

Need of Being Motivated In Public Sector Organizations

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Abstract: High performance and productivity seemed to be the buzzwords in the private sector till now. In the backdrop of various government schemes and poorly performing public sector organizations, this article takes a peek into the concept of motivation in public sector and the factors which generally affects motivation at workplace.

Often we see that the employees in a private sector firm are more motivated than their counterparts in the public sector. For instance, NGOs like Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Child Rights and You, Bachpan Bachao Aandolan, Hope Foundation etc have a set of human resources who are more motivated and energetic than an organization under the ownership of the government.

To define motivation in clear words is somewhat impossible owing to its subjectivity. Motivation keeps a person doing what has to be done the way it has to be done. A good number of government initiatives lose its charm over a period of time with people involved not being interested to perform the duties as it used to be done. Motivated employees are required to keep the spirit of the job high and make the workplace interesting and positive. There are several factors which would keep an employee motivated in the given perspective of government initiatives:

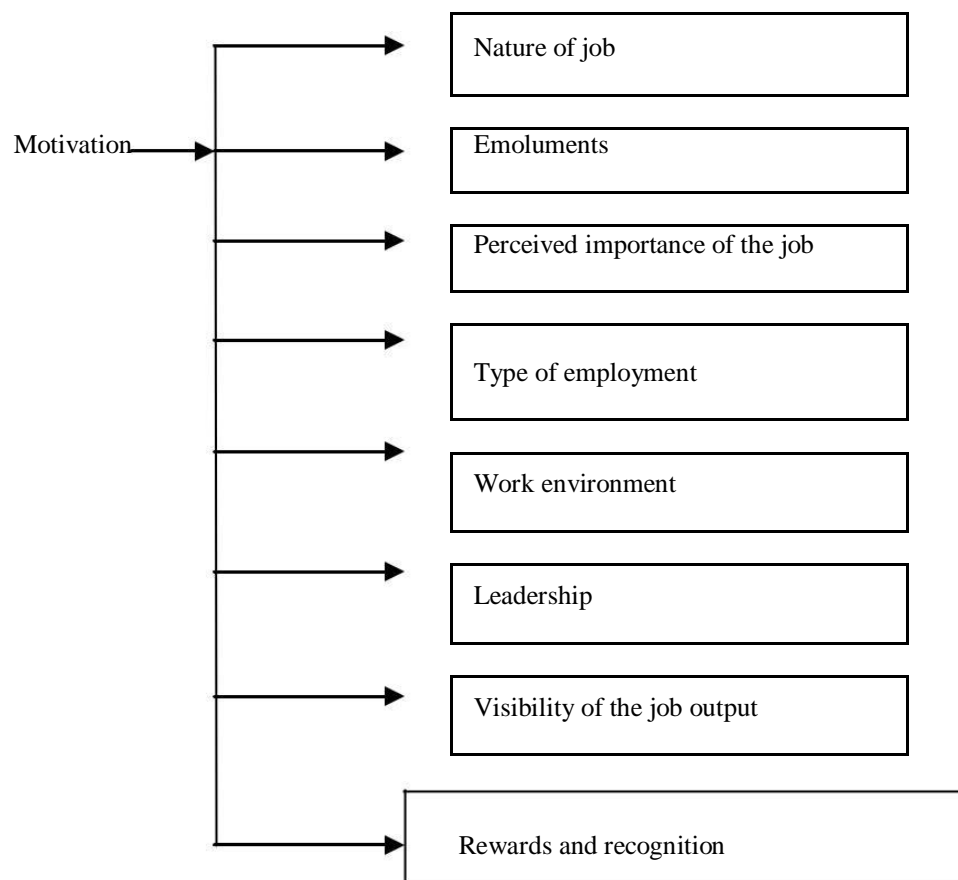


Figure 1: Factors which affects motivation in an organization

Nature of job: the nature of the job is supposed to be a prime motivating factor though there are studies showing the other way round to be true too. Especially when it comes to government jobs, the employees do not expect any considerable progress in their career in comparison to their private sector counterparts (Rashid & Rashid, 2012). For a mission driven job like Swachh Bharat Mission or Digital India, the ground level job is about imparting awareness amongst the general public about the objective of the mission. This process itself could be a motivator irrespective of the scale of operation and the kind of exhaustion it might lead them to. It must be understood that they do not attach a lot of importance to the content of the job but the output generated and the objective behind their work.

Emoluments: A study conducted has shown that comparatively public sector employees attach somewhat less importance to the inclusion of financial rewards and career development opportunities in their work motivation than private sector employees (Rashid & Rashid, 2012). This cannot be generalized since pay could be a dissatisfier if found insufficient.

Perceived importance of the job: A job which is thought to be an important one will have more enthusiasts working on it than the ones which are comparatively unimportant. This is in contrary to the content theories of motivation which proposes that employees' internal factors energize and direct their behavior at work (Whatmore, 2012). This would attribute motivation to their internal factors. But a job which is unimportant or not very relevant will not find people working on it eagerly.

Type of employment: Here the reference is to whether the employee is associated with the organization on a full time basis on its rolls or is (s)he employed on contract. A common notion is that the permanent employees on the rolls of the organization and found more productive, but several studies have shown mixed responses to the same (Call Centre Helper.com, 2011). Critics of governments including the media often portray public sector employees as over paid and underworked (Lavigna, 2014). This could turn eventually a demotivator since in public sector, employees rarely get a chance to come out open to say about their work to the public.

Work environment: There are several factors at the work place which could have a significant impact on the level of motivation of people. Nature of the work, restructuring and downsizing, performance evaluation and feedback systems, nature of organization, autonomy in the job and change in the organizations are some of them which individually or collectively will affect the level of motivation in people (Amabile, 1993). In the public sector, there are some of these factors which will have pronouncing effect say autonomy granted to them, performance evaluation and feedback system. The amount of autonomy in public sector is very limited since there would be a standard operating procedure established. There would be only a limited scope for the employees to raise their concern about any glitch in the process. This would be highly dissatisfying.

Leadership: Leadership may be defined as the influence that particular individuals (leaders) exert upon the goal achievement of others (subordinates) in an organizational context (Newfoundland Labrador Canada, 2017). Leaders could be of two types: emergent leaders- those who earn leadership positions through their expertise, skills, abilities to influence others of personal acceptability by the group; and assigned leaders- those who are given power to exercise influence through appointment (Newfoundland Labrador Canada, 2017). At work place a leader who supports the person both emotionally and socially will be able to make a difference in the lives of the employees. In public sector often the role of a superior doesn't go beyond the idea of giving instructions and just being a part of the chain of command. There exist superiors who become true leaders, wherein they occupy a transformational role in the system.

Visibility of the job output: A job in which the outcome is more visible will motivate the people to work harder (Robbins). This could be attributed to the expectation of the person who performs a task: (s)he performs a task expecting some change to happen, imminent or gradual. When that doesn't happen or when the scale of change is not as expected, their morale finds a dip. More often it is the leader who could help in such situations wherein they mentor the subordinates about the job.

Rewards and recognition: According to a study it is learnt that even small rewards could motivate people to go that extra mile (Garaus, Guttel, & Furtmuller, 2016). So, in public sector, where there doesn't arise the case of rewarding often, small rewards will be very effective. Feeling happy when rewarded is a basic human nature and there are all possibilities of the behavior being repeated and reinforced when rewarded, according to theories in motivation.

This article is an attempt to understand the various factors which generally motivate or de-motivate people in the context of an organization. Most of the studies point to the fact that as is the case in a private

sector organization, employees in the public sector too deserve deliberate attempt towards extrinsic motivation to keep the morale consistently high.

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