



EPISODE 35 - Theories of Human Motivation and Management

Transcript

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So this is the thing. Management is management. No matter where you go, where you work, whether you own your own company or work for a company, management involves managing people and processes. It involves working with and directing people. And in the course of your career, unless you are the big boss, the top manager of a business you own or run, you'll have a manager. And you'll have many managers likely throughout the course of your career. Some management styles will work for you and others maybe not so much. And without fully knowing it, people manage based on what they think is best and what they know. Sometimes, what's worked for them reinforces the way people manage. So they get reinforcement based on their management style.

I worked under authoritarian leaders. They delegate but micromanage. They criticize and create a walking on eggshells environment. They make you feel like no matter what you do, it would never meet their expectations. They feel so confident in themselves and their leadership and management style, that any other way of management is wrong in their eyes. Often even seeing it as weak. Some are so determined to climb the ladder and get to a particular destination, they do whatever they need to do for their own personal growth. To get more money. To get more power. And when their efforts are rewarded, it reinforces their management style. I've seen it happen many times almost like it's an unwritten playbook.

But I've also had supportive, encouraging, kind managers who care about their employees, their growth and each employees growth desires, job enrichment, and needs. They take time to focus on what motivates their staff and put effort into making sure their staff's needs are met so they stay motivated. Employee turn over is expensive and companies work hard to prevent high employee turn over.

Managing people isn't easy especially when everyone thrives on different things. Some people love public recognition while others shy away from it. They'd rather a quiet, personal recognition from their manager over a public celebration. It's important to know what motivates your staff, what works best for them - their strengths and weaknesses - and figuring out what tasks will help each staff member feel motivated, encouraged and supported. And not only learning what type of recognition each employee needs but making it a point to respect them and give them the recognition that works for them.

Everyone is motivated by different factors and in different ways and there's several theories that breakdown and explain human motivation.

[Music and Intro]

Hey there. In this episode, you're gonna get an overview of management, particularly management theories. Management concepts are on the RD Exam. So you're gonna need to be familiar with management concepts and theories. One of the things to keep in mind is that the management questions should be approached using critical thinking skills. You may need to read scenarios and answer questions based on what's best, or what you should do first or maybe last in a given scenario. So memorizing is something that helps with some of the concepts but when it comes to management, I want you to think about and focus on critical thinking when approaching the questions. Another reason I say this is because the real world of management is critical thinking too. Honestly, it feels sometimes that's all it is.

I've worked in management for many years and it for real requires critical thinking because each and every scenario doesn't come with a manual telling you how to handle each situation. Of course some things have more standard protocols like fire safety and other safety issues but not every situation especially things like workflows and adding on or modifying tasks come with clear direction. A lot of those situations have to be approached by logical thinking, working through the problems, looking at the resources you have, how you can use them to your benefit, limitations you have, speaking to your staff and other leaders if possible. And once all that's been evaluated and done, you come up with a plan. And a lot of times, that needs to be modified too. So critical and logical thinking is so important and a must have when working in management.

A listener requested this topic so I wanted to go over some of the concepts of management - in particular management theories.

But before we get started, I want to give a shout out to another amazing RD who joined this incredible community. Lori Herrera passed the RD exam. She was on a mission to pass and studied hard to get across the finish line. She's starting her RD journey as a clinical pediatric dietitian which I gotta say, is a great learning opportunity and a much needed area of dietetics. So happy for you Lori. Congratulations and welcome to the RD community.

Ok, like I mentioned in the opening part of this podcast, I truly believe people want to do well in their job. That's my belief and what I've seen. We spend so much time at work so why wouldn't you want to be somewhere where

you do good work. I certainly do. And when it feels like you aren't appreciated or that you're not connected to the "why" or the "purpose" of the work, it can feel defeating. Some employees are comfortable going to work, doing their job, flying under the radar, getting a paycheck and going home. But even those people want to at least know there's growth opportunities if they want to take advantage of them. And I really think they want to feel good at work.

As a manager, a really important skill to have is communication. Communication is key. Warren Buffet says, "the one easy way to become worth 50 percent more than you are now is to hone your communication skills - both written and verbal". He goes on to say "You can have all the brainpower in the world but you have to be able to transmit it and the transmission is communication". And I couldn't agree more. If you have an idea but can't communicate it to leadership or to your staff, no one will know what you're doing or working towards. It could be a brilliant idea but if you aren't able to sell it by clearly communicating the idea or explain it in a way that makes sense to others, then the whole idea will go flat. You gotta be able to communicate your ideas and your expectations to your staff. And when information isn't clearly communicated, it creates barriers between management and the staff. It also creates uncertainty. Using motivational interviewing when communicating helps. Particularly reflective listening. I use it all the time. If someone asks me to do something or explains something to me that I don't understand, I use reflective listening. "If I understand you correctly, you're asking for" or "If I understanding correctly, this is what you want me to do". That way, if I'm wrong, it gives the person the opportunity to tell me again or explain what they want in a different way. And at the very least, it lets them know that I'm not certain of the ask. Not understanding or walking away from a conversation having no clue what someone is saying or asking feels awful. So remember that communication is a two way street. You have to communicate correctly and make sure you understand correctly if you're the one being communicated to. I love to follow the principle, listen more than you speak. You have 2 ears and 1 mouth for a reason. As a manager, when you give your employees the opportunity to speak and truly listen to them, you get a lot more information than you would if you just talk nonstop.

The direction of information and communication can vary depending on the type of organization you work for. The bigger the organization, the more structured and hierarchical they tend to be. They follow the chain of command. And it can affect the communication within the organization. So let me give you an example. If the owner of a company wants to change the way things are done or maybe is trying a new protocol, the communicate will come from the top down. This is downward communication. Often times, the hierarchy is followed, it just trickles from the top down. Now if issues start with employees, say they're concerned about the safety in a department or say a new workflow was implemented from the top down that isn't working, the employees can express their concerns to their manager then their manager can share the information with their

boss, who will then share it with their boss until it gets to the owner, or head of the company or whoever implemented that workflow. That communication flow is from the bottom up. This is important because the workers do the job. The owners and leaders manage and delegate but the employees are the ones who do the work and they know when things aren't going well. They work through it and deal with the challenges every day so their feedback and insight is valuable. Most of the time, there are many departments all working together for a common good. So let's use hospitals as an example since the questions on the exam will pertain to some area of dietetics. And hospitals are a great example of different departments. Food and Nutrition and Environmental Services which is most commonly called Housekeeping have the common goal of giving the patients the best experience possible. For food and nutrition, the goal is to provide delicious, healthy, appealing food to the patients. And for Environmental Services, the goal is for the patients to have a clean room to stay in. But at the end of the day, the goal is to provide a good patient experience to that one patient. A lot of times, Environmental Services may need to communicate to Food and Nutrition Services. But one department isn't above the other. So any communication that goes between Food and Nutrition Services and Environmental Services is lateral or horizontal. The information isn't coming from the top down or from the bottom up. It's going between departments. It could also be called interdepartmental communication.

Some communication can be formal. This would be things like writing a formal memo. Let's say you plan to make a change to the order trays are delivered on the units. You would likely choose to write a formal email and attach a memo to the email so the units can print it off and share the information with their staff or maybe they choose to write a formal email explaining the changes. Either way, these are examples of formal communication. Some places, depending on where you work, may send a formal memo to their boss or someone higher in leadership who will then disseminate the information in a formal way to all the departments. In that example, that's a top down communication style. It's formal and the information is coming from the top down. But just like there's formal communication, there's also informal communication which is much more common and what you use in your day to day life. When you post something on a social media site, this is informal communication. It's socially communicated. It can happen informally in the workplace too by casually sharing information with someone else. The point is, there's different forms of communication. All are important, and all have a place. In big companies though, the communication tends to be much more formal.

So let's go over some management theories starting with McGregor's management theory. With this theory, Douglas McGregor who was a management professor in the 1950's states that a manager's attitude has an impact on employee motivation. He proposed 2 theories: Theory X and Theory Y which are opposing motivational methods in management. So let's go over these two theories. Theory X assumes that people don't like to work and will avoid work whenever possible. People aren't ambitious, and they don't want responsibility. They'd

rather be directed. Kind of like the authoritarian leadership style. People would rather be controlled and have no creativity in problem solving. In this theory, people are self-centered only, thinking about themselves and need to basically be controlled and coerced into doing a task and achieving an outcome. This theory assumes that people are not intelligent and resist change. Motivation in Theory X is monetary first and foremost followed by security. So people are motivated by money. And they're also motivated by fear.

McGregor drew on Maslow's hierarchy of needs when coming up with his theory of motivation and argued that people are motivated by a need. But once that need is met, it's no longer a motivator. So people in the workplace seek self-fulfillment and growth opportunities that provide more money, again coming back to the monetary rewards. So basically the only way people will climb the ladder which is a common term you'll hear or meet higher demands is if there's monetary reward. The salary needs to be enticing. He argues that Theory X isn't effective and that motivation is more likely to fall under Theory Y. So what's Theory Y? Theory Y assumes that work is as natural as play and that if people are committed to the organizational goals, they'll be self-directed and creative in order to achieve those goals. In this theory, self-fulfillment is important and people will address this need if there's rewards in place to encourage quality and productivity towards self-fulfillment. People can handle responsibility and seek out responsibility when they have the opportunity to be creative. Theory Y is much more positive and involves active participation whereas Theory X is much more negative and autocratic in nature. With Theory Y, some strategies to help employees stay motivated include reducing the levels of management within an organization. This way, managers will delegate responsibilities and give their staff the ability to make decisions and use their creativity. Expanding people's job description gives people more responsibility which makes them feel important and feeds the ego. Listening to employees and getting their feedback give employees some control. Also, providing performance appraisals especially self evaluations allows employees to evaluate themselves and set their own objectives. This environment allows for continued motivation. So that's the McGregor's management theory.

Moving on to the Expectancy Theory of Motivation which was proposed by Victor Vroom in 1964. His theory focussed on outcomes, not needs. According to the Expectancy theory, people are motivated if they know their efforts will be recognized and rewarded. Employees need to know and believe they'll be rewarded. And rewarded in a way that's attractive to them. And employees need to believe that their efforts will lead to desired outcomes. In this theory, employees make the decision about whether or not they're actually willing to perform or not in their job. And that conscious decision is based on recognition, reward, and achieving a valid or desirable outcome.

So I just mentioned the Expectancy theory is based on outcomes not needs. There are 2 theories that are based on needs. Those are Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Herzberg's two-factor theory. So let's go over those. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a theory of motivation developed by an American psychologist Abraham Maslow who proposed there's five categories of human needs that dictate an individual's behavior and forms the basis of human motivation. This theory is represented by a pyramid with the most basic needs on the bottom - the largest need. The 5 needs according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs are physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. The lowest level represents the basic physiological needs which includes food and water, rest, clothing and shelter, overall health, and reproduction. These must be addressed before moving on to the next level. The next level is safety needs which includes safety from violence and theft, emotional stability and well-being, health security and financial security. The 3rd level is love and belonging which includes friendships and family. Physical and emotional intimacy are included in this level. These three lower levels on the pyramid are considered lower needs categories. Level 4 is esteem needs which includes self-respect and self-esteem. And the last level, Level 5 at the very top of the pyramid is self-actualization needs which describes the fulfillment of your full potential. This includes education and skill development. Based on these human needs, if level 1-4 needs aren't met, it can be harmful. Makes sense right. If someone's physiological needs aren't met. They don't have food and shelter, that's harmful to a person. If safety needs aren't met, that's harmful. If emotional and physical needs aren't met, it's harmful. They've done studies on orphans who never feel physical touch. It's very harmful and damaging to them. Humans need to be connected. If someone struggled with self-respect and self-esteem, it can be harmful. Absolutely it can. So if any of these needs aren't met, it can be harmful. If level 5 isn't met, the need for self-actualization, it's not harmful to the person. It can however, on the flip side, make you happier. But when basic needs are met, the higher needs become motivators. So that's Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

The other theory that's based on needs is Herzberg's two-factor theory. It's called a two factor theory because the theory states that motivation can be broken into hygiene factors and motivation factors. Hygiene factors are often called maintenance factors. These can be satisfiers or dissatisfiers. And motivation factors are called satisfiers. So what are motivation factors? Motivation factors are satisfiers such as job enrichment, sense of achievement, recognition from peers and management, level of responsibility someone has in a job, opportunities for advancement and the status a job provides. These motivators are considered satisfiers meaning they lead to job satisfaction because they incorporate growth and the sense of self-achievement. When there's a lack of motivators, people focus on the hygiene factors which can lead to dissatisfaction especially if the person is not happy with the hygiene factors. These are things such as salary, job security, working conditions, management, and relationships with others. If someone is happy with the hygiene factors, it's a satisfier but if they're not happy with these factors, say they're unhappy with their pay or maybe they're unhappy with their

working conditions and they don't have any motivators, they becoming fixated on how unhappy they are with their pay or their working conditions. So these hygiene factors become a dissatisfier. So basically let me summarize this. The hygiene factors can be satisfiers or dissatisfiers. If an employee is happy with their salary and their working conditions, if they enjoy their relationships at work, then these factors are satisfiers. But if they're not happy with these things, then they're dissatisfiers. If you're happy with something, you're satisfied. If you're unhappy with something you're unsatisfied or dissatisfied. If an employee feels there's motivators in place for them, they have a sense of growth in the company. They're learning and happy with the opportunities they have. These are satisfiers but if this is missing, the employee then focuses on the hygiene factors like salary and working conditions which is when motivation can deteriorate especially if they're not happy with those hygiene factors. So what can managers do? This is how I look at it. As a manager, you want to pay attention to your employees and connect with them. See what they want and where they want to go in their career or in their job. And if possible, give them the opportunities to grow in these areas. Do what you can to keep your employees engaged. This is not fully the responsibility of the manager because things outside the workplace such as personal situations at home can impact the working situation. Which makes sense. If things are an issue in someone's personal life, it's hard to completely separate that from work. So external factors can have an impact on someone's motivation in the work place. But connecting with these employees and seeing what you can do to support them in their work can help keep them motivated and satisfied at work. So that's a summary of Herzberg's two-factor theory.

So let's go over McClelland's Human Motivation Theory which built on Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. McClelland identified 3 motivators he believes everyone has which are: 1) the need for achievement, 2) the need for affiliation or 3) the need for power. And these motivators are developed through culture as well as past life experiences. So someone's dominant motivator is learned. This theory is sometimes called the Learned Needs Theory for that reason. The first dominant motivator is the need for achievement. People with this dominant motivator have a strong need to accomplish goals and they thrive off feedback. They need to hear feedback about their progress and achievements. These people often like working alone and can manage themselves. The second dominant motivator is the need for affiliation. People motivated by affiliation need to belong to groups. Being liked is really important to these people and they'd rather collaborate than compete. These people also don't like taking risks and avoid uncertain situations. And the last motivator, the need for power is characteristic of people who want to control and influence others. They like competition and winning. And they enjoy status and recognition. They also seek confrontation. So those are the 3 motivators within McClelland's Human Motivation Theory. This theory can be helpful as manager when trying to determine what the dominant motivators are for people on your team. Knowing what motivates your staff is very helpful as a manager.

One more thing I want to bring up which isn't a theory of motivation but might pop up on the exam. And if not, I think it's a good concept or principle to be aware of. And that's the Peter principle. So what is this? The Peter principle was laid out by a Canadian educational scholar and sociologist in 1968 said that a person's incompetence in a job they're promoted to isn't due to a lack of competence but due to a person's lack of skills for that job. You see this when someone is promoted within an organization that has a clear hierarchy. So this means there's a clear ladder you can climb. In our profession, it could look something like going from clinical dietitian, to clinical nutrition manager, to director of food and nutrition services, and then, depending on where you work, there may be a regional director position or you can move out of food service and go into hospital administration. But you can see there's a clear ladder to climb. Also called a chain of command. The Peter principle is when someone is promoted until they reach a level of incompetence. They get to a point where they can't be successful and are incompetent in their role. Therefore they will no longer be promoted beyond that position. But on the same note, they won't be fired because incompetence alone isn't usually grounds for termination. According to this principle, everyone in an organization will be promoted to a position of incompetence and therefore no further growth within the organization will be possible. The biggest consequence of the Peter principle is when people are promoted to levels of leadership where they're ineffective in their role and therefore become poor managers.

One of the solutions and ways to avoid the Peter principle is to make sure training is provided whenever someone is promoted and that training is specific for the job they're being promoted to. So the skills someone will need in order to be successful in their new role should be part of the training they receive when they're promoted.

So there you have it. That's a review of management and theories of motivation.

Stay on top of your study game. There's no limits to achieving the success you so deeply desire. Until next time.

[Music and Outro]