

Lesson 5

Motivation



Key Terms

alleviate
complement
intangible
prejudicial

What You Will Learn to Do

- Employ motivation strategies that inspire others to achieve goals

Linked Core Abilities

- Take responsibility for your actions and choices
- Treat self and others with respect

Skills and Knowledge You Will Gain Along the Way

- Identify how individual performance within a group is influenced by expectations, ability, and motivation
- Explain the 14 principles of motivation
- Define the key words contained in this lesson

Introduction

Leaders spend a great deal of time and effort studying the technical aspects of their jobs; however, to lead effectively, they must also know what makes people tick. By studying human behavior, leaders learn why people act and react in certain ways. Plus, leaders who care about their subordinates and are attentive to their needs are more able to influence them in accomplishing unit goals. This lesson identifies those basic needs, and it explains how they can be satisfied.

Studying human behavior helps leaders acquire the knowledge they need to better understand themselves and those they lead.

It is important that leaders learn why human beings act and react in certain ways and to identify various types of behavior. They also must learn how to influence the behavior of subordinates so that their personal goals **complement** or reinforce the goals of management.

Key Note Term

complement –
complete

Leaders' Concern for Group Needs

Leaders must provide purpose and goals for the group. By selecting the best course of action to reach a goal, they provide purpose. By explaining the reasoning behind decisions and demonstrating their own enthusiasm for the task, they provide direction and assistance in accomplishing the goal (see Figure 6.5.1). This direction should also include information on the required standards of performance.

Leaders must realize that, although they are recognized as leaders because of their position, they will not be accepted until they earn the respect and confidence of the group by satisfying its needs. Successful leaders, therefore, must be more concerned with the well-being of their people than they are with themselves. They must go out of their way to give time, energy, and counsel to help their subordi-

Figure 6.5.1: Explain the reason behind a decision to help keep followers motivated.

Courtesy of CACI.



nates live up to their potential. By constantly showing this level of concern to their subordinates, these leaders receive a high degree of respect and loyalty from their subordinates along with their desire to accomplish team goals.

Note

Unselfish leaders avoid providing for their own comfort and personal advancement at the expense of others. Leaders should place the comfort, pleasure, and recreation of subordinates before that of their own. It is difficult to respect leaders who seek their own comfort over that of their subordinates or who hoard credit for achievement made possible by subordinates. True leaders place themselves last in priority and share the dangers and hardships with their subordinates.

Motivating by Satisfying Needs

Needs form the basis for actions. They motivate people to behave in certain ways and to do certain things. Consequently, motivation is a total process that is determined by the interaction of human needs, the situation, and the combination of personal and group needs. The leader's part within this interaction includes the following:

- **Thoroughly understand human needs and stay directed toward satisfying them. Keep a broad point of view on human nature and motivation. Do not hold to a narrow view that people are motivated only by fear or believe the opposite, that people are all good and will always be motivated to do the right thing. Instead, a complex array of forces can motivate people, and leaders must be open to every situation.**
- **Satisfy individual and group needs by establishing goals or tasks for individuals and groups to reach, leading to goal/task accomplishment.**
- **Understand how to motivate to obtain the behavior and conduct (confidence, competence, professionalism, and so on) needed from subordinates.**
- **Establish and maintain loyalty and teamwork within the unit.**
- **Create a caring climate within the unit—one that promotes trust and respect as well as an understanding and acceptance of the “why” of subordinates' actions.**
- **Create self-motivation in subordinates; this is the most powerful and lasting form of motivation. Most people can become self-motivated if taught leadership attributes.**

Fourteen Principles of Motivation

Although there is no simple formula for motivation, you can understand a basic view of what motivates people. Keep in mind that this view is a simplification for you to use as a guide. It assumes that needs motivate people and that a person's motivation to reach a goal depends on whether the person perceives that the goal will satisfy any of those needs. Realizing that different people react to varying needs will allow you to arrive at appropriate decisions and actions in a particular situation.

People are motivated by many forces, including values, self-interest, kindness, worthy causes. Some of these forces are internal, such as fears and beliefs. Some are external, such as danger; the environment; a chance for promotion; or pressures

from a senior, subordinates, or one's family. Forces combine to determine what a person is motivated to do in a given situation.

Because needs form the basis for actions and leaders must motivate by understanding these needs, leaders must understand how needs drive individuals, people, or groups to action. The following is a discussion of 14 practical principles (guidelines) that flow from this basic view of motivation.

Note

Do not confuse these principles with the 11 leadership principles.

Principle 1

Make the needs of subordinates coincide with unit tasks and missions.

Subordinates will have a natural desire to work to satisfy their own needs. When leaders link these interests and needs with those of the group, they have a powerful way to motivate.

Principle 2

Reward individual and team behavior that supports unit tasks and missions.

The opportunity to win a reward is a sound motivator. A ribbon, a medal, a certificate, or a letter are only small tangible objects, but they mean a great deal to someone psychologically (see Figure 6.5.2). These rewards have motivating power because they are a way of satisfying social and higher needs. Awards symbolize a proud achievement. After the higher needs are awakened by such rewards, the motivation to keep working for more recognition normally increases.

Rewards can also include a simple “well done” or a “pat on the back,” a promotion, or a favorable evaluation.

Figure 6.5.2: Being rewarded for a job well done can keep motivation high.

Courtesy of CACI.



Principle 3

Counsel subordinates who behave in a way that is counter to unit tasks, missions, and standards.

The previous two examples were the “carrot” or the reward approach. This principle is the opposite; it is the “stick.” Use this principle only when it is necessary to motivate people who do not respond to positive motivation. Before resorting to this approach, however, be certain that the task, mission, or standard was clearly communicated prior to the infraction.

Every leader in the chain of command must be involved in the discipline of the organization. This shows subordinates that even their immediate supervisor has the power of “the stick.” Each case requiring counseling or disciplinary action also provides an opportunity to teach subordinate leaders how to counsel and take disciplinary action. Remember, conduct reprimands, counseling sessions, and other corrective actions as privately and as quickly as possible after an infraction. Do not humiliate or embarrass someone in front of others.

Principle 4

Set the example in all things.

If leaders show their subordinates how to act, they are teaching them at the same time. If leaders follow regulations and unit operating procedures, they are demonstrating the expected policies to be followed. By doing these actions, leaders are also proving their own degree of self-discipline.

A word of caution is in order here. No one is superhuman, and subordinates do not expect that. While they want leaders to set the example in all things and to share hardships with them, they do not want their leaders to take unnecessary risks. If they see leaders taking unnecessary risks, they may lose confidence in their judgment, affecting the morale, cohesion, and discipline of the unit.

Principle 5

Develop morale and esprit within the unit.

Morale is the mental, emotional, and spiritual state of an individual. It is how a person feels—happy, hopeful, confident, appreciated, worthless, sad, unrecognized, or depressed. Morale has a tremendous impact on motivation. High morale strengthens courage, energy, and the will to get things done. Because everything a leader does affects morale in one way or another, a leader must always be aware of how his or her actions and decisions affect it. Give subordinates something to hope for, because hope builds morale.

Esprit means team spirit; it is the spirit, soul, and state of mind of the unit. It is a product of cohesion; the overall consciousness of the unit that the subordinate identifies with and feels a part of.

Principle 6

Give subordinates tough problems and challenge them to wrestle with them.

Coach subordinates on their problem-solving, decision-making, planning, and implementing skills. This principle

- Encourages (by teaching and coaching) the development of junior leaders
- Motivates people who must carry out the plan
- Makes communication clearer, which gives everyone a better understanding of the mission and what they must do as individuals and as a team to achieve it
- Creates an open, trusting communication bond between the members of the chain of command

Principle 7

Have subordinates participate in the planning of upcoming events.

Participating in the planning of future events can be a highly motivating experience. By contributing ideas to a plan, subordinates then have a personal interest in seeing the plan succeed. Plus, it improves communication, which improves teamwork. Improved communication also gives everyone a clearer picture of the objective so that they can use their initiative to achieve it. Clear understanding of the mission and the plan prevents ill-founded rumors and fears based on a lack of knowledge.

Also, by involving subordinates in planning, leaders show that they recognize subordinates' abilities and appreciate them. Recognition and appreciation from respected leaders are powerful motivating forces.

Principle 8

Alleviate causes of the personal concerns of subordinates so that they can concentrate on their jobs.

Everyone has a unique combination of experience, values, character traits, knowledge, and skills, causing a person to have a unique way of dealing with life. Things that seem of no importance to leaders may be of critical importance to subordinates.

Some people may have family problems that leaders must empathize with before they can help them. Others may not know how to handle money, have meaningful relationships, stay out of trouble, balance the demands of school or work with the needs of the family, or grow professionally and personally.

Leaders should strive to help their subordinates as much as they can by keeping them informed of situations and decisions, encouraging feedback, and through counseling if necessary. For those people who are having real or perceived challenges, these difficulties will cause them to worry, consume their energy, and prevent them from being productive. To help **alleviate** these causes of personal concerns, leaders should teach subordinates how to handle their lives in a healthy, constructive way.

Principle 9

Ensure that subordinates are properly cared for and have the tools they need to succeed.

Simply put, this principle means caring for subordinates. Leaders at all levels of the chain of command must do all they can to help subordinates meet their physical, safety, social, esteem, and self-fulfillment needs. Teach them all you know. You want them to have the right values, character traits, knowledge, and skills because these are the tools that will allow them to grow and to live happy, productive lives.

Key Note Term

alleviate – to relieve

Principle 10

Keep subordinates informed about missions and standards.

Keep clear, open communications with subordinates so that they can accomplish their mission as a team and use initiative in the absence of orders.

Principle 11

Use positive peer pressure to work for you, the leader, and the unit.

Peer pressure can be a powerful motivating force, but leaders must be careful how they apply it. If not used properly, it can backfire with serious consequences. On the other hand, positive peer pressure that is based on professional norms and values is healthy.

Principle 12

Avoid using statistics as a major method of evaluating units and motivating subordinates.

Statistics in themselves are not necessarily bad or good. Leaders should use them sparingly and carefully because they are only the “mask” and may present a false image. They are surface indicators or symptoms that leaders need to check into further. Perhaps they indicate a serious problem; perhaps not. Leaders simply do not know until they look into the true causes of the symptoms.

Improper use of statistics has a devastating effect on trust, morale, and motivation. Valid evaluation systems and effective leaders require much more than statistics. They require ways to get beneath the “image” to the real substance—the true strengths and weaknesses that influence effectiveness and the real leadership causes of those strengths and weaknesses. Good leaders make the time to get out and to see the real substance of a unit.

Principle 13

Make the jobs of subordinates as challenging, exciting, and meaningful as possible.

Make each subordinate feel special. Experience and study have proven that people need meaningful work. They need to believe that what they are doing, even if it is tiring and unpleasant, is necessary and important. When people feel that their jobs are important and that they have responsibility, they feel needed and motivated. This principle encourages the delegation of authority. This “power-down” approach helps leaders get the best out of their subordinates. Leaders give responsibility to subordinates who have the skill and will to handle it, and they strive to make subordinates feel that they are as responsible as them for achieving unit standards and goals.

Principle 14

Do not tolerate any form of prejudicial talk or behavior.

Racial, sexual, or other **prejudicial** talk and behavior are contrary to the principles on which America was founded. If a person feels that he or she is the object of prejudice, that person’s motivation can be seriously damaged. Prejudice can also destroy teamwork, cohesion, and discipline within a unit.

Key Note Term

prejudicial – to form an opinion without knowing or in spite of the facts

Although these 14 principles of motivation are different from the 11 leadership principles, there are similarities. Did you recognize any?

Building Motivation

People will have little motivation to do something if they believe they cannot succeed. Likewise, if they are not convinced that good performance is the best way to satisfy their needs, their motivation will be low and they will have little or no interest in doing their best. However, when subordinates are convinced that their chances for success are good enough to warrant the effort, this belief will help them to achieve their own goals (or needs) as well as those of the group. Therefore, leaders must know their subordinates' capabilities, establish challenging goals within those capabilities, and employ them in accordance with those capabilities (one of the leadership principles). Leaders can also build confidence by offering support, encouragement, and assistance.

Creating assurance that good performance will be rewarded is based on three factors:

- **The leader has a consistent record of checking and evaluating performance**
- **The leader has an equally consistent record of using rewards in respect to improving performance**
- **The leader knows that some team players feel that completion of the task itself is sufficient reward**

Tangible and Intangible Rewards

People work for the opportunity to receive tangible (a plaque) or **intangible** (a “pat on the back”) rewards and need to believe that their work is necessary and important. If supervisors never compliment them on a job well done, however, it is easy for subordinates to feel that they never do good work or that their leaders are not interested in their work. Either of these beliefs can destroy motivation.

On the other hand, if leaders recognize and confirm each person's importance and value to the organization, motivation will be strong. Highly motivated teams with high morale usually have leaders who take a personal interest in them and are understanding.

People resent a lack of respect and will respond with that same disrespect by doing only what is necessary to get by. Leaders must build bonds of mutual respect, trust, confidence, and understanding that are fundamental to a disciplined, cohesive team.

Key Note Term

intangible – that which has a value not dependent on physical makeup

Conclusion

This lesson explained one of the most important aspects that you, as a leader, must know to do your job properly—the understanding of human nature and how that understanding impacts on what you must know about yourself, your job, your subordinates, and your unit. This knowledge will give you a stronger foundation for what you must be and what you must do; then, what you do as a leader—the application of these skills—flows from this “being” and “knowing” foundation.

Invisible threads weave together many of the techniques and attributes of leadership. This lesson illustrated how understanding needs is intertwined with a leader’s values, ethics, and character and with various leadership traits and principles. Your knowledge and proper application of human nature is essential; it is the bedrock of your character as a leader.

This concludes the chapter, “Leadership Principles.” Through the lessons in this chapter, you have learned about power and influence, different styles of leadership, and communication skills. You have also learned what it takes to manage your team and the importance of motivation.

Lesson Review

1. Compare and contrast tangible and intangible rewards.
2. How do the 14 principles of motivation compare to the 11 principles of leadership? What are the similarities? What are the differences?
3. Choose one of the 14 principles of motivation and explain it.
4. Why is it important to establish and maintain loyalty and teamwork within the unit?