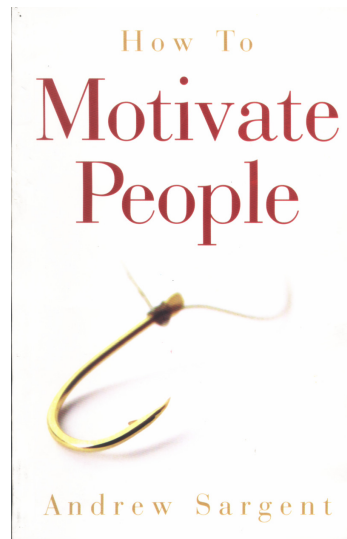


How to Motivate People



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■ The Big Idea

How does a manager gain the positive commitment of the workforce? What measures are necessary to motivate employees and make them effective members of the organization?

Andrew Sargent explains the issues, the theories expounded by behavioral scientists, the barriers to motivation, the crucial influence of the personnel expert and, through description of actual case studies, the role of supervisors. He offers positive, practical and informative guidance to achieving harmonization and motivating the team.

■ Why You Need This Book

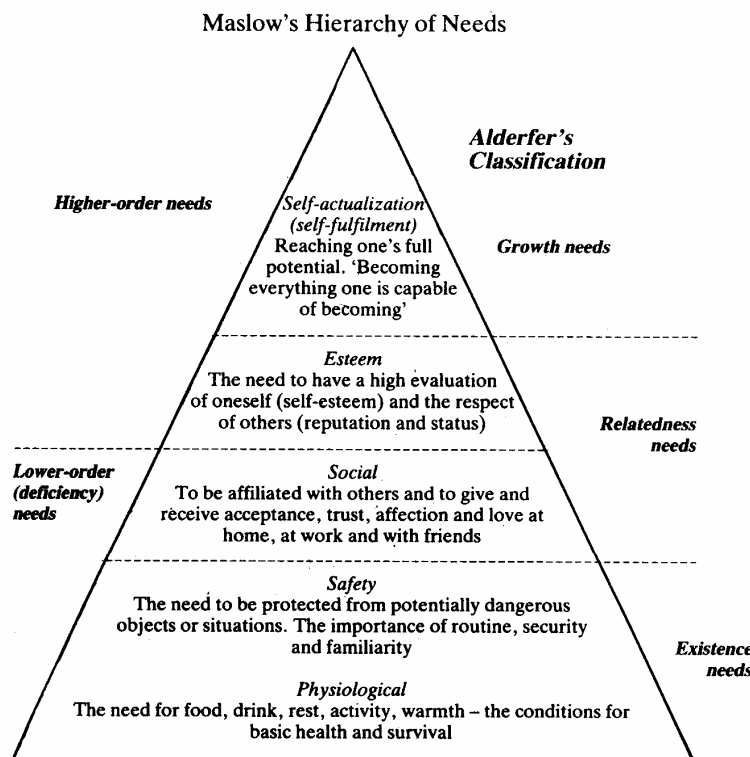
This book focuses on constructive analysis of the challenge of motivation and practical help in making it happen. Its straightforward, common-sense style spells out a clear message for managers in today's demanding business environment.

■ What the Behavioral Scientists Say

Motivation is about what makes people tick, what makes people act or behave in particular ways. On a basic level, people are motivated towards a desired outcome, such as congratulations from their manager for a job well done, or are motivated to avoid an undesired outcome, such as a rollicking from the boss for work being late.

One of Abraham Maslow's great contributions was his Hierarchy of Needs, which sees people as having a set of needs which they are motivated to satisfy.

Maslow suggested that needs only motivate people when they are unsatisfied. When applied to his hierarchy, lower-order needs (basic physical needs, comfort, safety and security) have to be satisfied before higher-order needs (self-esteem and personal growth) assert themselves.



Various researchers have followed up on Maslow's ideas as they apply in the workplace. Fred Herzberg's two-factor theory looks at the main factors which result in either satisfying or dissatisfying experiences at work. The assumption is that if the individual is satisfied in their work, that this will mean good performance or, at the very least, a willingness to stay on the job.

The link between motivation and performance would seem to be an obvious one. If individuals are highly motivated, they will perform better. In turn, better performance may well lead to a sense of achievement and result in greater motivation.

Turning people on starts with you. Every interaction you have with your employees may have an influence on their motivation. The loyalty and commitment of the team is a function of the commitment you have for it and the determination you have to find out what motivates it.

■ The Barriers to Motivation

What are the factors that inevitably turn people off? Here are some general ones:

A. Size

This is a major barrier to overcome. While nobody can prevent organizations from becoming bigger, it has to be understood that however big the company or corporation becomes, structure has to be managed so as to preserve the dignity and esteem of individuals.

B. Job Design

We're going to be confronted by employees who have either very little or too much to do. And if we're not careful, that minimal demand will quickly translate itself into resentment and frustration.

C. Money

Have you ever met anyone who talked about his or her salary except to complain – either that it wasn't enough, or wasn't as much as the next guy, or was unfairly worked out? That's about the long and short of it.

D. Pre-conditioning

People with previous work experience will invariably have been conditioned by that experience to expect or suspect an environment which is different from what they actually get. Yet how many organizations have induction programmes or training schemes which accommodate the need to help people adjust their values, beliefs and expectations over a period of time?

E. Machismo

Machismo or Rambo-style management is an enormous barrier to commitment and motivation. We have somehow bred a generation of managers whose instincts and inclinations are not in the least complementary to the world in which they have to manage.

F. Trade Unions

Unions don't control members any more, if they ever did. The reality is that members control unions.

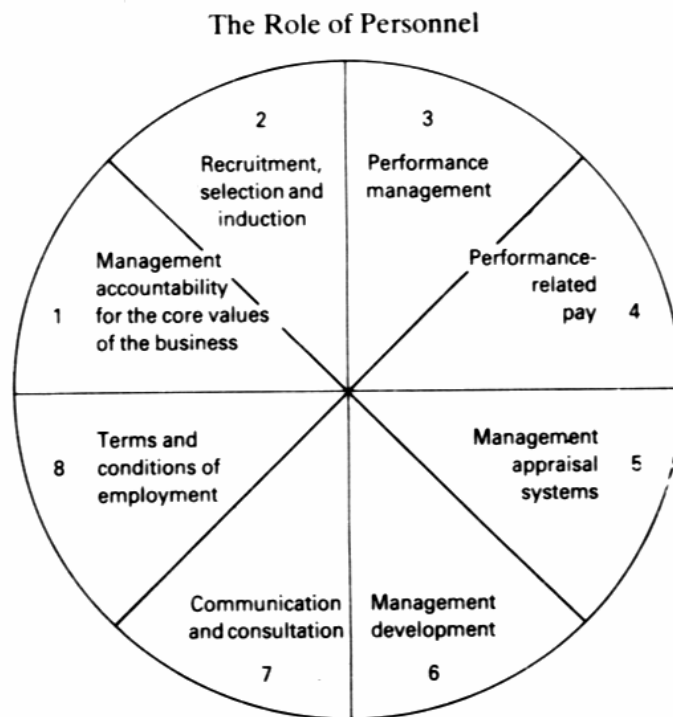
■ The Influence of Personnel

Personnel managers are clearly in a unique position to influence the success of their organizations. However, unless personnel policy is initiatory in its nature, it is all too easy for their role to revert to one of solving problems.

Managers won't all naturally know how to do the following things, but they can be shown how to:

- structure their teams into manageable units
- set targets, write job descriptions
- consult upon/discuss improvements
- communicate progress
- manage discipline
- monitor standards
- manage employee representatives
- manage the fair implementation of procedures
- review performance
- ensure that terms and conditions of employment are fairly applied
- train and coach their teams

A simple model as shown below can help personnel managers take initiative to ensure that the organization and its people are managed in a mutually complementary way.



■ A Management Style for the '90s

Smart organizations are already doing the following, but others have either not yet realized that they are problems, or are handling them in a quite inappropriate way.

ELIMINATE THE MACHISMO FACTOR. You employ managers to manage and part of that is to manage people in a caring way which is complementary to your organization's objectives.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS. Do your managers know that they're supposed to talk to people and listen to them?

EDUCATION. Do your managers receive from/through the organization, regular input and information about the world in which they live and manage?

OTHER TRAINING NEEDS. Have your managers been trained in problem-solving skills (human and otherwise)?

MONITORING/SUPPORT. Do you personally monitor the effect and impact of management style in your organization?

A FAIR DEAL. Is there a proper relationship between pay and achievement?

CLARITY. Have your organization's standards for the management of people been written down and published?

DECISION-TAKING. Have managers in your organization been taught:

- how to evaluate options
- how to manage consultation
- how to plan the timing of a decision
- how to explain decisions
- how to check that they're working

JUSTICE. Do your managers know how to administer justice? No, not how to sit in judgment on people, but how to manage terms and conditions, rules and regulations, in a fair and just manner?

ACCOUNTABILITY. Effective line management demands both accountability and insisting on accountability.

TECHNICAL PROFICIENCY. Are your managers, particularly middle managers and supervisors, technically proficient enough to demonstrate credibility and provide real leadership instead of mere 'cheer' leadership?

HOW NEAR ARE YOUR MANAGERS TO THE IDEAL? Start at the top and set about managing the changes. Some of them can be made to happen.

■ Harmonizing Terms and Conditions of Employment

Harmonization is the achievement of common terms and conditions of employment for manual and non-manual workers in the organization.

So why harmonize? Here are two main reasons:

Economic factors. If we harmonize, we can simplify our wage negotiations and our terms and conditions in general.

Employee relations. Differences are divisive; they are unfair and unjust. If we harmonize, we will improve our industrial relations. Harmonization will also help to improve motivation and team spirit.

You probably cannot reduce or eliminate all your 'unacceptable differences' at a stroke. Apart from the cost, you are frequently asking people to accept significant cultural changes, so go from step to step:

Step 1: Review where you are now. Examine everything relating to terms and conditions.

Step 2: Work out where you would like to be, in the long, medium and short terms – and be realistic.

Step 3: Share your thoughts with everybody and ask for their views. Discuss them with all your managers, and put the subject on the agenda of your consultative committees, backed with clear supporting information.

Step 4: Having consulted, work out your priorities and plans. If you negotiate with trade unions, always link improvements to terms and conditions with your pay strategy.

Phase in your harmonization plans. You probably cannot put them all into action at once. Remember, most harmonization is 'upward' and can cost you money.

■ Managing Performance

It is essential to ensure that a basic performance management system exists in the first place. The following points should provide practical guidance:

Induction. Induction is designed to help people settle into their jobs. Introduce them to the working environment and their colleagues, as well as making them aware of company policies and procedures. It acts as a solid foundation on which they can build.

Job descriptions. A job description, apart from stating roles and responsibilities, should include standards of performance. Standards of performance should include measurements such as frequency, averages, percentages, and time limits, and should also be measurable in terms of quality, quantity and cost. They should be reviewed annually or every time the job changes.

Managing improvement – performance review. The performance management process shouldn't end with the job description. You also need to review the performance of the job-holder against what you agreed with him or her in the first place.

Setting targets. The outcome of any successful performance review should be that the job-holder knows what specifically has to be achieved for performance to be improved. A vital part of this process is what has become known as 'setting targets'.

High fliers. High fliers may represent only a small number of your workforce, say 5 percent. But they are an important 5 percent who will be the innovators, achievers, and entrepreneurs. One note of warning however: Not everyone can be a high flier, so don't tweak the performance management system to force people to be like them.

■ Managing Communication

Employee communication is a function of needs rather than wants. It is more a matter of ensuring that people understand the necessities of the business and of working life than simply communicating what they want to hear. A few working principles will help you define not only what to communicate but also the right order and the right style.

Communication should:

1. ... appeal to self-interest.
2. ... involve listening.
3. ... be regular and systematic.
4. ... be face-to-face, wherever possible.
5. ... be management-led.
6. ... be relevant to results.
7. ... be quality-linked.
8. ... be in teams.

■ Making Motivation Happen

Here are the principles to help you manage the process of 'turning people on':

1. **Leadership.** Projects need champions and motivation at work is the most important thing about competitiveness. Cost-effectiveness – or simply staying alive – is the commitment and application of people at work.
2. **Surveys.** Changing behavior, and hence attitudes, is difficult unless you can identify a start point. Those colleagues of yours who would prefer to preserve current values and resist change would want to know why you wish to change their world. So defining what the problem is and why it exists is of crucial importance, and a simple objective survey often helps.
3. **Making use of good practice.** Visit a few organizations which already implement whatever it is you're considering, learn from their successes or failures, and then adapt the technique or practice to your own organization.
4. **Pilot schemes.** Pilot schemes are sometimes useful for controlled experiments with established techniques. As a general rule, if it hasn't been tried and found to work elsewhere, don't experiment with it in your organization. You don't have that right.
5. **No Panaceas.** There is no such thing in motivation as the Holy Grail. Nor should you believe in magic. When management consultants come along and tell you they've discovered the universal cure-all, treat them like the confidence tricksters they are.
6. **Human Resource Strategy.** There should be one if there isn't already one – a paper which sets out the human 'values' of the organization. Such a strategy should be relevant to corporate objectives and set out what the organization believes in.
7. **Policies and Procedures.** Nothing ever happens unless there's a simple policy or procedure for making it happen.

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8. **Tackle the Roadblocks.** If you're confronted by a manager who doesn't implement what is agreed and required, take it seriously! Don't fudge the issue and hope it will go away.
9. **Be an Idealist.** Changing part of the world isn't a bad thing to want to do. Just try not to be boring about it! And remember that enthusiasm counts and is infectious.
10. **Keep it Simple.** Managers are busy people, complex people, technical or financial people – and invariably ordinary people. They do not need complex psychological models or theories, nor do they respond to them.
11. **Be Positive.** Nothing – absolutely nothing – is as bad as a cynical personnel manager who can't resist telling colleagues why nothing works, and why nothing else is worth trying.

Always frame your ideas as proposals – start with the benefits, follow up with the method, explain the investment required, go back to the benefits. It isn't selling – it's just common sense.

If you don't think that turning people on is part of the job or a valuable and important initiative, what else do you think matters more?

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