

Herzberg Two Factor Theory of Motivation

Increase motivation and decrease dissatisfaction.

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Background

This theory, also called the Motivation-Hygiene Theory or the dual-factor theory, was penned by Frederick Herzberg in 1959. This American psychologist, who was very interested in people's motivation and job satisfaction, came up with the theory. He conducted his research by asking a group of people about their good and bad experiences at work. He was surprised that the group answered questions about their good experiences very differently from the ones about their bad experiences. Based on this, he developed the theory that people's job satisfaction depends on two kinds of factors. Factors for satisfaction (motivators / satisfiers) and factors for dissatisfaction (hygiene factors / dissatisfies).

Performance, recognition, job status, responsibility and opportunities for growth all fall under motivators/ satisfiers.

Satisfaction and dissatisfaction

Performance, recognition, job status, responsibility and opportunities for growth all fall under motivators/ satisfiers. Hygiene factors/dissatisfiers are about salary, secondary working conditions, the relationship with colleagues, physical work place and the relationship between supervisor and employee.

Herzberg's Two Factor Theory



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Identify hygiene factors and motivators in your own life.



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4 different combinations can exist at work:

1: High hygiene and high motivation

This is the ideal situation. Employees are very motivated and barely have any complaints.

2: High hygiene and low motivation

Employees have few complaints, but they're not really motivated, they see their work simply as a pay check.

3: Low hygiene and high motivation

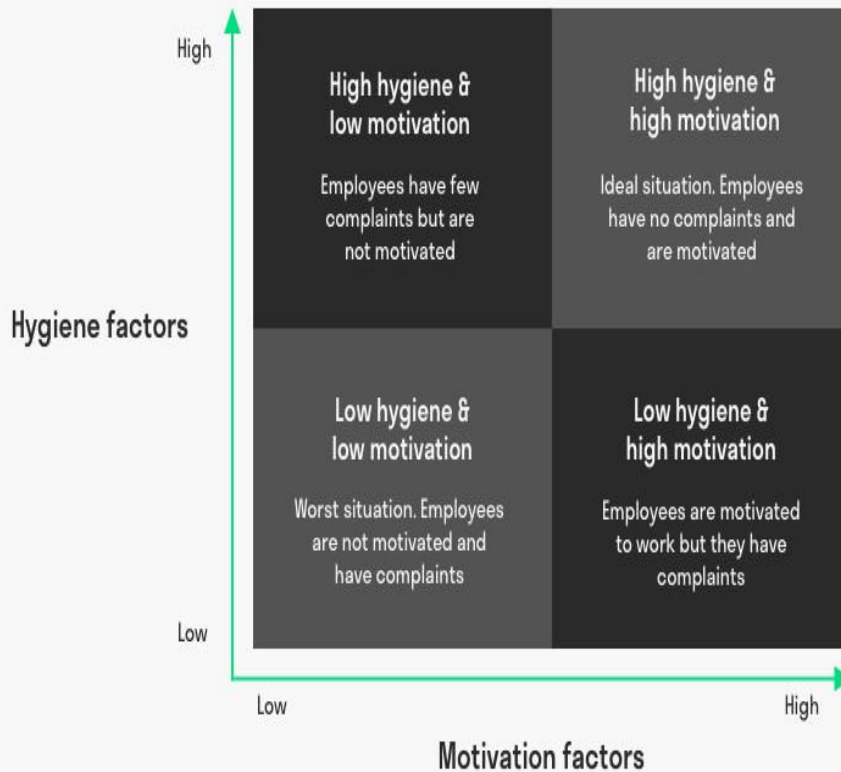
Employees are motivated, their job is challenging, but they have complaints about salary or work conditions.

4: Low hygiene and low motivation

This is the worst possible situation, employees are not motivated and have a lot of complaints.

Illustration of the Two Factor Theory in practice

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Hygiene factors

Hygiene factors are those job factors which are essential for existence of motivation at workplace. These do not lead to positive satisfaction for long-term. But if these factors are absent / if these factors are non-existent at workplace, then they lead to dissatisfaction. In other words, hygiene factors are those factors which when adequate/reasonable in a job, pacify the employees and do not make them dissatisfied. These factors are extrinsic to work. Hygiene factors are also called as **dissatisfiers or maintenance factors** as they are required to avoid dissatisfaction. These factors describe the job environment/scenario. The

hygiene factors symbolized the physiological needs which the individuals wanted and expected to be fulfilled. Hygiene factors include:

- **Pay** - The pay or salary structure should be appropriate and reasonable. It must be equal and competitive to those in the same industry in the same domain.
- **Company Policies and administrative policies** - The company policies should not be too rigid. They should be fair and clear. It should include flexible working hours, dress code, breaks, vacation, etc.
- **Fringe benefits** - The employees should be offered health care plans (med claim), benefits for the family members, employee help programs, etc.
- **Physical Working conditions** - The working conditions should be safe, clean and hygienic. The work equipment should be updated and well-maintained.
- **Status** - The employees' status within the organization should be familiar and retained.
- **Interpersonal relations** - The relationship of the employees with his peers, superiors and subordinates should be appropriate and acceptable. There should be no conflict or humiliation element present.
- **Job Security** - The organization must provide job security to the employees.

Motivational factors

According to Herzberg, the hygiene factors cannot be regarded as motivators. The motivational factors yield positive satisfaction. These factors are inherent to work. These factors motivate the employees for a superior performance. These factors are called satisfiers. These are factors involved in performing the job. Employees find these factors intrinsically rewarding. The motivators symbolized the psychological needs that were perceived as an additional benefit. Motivational factors include:

Recognition - The employees should be praised and recognized for their accomplishments by the managers.

Sense of achievement - The employees must have a sense of achievement. This depends on the job. There must be a fruit of some sort in the job.

Growth and promotional opportunities - There must be growth and advancement opportunities in an organization to motivate the employees to perform well.

Responsibility - The employees must hold themselves responsible for the work. The managers should give them ownership of the work. They should minimize control but retain accountability.

Meaningfulness of the work - The work itself should be meaningful, interesting and challenging for the employee to perform and to get motivated.

How to apply the Herzberg Two Factor Theory?

Organizations and their managers want teams with the best possible performance. But how do you motivate that team? There's not much point in motivating employees if the hygiene factors aren't taken care of. Motivating people really works when the things that bother them – the things they complain about – disappear.

Take away the dissatisfaction

To do this, it's important to figure out all the important factors first. What are the complaints about, what's going on, how do the employees interact with each other? Generally speaking, the following aspects are important:

- Work on the bureaucracy within the organization
- Make sure there's supportive and effective supervision
- Create a work environment where all employees are respected
- Pay an honest salary
- Make sure all employees do worthwhile work to build up the status of their functions
- Give job guarantees

Create conditions for satisfaction

For motivation within the organization, think about:

- Creating conditions for good performance
- Appreciating your employees' contributions
- Tailoring the work to your employees' talents and abilities
- Giving each team as much responsibility as possible
- Offering opportunities for growth within the organization
- Offering training and development opportunities

Implications of Two-Factor Theory

- ✓ The Two-Factor theory implies that the managers must stress upon guaranteeing the adequacy of the hygiene factors to avoid employee dissatisfaction. Also, the managers must make sure that the work is stimulating and rewarding so that the employees are motivated to work and perform harder and better. This theory emphasizes upon job-enrichment so as to motivate the employees. The job

must utilize the employee's skills and competencies to the maximum. Focusing on the motivational factors can improve work-quality.

Now it is your turn

What do you think? Could you use the Herzberg Two Factor Theory to motivate your employees? How would you approach it? Share your experience and knowledge.

