Topic 9 Motivation & Coaching Skills

Introduction

Let us assume that motivation is the result of the interaction of people and the situation. As we have already concluded a leader is supposed to be able to inspire people. In this topic we cover motivation and coaching techniques which are important because not all leaders can influence others through formal authority or charisma and being inspirational leaders alone. Face-to-face, day-by-day motivational skills are also important. By recognising that motivation is an individual's willingness to exert effort towards organisational goals and satisfy some individual need, a leader can exert influence.

Learning Objectives

- Explain the leader's role in employee engagement.
- Identify and describe leadership skills linked to expectancy theory.
- Describe goal theory.
- Describe how leaders can motivate others through recognition.
- Describe how leaders can motivate using social equity theory.
- Understand the characteristics of coaching and how to practice coaching skills and techniques.
- Describe how executive coaches help enhance leadership skills.

Leadership & Employee Engagement

Effective leaders are outstanding motivators and coaches. The broad purpose of leaders applying motivation and coaching techniques is to get employees involved in their work and excited about working for the organization.

Employee Engagement refers to the commitment workers make to their employer. The leader who engages workers sees them as whole people, having the courageous conversations that will build trust and see what is really going on.

Engagement is reflected in employee willingness to stay with the firm and go beyond the call of duty. The more highly engaged an employee the more likely they are to be more productive. Leaders need to use motivation and coaching techniques to help keep employees engaged. Leaders who give positive feedback to employees foster greater engagement. Furthermore, giving mostly negative feedback is better than no feedback or being ignored.

Expectancy Theory & Motivational Skills

Basic Premise: The amount of effort individuals expend depends on how much reward they expect to get in return:

- Individuals want to maximize gain and minimize loss.
- Individuals choose among alternatives by selecting the one they think they have the best chance of attaining.
- Individuals choose the alternative that appears to have the biggest personal payoff.

Given a choice, individuals will select the assignment they think they can handle the best and will benefit them the most.

The Expectancy Theory of Motivation
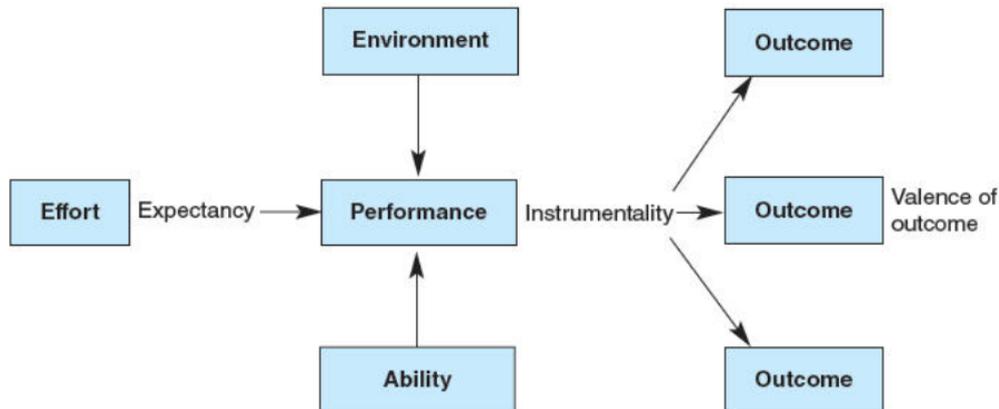
Source: DuBrin A J (2013) Leadership (7th Ed) South-Western Cenage Learning, Ohio, p307

Three Basic Components – all must be present for motivation to take place.
Valence
Attractiveness or worth of an outcome
Instrumentality
Probability that performance will lead to certain outcomes
Expectancy
Probability that effort will lead to correct performance of the task

Expectancy Theory – Leadership Considerations

Expectancy theory has many implications for leaders and managers with respect to motivating others. Some of these implications would also stem from other motivational theories and would fit good management practice in general.

- Determine what levels and kinds of performance are needed to achieve organizational goals.
- Make the performance level attainable by the individuals being motivated.
- Train and encourage people.
- Make explicit the link between rewards and performance.
- Make sure the rewards are large enough.
- Analyse what factors work in opposition to the effectiveness of the reward.
- Explain the meaning and implications of second-level outcomes.
- Understand individual differences in valences.
- Recognise that when workers are in a positive mood, high valences, instrumentalities and expectancies are more likely to lead to good performance.
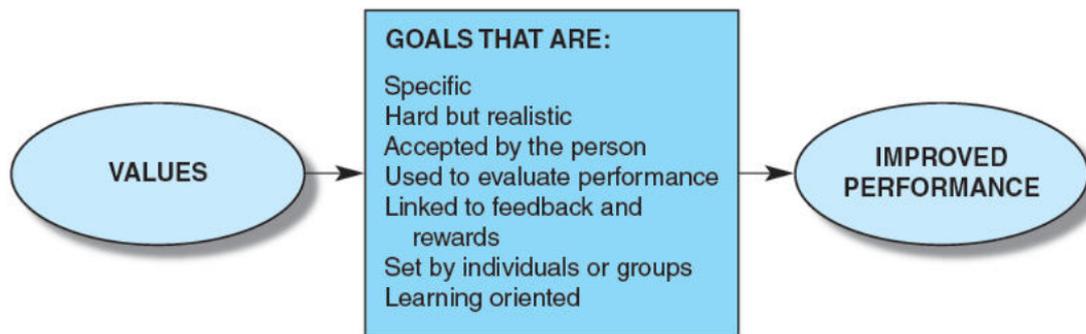
Goal Theory

Basic Premise: Behaviour is regulated by values and goals.

Goal setting is a basic process that is directly or indirectly part of all major theories of work motivation.

- A **goal** is what a person is trying to accomplish.
- Our **values** create within us a desire to behave in a way that is consistent with them.

The core finding of goal theory is as follows:

Individuals who are provided with specific, hard goals perform better than those who are given easy, nonspecific, "do your best" goals or no goals. At the same time, however, the individual must have sufficient ability, accept the goal and receive feedback related to the task.

VALUES → GOALS THAT ARE:
Specific
Hard but realistic
Accepted by the person
Used to evaluate performance
Linked to feedback and
    rewards
Set by individuals or groups
Learning oriented
→ IMPROVED PERFORMANCE

Source: DuBrin A J (2013) Leadership (7th Ed) South-Western Cenage Learning, Ohio, p317

Goal Theory - Leadership Considerations

- Specific goals lead to higher performance than do generalized goals.
- Performance generally improves in direct proportion to goal difficulty. Stretch goals lead to improved organizational effectiveness and professional development. Goals that are too difficult can be frustrating, yet powerful goals can be inspirational. These powerful goals that often relate to a noble cause can be divided into subgoals to facilitate attainment.
- For goals to improve performance, the group member must accept them.
- Goals are more effective when they are used to evaluate performance.
- Goals should be linked to feedback and rewards. Rewarding people for reaching goals is perhaps the best-accepted principle of management.
- Team goal setting is as important as individual goal setting.
- *Learning goal orientation* (wanting to learn) improves performance more than a *performance goal orientation* (wanting to look good) does.

The Importance of How Goals Are Attained and Other Concerns.

A major concern about using goals to motivate performance is that leaders, as well as other workers, take unethical and dysfunctional shortcuts to attain their goals. To implement goal setting without creating dysfunctions, it is therefore essential to specify how the goals will be attained with a particular focus on ethical behavior. Too much focus on goals can also lead to the neglect of emergencies and new opportunities.

Using Recognition & Pride to Motivate Others

Motivating others by giving them recognition and praise can be considered a direct application of positive reinforcement. Recognition is a strong motivator because it is a normal human need and most workers feel that they do not receive enough recognition. Recognition programs to reward and motivate employees are standard practice. Yet managers do not need a formal company program to dispense recognition. Recognition can be oral, written or material and includes praise, which is low cost and often motivates employees to elevate their performance.

Giving recognition for a job well done helps satisfy the desire to feel proud. Pride in a job well done is an intrinsic motivator that contributes to job performance. Whereas receiving a gift or bonus is an extrinsic motivator. Giving workers an opportunity to experience pride can be a strong internal motivator and also grants recognition. An effective leader should celebrate "steps" (attaining small goals) as much as "landings" (the major goal).

Thus leaders/managers may find their focus should be on pride, not money, as their primary motivating tactic.

Equity Theory & Social Comparison - Leadership Considerations

According to **equity theory**, employee satisfaction and motivation depend on how fairly employees believe they are treated in comparison to peers. The theory contends that employees hold certain beliefs about the outcomes they receive from their jobs, as well as the inputs they invest in these outcomes. The core of equity theory is that employees compare their inputs and outcomes (making social comparisons) with others in the workplace. If employees believe that they receive equitable outcomes in relation to their inputs they are generally satisfied and motivated—and vice versa.

- Equity exists when an individual concludes his/her own outcome/input ratio is equal to that of other people.
- Inequity exists when an individual's ratio is not the same as that of other people.

The highest level of performance occurs when a person has ratios equal to those of their chosen comparison person. However, when an individual perceives inequity, they are likely to engage in an action leading to a negative outcome for their employer arising from these possible actions:
- Alter the outcome (e.g., ask for a raise).
- Alter the input (e.g., devote less time to work).
- Leave the situation (e.g., quit and find a more equitable job).

A practical implication of equity theory, as well as expectancy theory, is not to give everybody the same salary increase or bonus. Workers who think they have provided the highest inputs will think they are treated unjustly.

The implications of equity theory for leaders are to recognize the consequences of inequity and take steps towards an equitable workplace: (1) No matter how well designed a program of productivity or cost cutting might be it must still provide equitable pay. (2) The leader

should attempt to see that subordinates perceive themselves to be getting a fair deal in terms of what they are giving to and receiving from the company.

Coaching as an Approach to Motivation

Effective leaders are good coaches and good coaches are effective motivators. Although high-level leaders coach less, there is a coaching component at all levels of leadership. Coaching is a way of enabling others to act and build on their strengths. To coach is to care enough about people to invest time in building personal relationships with them.

The purpose of coaching is to help the employee learn from the job and develop as an employee. Coaching is giving employees the resources they need to make their own decisions. Coaching requires trust on the part of both people in the relationship. Effective coaching focuses on the growth and development of people, rather than telling them what to do in a given situation.

Fallacies about Coaching

* Coaching applies only in one-to-one work
* Coaching is mostly about providing new knowledge and skills
* If coaches go beyond giving instruction in knowledge and skills, they are in danger of getting into psychotherapy.
* Coaches need to be expert in something in order to coach.
* Coaching has to be done face-to-face.

Coaching Skills & Techniques

Coaching skills are important because coaching is a direct way of influencing group members. If implemented with skill, the following suggestions will improve the chances that coaching will lead to improved performance.

Coaching skills and techniques include:
1. Communicate clear expectations to group members.
2. Build relationships.
3. Give feedback on areas that require specific improvement.
4. Listen actively.
5. Help remove obstacles.
6. Give emotional support and empathy.
7. Reflect content or meaning.
8. Give some gentle advice and guidance.
9. Allow for modeling of desired performance and behavior.
10. Gain a commitment to change.
11. Applaud good results.

Executive Coaching & Leadership Effectiveness

Executive coaching is a form of coaching where managers consult with professional coaches to work towards becoming an effective leader. Executive coaches are hired to:
• Develop high potentials as leaders or facilitate a leadership transition
• Act as a sounding board to leaders
• Address derailing or failing leadership behavior

A refinement of individual coaching is for the coach to work with both the individual and his or her work associates. The coach will solicit feedback from the group members as well as involve them in helping the manager improve.

Executive coaching often attains positive outcomes. However, a potential drawback of executive coaching is that advice and suggestions may backfire because they do not fit the culture or the coach doesn't thoroughly understand a situation and offers bad/poor/incorrect advice. For example, the coach may not recognize a mental health problem and the coach delves into areas that should be the province of mental health professionals. Another ethical problem is that the leader/manager may become too dependent on the coach when making decisions.

Summary

To become effective motivators and coaches, leaders and managers are well placed to consider the various theories of motivation, especially when the jobs being performed are complex and where discretion is greater. A broad purpose of an effective leader is getting others full engaged and enthusiastic. Expectancy theory is useful for developing motivational skills because it is comprehensive, building on other theories of motivation and explicitly linking performance and rewards. Goal theory is a basic process that is directly or indirectly part of all major theories of motivation - for example clear and difficult goals lead to higher levels of employee productivity. Recognition and reward programs are a direct application of positive reinforcement that impacts an individual's work and the effort applied. If an individual feels they are being treated fairly, they are more willing to work hard.