which are usually characterised by complex processes and infrastructure, as well as strongly codified procedures and work standards. Implementing change in such an organisation therefore requires the right approach and skills. If changes are not implemented correctly, they can lead to a number of problems, such as a decrease in productivity, production errors, higher costs, supply and distribution problems and even loss of customers. Therefore, it is important to choose the right method of implementing change that considers the specifics of the organisation, the work culture, as well as the needs of employees and customers. Academic considerations in such a field are worth basing on the experience of specific companies, preferably leaders in their industries and numerous case studies can be found among contemporary researchers such as AIOqla (2021), Edu and Amadi (2020), Edmonds and Kennedy (2017), Nowell et al. (2017), Ngwenya (2020), Northouse, (2016).

The right choice of change implementation method in a manufacturing company supports the minimisation of the risks and costs of change implementation, and accelerates the implementation process and the achievement of positive results. In addition, choosing the right method can increase employees' commitment and level of trust in the implemented change, which is crucial for the success of the entire change process (AIOqla, 2021; Negwenya, 2020; Edu & Adadi, 2020; Edmonds & Kennedy, 2017; Nowell et al., 2017; Nothouse, 2016; Duháček Šebestová at al., 2025).

2.3. The role and importance of motivational factors

Psychologist Abraham Maslow in 1943 presented his concept based on the hypothesis:

'*Human beings in their actions strive to satisfy their needs, which constitute a logical hierarchy and include the areas of physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualisation.*'

This also implies economically, as it implies that all needs – at least in part – can be satisfied by the company in which the employee is employed (Figure 3) (Maslow, 2006).
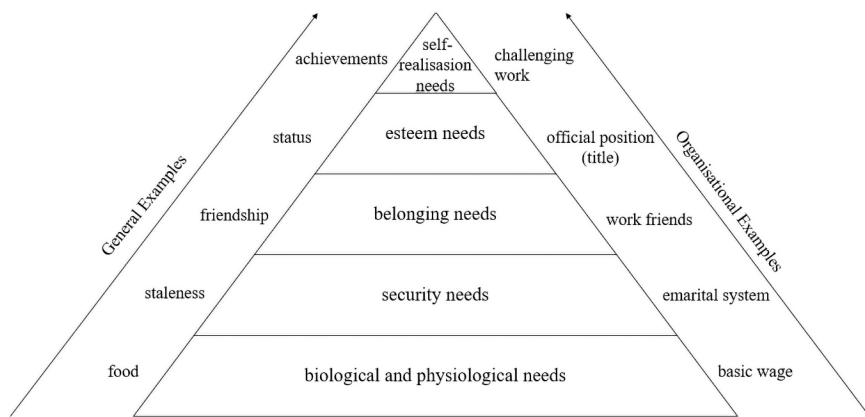

Figure 3. Maslow's pyramid (source: own elaboration based on Maslow, 2006)

Maslow's theory of the hierarchy of needs includes:

(1) biological and physiological needs – the most important of all needs because they ensure survival and are the main motivator of people's actions; these include basic life needs such as air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sleep and sex; individuals tend to prioritise these needs over others such as the needs for belonging and self-actualisation;

(2) security needs – include a sense of reassurance, protection, safety, order, entitlement, constraint, stability, support, care, and freedom from fear and chaos; the fulfilment of these needs is only possible if physiological needs are met at an adequate level;

(3) belonging and love needs, also referred to as social needs, only appear after the satisfaction of physiological needs and safety needs, and can only be fulfilled through the presence of another person; they involve people's involvement in relationships, starting a family, belonging to professional groups; love needs are related to giving and receiving affection; belonging needs result from strong herd and gathering tendencies and focus on the search for bonds, they can be fulfilled when a person feels the need for the presence of others, e.g. to form a family, the presence of children in his/her life;

(4) esteem needs – stem from having a stable, firmly established self-esteem, self-respect, a sense of worth and respect from others; recognition needs stem from a sense of responsibility, reputation, status; the strongest sense of satisfaction is based on respect from other people;

(5) self-realisation needs – are an important intrinsic motivator for human fulfilment; they ensure becoming better by improving existing skills and acquiring new ones; they are individual for each person, but can only be fulfilled by providing the previous needs: physiological, safety, love and recognition.

According to A. Maslow's theory, needs should be satisfied according to the order presented, starting with those at a lower level. Only when the needs at lower levels have been satisfied can the focus be on those at higher levels (Maslow, 2006; see also research: Bańka, 2007). When translating the hierarchy into organisational language, possible aspects related to:

(1) the basic human motivator, which is work as a source of income to cover basic needs such as housing, medical treatment or food; companies should provide decent pay and stable working conditions so that employees can meet their basic needs, which will have a positive impact on their motivation and commitment;

(2) security needs, which, according to Maslow, act as a determinant of certain behaviours, prompting a person to seek out conditions that they perceive as secure; this can also be a driving force for employees to be active in the workplace, as a result of people's desire to have a stable job; a company can satisfy security needs by providing stable conditions for the material working environment;

(3) the satisfaction of social needs in the work context arises from interaction with management and other workers; the pursuit of these needs contributes to team cohesion and increases the level of social capital in the enterprise;

(4) the adoption of a basis of respect for other people, through which the enterprise can provide a sense of fulfilment of the need for recognition by valuing employees, their commitment and activity;

(5) the company's values regarding development needs, which influence the employee's self-fulfilment, which translates into a benefit for the organisation if only in the form of greater team commitment.

However, Griffin (2016) notes that Maslow's theory has some weaknesses and shortcomings. Not every employee exhibits the five levels of needs, nor does everyone exhibit the sequence of needs according to the concept presented. It is the individual's needs that are the trigger for action. Motivation is felt when a course of action can lead to the achievement of a goal and an expected reward satisfying a felt need. A need, however, is an internal state. In response to an unsatisfied need, the individual is stimulated to act and a desire to satisfy the need arises (Juchnowicz, 2000). This is followed by a process of reviewing possible conditions and then making a choice of behaviour to satisfy the need and initiating the process of action. The next stage is to assess the extent to which this need is satisfied, and a positive assessment becomes the basis for applying a specific solution. If the assessment is negative, then the solution will be rejected by the individual and he or she will start looking for a new, more satisfying solution (Figure 4) (Griffin, 2016, 2023).
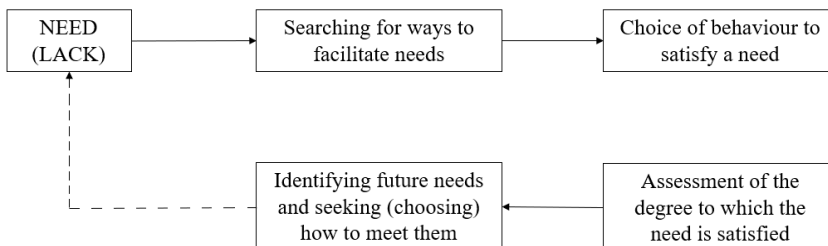

Figure 4. Motivation diagram (source: Griffin, 2023)

The terms included in the model are defined as follows:

(1) expected effort-achievement relationship – an individual's perceived likelihood that his or her effort will result in greater achievement;

(2) expected achievement-performance relationship – an individual's perception that performance at work will lead to a particular outcome;

(3) outcome – the consequences of behaviour in an organisational setting, usually in the form of reward;

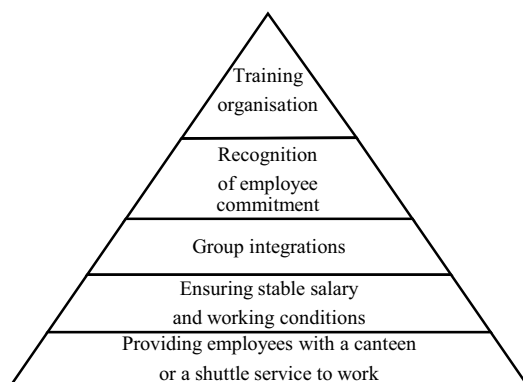(4) valence – an indicator showing the strength of an individual's desire for a particular outcome (Figure 5).

Training
organisation

Recognition
of employee
commitment

Group integrations

Ensuring stable salary
and working conditions

Providing employees with a canteen
or a shuttle service to work

Figure 5. Employer's suggestions for meeting employee needs
(source: own elaboration)

Also worth mentioning is the theory of the Polish psychologist Mellibruda, who in his publications emphasises the importance of the existence of particularly important issues in human life. These include – in addition to the satisfaction of basic needs – the pursuit of growth and enrichment of life satisfaction, and the search for certain values or a belief system worth engaging in (Mellibruda, 2003). Based on the assumption that:

...most difficulties and conflicts between people cannot be resolved by a penal code or disciplinary rules. It seems that a lot of suffering, sadness, bitterness and resignation are the consequences of actions undertaken without malicious intent. It is then difficult to identify the culprit, and it is difficult to make amends through punishment. On the other hand, it is possible to search for the sources and causes of difficulties, problems and failures,

the importance of striving to find the cause is indicated, and not through punishment, but precisely through motivational systems that support internal dialogue within the organisation (Małecka, 2023). This also implies the need to take care of the level of social capital in a given enterprise and the opportunities provided by an adequate and tailored motivational system.

3. Materials and methods

The paper is based on the presentation of selected sociological and managerial thoughts with real application in economic practice. It ranges from traditional models referring to the theory of Taylor (1856), through the influence of behavioural psychologists and Skinner (1904)

to contemporary behavioural economics. Against the background of a critical review of the literature on the subject, an overview is given of:

(1) selected theories in the field of employee motivation;

(2) selected models of the change implementation process in an enterprise and also describes;

(3) the role and importance of motivating factors.

Due to the scientific nature of the authors' work and their many years of practical experience in senior and middle management positions – presents their own model supporting the implementation of changes in employee motivation processes, based on a combination of their theoretical knowledge and business activity as a synthesis, which should foster the determination of the determinants of the development of enterprise motivation models in both theory and business practice.

4. Results

Creativity and ingenuity are the score of modern development and support innovative activities. For this to be possible, every manager should have a stock of competences (a necessary condition) and qualifications (a sufficient condition) to effectively activate the mental potential, commitment and effectiveness of employee teams. These activities supported by appropriate tools enable each manager to create an individual model for motivating employee teams (Małecka, 2023).

The multitude of definitions of motivation and motivation found in the literature and their presentation in various approaches, with different emphasis on individual elements and their interpretations described in the article, as well as the authors' empiricism, made it possible to construct a model for implementing change, considering the most relevant and effective motivation tools. Important in the presented model is the sequence of determining and implementing the individual steps, which should be considered essential for maximising the effectiveness of the change implementation process in a company in a continuous process (Figure 6).
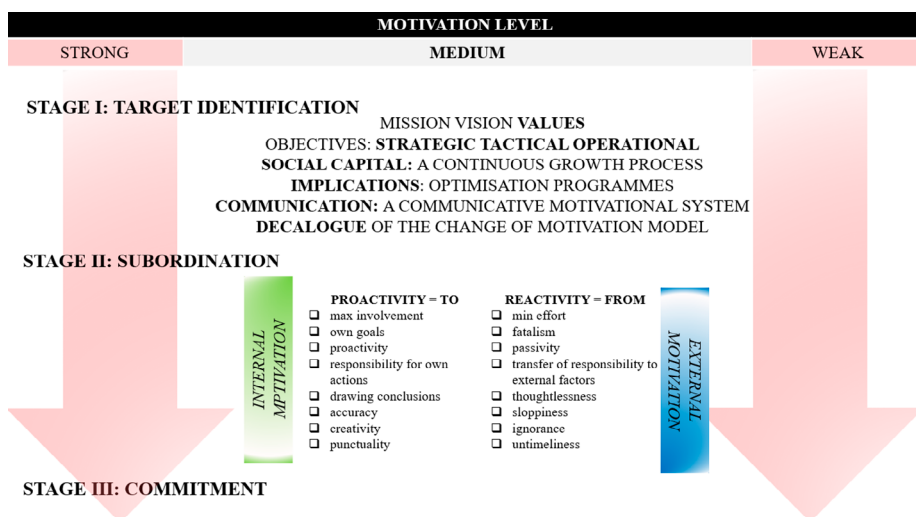

Figure 6. Model for implementing changes in motivational factors (source: own elaboration)

The terms included in the model are defined as follows:

(1) target identification – effective communication with the employee implies an understanding of the benefits to the employee of achieving the stated goal;

(2) subordination – the employee carries out unconditionally all the instructions of the supervisor;

(3) commitment – the employee identifies with the objective, regards it as his or her own and understands the possibility of achieving individual benefits for a correctly completed task.

It is important that motivating activities are embedded at least in the values of the company and are included in the strategic, tactical and operational objectives, as motivation should concern every level of the organisation. At the same time, work should be carried out to increase the level of social capital and this should be done in a continuous process.

It will also be important to update the various operational objectives, taking into account employee attitudes geared towards urgency and responsiveness when areas for improvement in the company's operations are noticed, in which optimisation programmes can be helpful. A prerequisite will also be to identify the level of human and intellectual capital in order to communicate the principles and processes involved in implementing change in the company – so that employees at every level understand how the incentive system works. The next steps concern the principles of setting:

(1) the validity of the change – a time-consuming step;

(2) the principles of change;

(3) the functioning of the change response;

(4) the hierarchy of motivations linked to the employer's expected reaction by employees;

(5) the hierarchy of consequences linked to the lack of response expected by the employer from employees;

(6) and the delegation of specific individuals responsible for implementing specific change processes;

(7) training those responsible in the principles of effective employee motivation;

(8) competence extremes;

(9) modelling appropriate behavioural patterns in managers at every level;

(10) transparency of rules and consequences.

It is important to emphasise the possible difficulties occurring during the implementation of the motivational model depending on the degree of motivation:

(1) overly strong motivation can cause excessive emotional tension which can:

a. multiply additional stress;

b. increases the number of mistakes made;

c. discourage action;

d. cause one to focus so intensely on the task at hand that one misses out on duplicate side mistakes.

(2) too low motivation can:

a. fails to encourage any action;

b. indicates bad patterns of behaviour in the organisation;

c. demotivates other employees in the team.

Hence, medium motivation was considered to be the most effective degree because, according to Brich's law, "people perform best with medium motivation, worse with too little or too much".

The need for change in a company generates a number of processes and tasks related to employee motivation. When stimulating motivation, i.e., spurring employees to action, it is worth taking into account the stage of explaining the need for change, which may be longer than the other stages, but strengthens the sense of security of individual team members, which should remain at a minimum intact. It will also be helpful in the next step to point out the inefficiency of existing methods and processes for the further development of the company. The next task is to build interest in the change process and to involve employees in the process by clearly defining goals, setting expectations and demonstrating that the change is needed and beneficial for the company and the employees. This also means that management at every level should be involved in the change process by adopting the attitudes expected by employees, which should contribute to breaking down the barrier of distrust and gaining acceptance for the changes proposed by the company.

5. Discussion and conclusions

Motivation (from Latin motivus 'moving' from motus 'movement') denotes a state of readiness to take a specific action. Dictionary sources interpret motivation as a set of mental and physiological processes aroused by a need, a state that determines the basis of behaviour and its changes. Thus, motivational systems (from Greek: systema) should be a set of interrelated elements, functioning as a whole and – in this case – supporting motivation. They will therefore include all inputs, primary and transformational processes and existing feedbacks, which, when coordinated internally, will indicate the specific structure of the system of mutually supporting elements. Helpful in the creation and evaluation of such systems will be the instrumental conditioning theories of Skinner (1988) and his successors from the 1990s onwards, as described in the article. An important feedback is that from the publication of his research up to the present day, it is not only and exclusively material incentives that reinforce desired behaviour, but a strong connection to an internal value system. Defined by Skinner (1988), positive reinforcement feedback demonstrates that positive reception received as feedback, as well as appreciation in the workplace, can also act as a reward and incentive for further behaviour change and development. The correct verification of such a classification is made possible by Maslow's individually adapted hierarchy of needs, the effectiveness of which increases with the assumption of pro-social activities, also presented in the article.

However, only the correct perception of employees' needs can result in the right choice of effective support instruments. This is why a tailor-made approach to management at all horizontal and vertical levels has been and will remain so important. This ranges from geo-economic aspects, diversity management, diversification of support methods and employee motivation by economic zones to national, regional, local and then sectoral aspects and areas of individual economic areas.

Nowadays, the issue of employee motivation certainly requires a new approach that does not change existing theory, but adapts tools to current economic conditions. Indeed, pandemic times have accelerated the digitalisation of the world and expanded the possibilities of remote working. However, this is a new path for many fields or industries, which requires different instruments to support employee motivation than the traditional one. Time will definitely verify the measures taken by companies, and the support instruments adopted so far will gradually evolve. It is already known, however, that for sure the element of psychological support for employees who remain in isolation will become particularly important. This is not only due to the post-pandemic alienation and internal fear felt by the human population, which has shown atavistic behaviour, but also to the ageing population of each country. The new generation is the digital generation. It is virtual reality that may prove to be closer to it than the traditional methods of the labour market. Motivational methods and models should then also evolve in this direction.

6. Limitation of the study

The limitation of the study is based on the quality of the literature sources used to develop and evaluate the models. Given the accelerated digitalisation caused by the pandemic, remote working affects employee motivation, so changes and proactive work with human capital are needed. The industry in which employees are to be motivated and the economic environment that determines individual behaviour – especially in the area of Central and Eastern Europe, where military considerations are of increasing importance – are not insignificant. These aspects are not included in the publication, as access to data in this area is limited.

7. Future direction of the research

With the proposed model, an organisation can consider implementing a tailored management approach that focuses on: employees' individual needs, age, knowledge, experience and development needs. It is recommended to implement programmes that address employee mental wellbeing as an important part of human resource management. In this regard, research focused first on the intrinsic conditions of the motivated environment should each time be preceded by a comprehensive construction of a proposal for the implemented model of change and the selection of its individual factors. The creation of individual evaluation sheets tailored to each researched environment would provide a basis for such activities.

Author contributions

Joanna Małecka: planned the study, conducted the literature review, responsibility for the study design and development of the presented data analysis, interpreted the results and the manuscript editing. Eleftherios Thalassinos: edited the manuscript and performed language proofreading.

Disclosure statement

Lack of any competing financial, professional, or personal interests from other parties.

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