



Motivating Employees

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

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Motivating Employees

What is Motivation?

What's the only real way to motivate? The only way to get a person to do something is to make the person want to do it in order to get something they want or avoid something they don't want.

Supervising and Motivation

Why is Motivation Important?

Some definitions of motivation:

- Motivation is a force that leads people to attempt to satisfy their important needs.
- Motivation is a drive from within that prompts or incites an action.

If motivation comes from within, what can a supervisor do to motivate others? Supervisors need to create a climate in which internal motivation will activate performance. In order for this to happen, supervisors need to know their staff, what motivates them, and how to create a motivating climate.

There are three main types of motivators: the carrot, the whip, and the plant.

Identifying Motivators

We've pretty well established that we can't motivate other people: motivation has to come from them. However, what we can do is provide the right atmosphere for employees to feel motivated. What do you think is the right atmosphere?

Motivation is a complex subject. As managers, we used to talk in terms that said the only way to get a person to do something was to make them want to do it in order to get something they want or avoid something they don't want. In other words, we would pay them or punish them. This discussion included terms of managing people with a whip, a carrot, and a plant.

The Carrot

This represents incentives and rewards. This could be time off, pay bonuses, or promotional gifts like jackets. One construction company found the best motivator for their crews was to give them Friday afternoon off if all their work was done and done well, and all their objectives had been met.

While this approach may work in some instances, it's been demonstrated that offering carrots often actually reduces productivity. You can see excellent descriptions of repeat experiments from a range of job types in Daniel H. Pink's book *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*.

The Whip

This represents threats and consequences. Although such techniques are often perceived negatively, they do have their place in the workplace for short-term goal achievement for the manager. In other words, employees never respond positively to this management style, but if the boss cracks the whip, they will get things done. Consequences for poor performance may include suspension and termination, of course, but those are big clubs and sometimes we just need a little stick. Smaller reactions might include no recognition, no promotions, or disciplinary interviews.

However, we must remember to recognize people when they do something good (and let's agree on something here: there is a lot more good work going on than there is poor work). If we continue to ignore people after their good work, our concept of consequences will backfire.

The Plant

This represents a positive environment. It suggests many things a supervisor should strive for: employees knowing their work is important, an open atmosphere, fair dealings with all, training, good lines of communication, a feeling of support by the supervisor, and a feeling of self-esteem.

What Do You Think?

You may have heard about people who have a hobby and they are fantastic at it. Maybe they like to do carpentry, paint, write, or sculpt. You'll say, "Wow, you are really good at that. You should do it for a living." And they'll say that doing what they love for money would take all the fun out of it. You might shake your head at them, but what they say is true: once they lose the passion for and activity, the results will change.

In his book *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*, Daniel Pink examines the success of sharing through open source projects. Some of the most successful tools around (such as Mozilla, Linux, and Wikipedia) were all developed by people who were doing the work without being paid. He also looks at pay for performance incentives that measurably lower results. For linear, predictable tasks, incentives can temporarily lead to greater production. However, when we are looking for more creative results, problem solving, or innovation, pay for performance typically backfires. If we pay people to donate blood, we get fewer donations. When we reward a lab monkey to solve puzzles, they solve less. When we reward children for drawing pictures, they draw less.

High levels of creativity result from tasks that we find interesting, challenging, and captivating. This includes things that we often ask from our staff, like problem solving, planning, thinking out of the box, and completing projects. Our task is to create a climate where staff's internal motivation will activate their own performance. In order to be successful, supervisors need to know their staff, what motivates them, and how to create a climate that they find stimulating.

The truth is that we can't motivate other people. Motivation is intrinsic (meaning it comes from within). However, what we can do is provide the right atmosphere for employees to identify their own motivations, link into them, and respond.

Test Your Knowledge

What motivation stimulators are at work in your workplace?

What could you do to create a motivating climate?

Motivational Theories

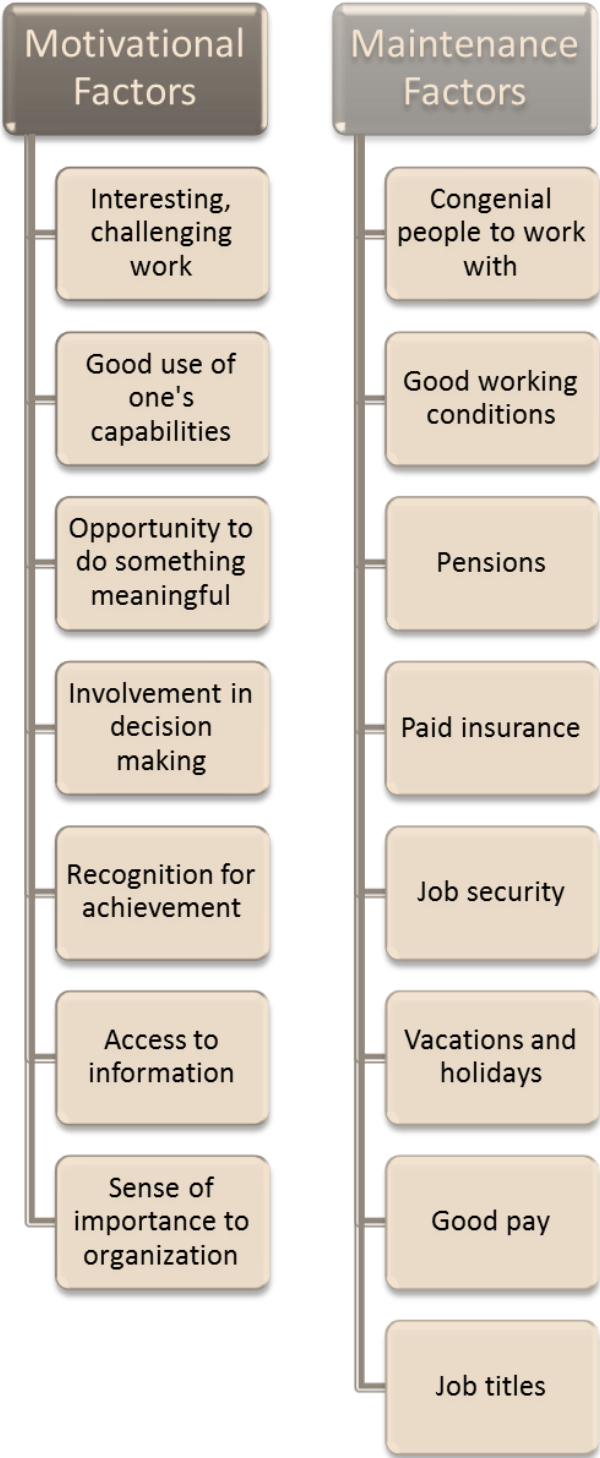
A Look at Theory

Two theories that are often referred to are Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Frederick Herzberg's Dual Structure Theory.

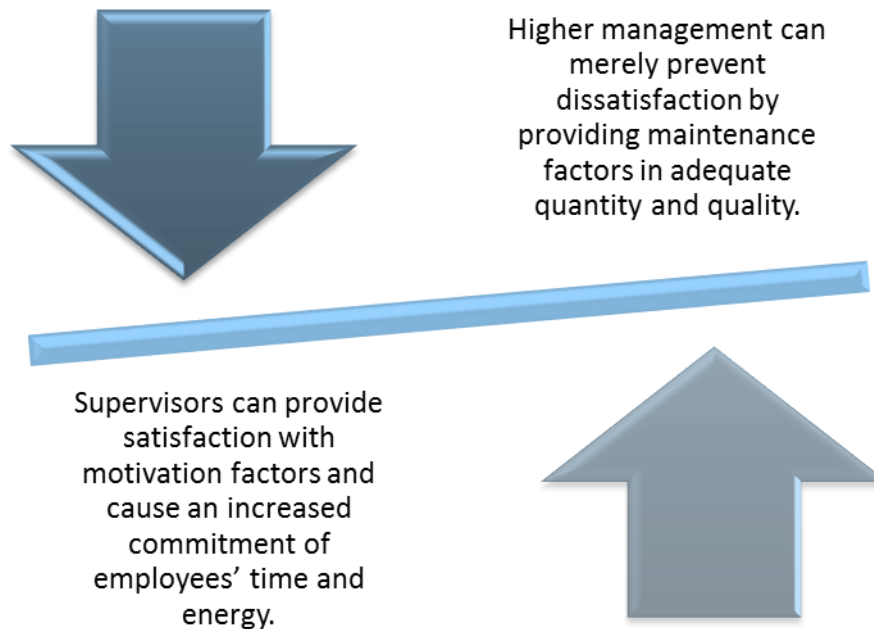
Maslow's Classic Hierarchy of Needs



Herzberg's Motivational versus Maintenance (or Hygiene) Factors



Supervisor's versus Higher Management's Role



Why do you think there are so many theories on motivation?

Human behavior is very complex. No single theory seems to explain all human behavior. Theories are essentially different sets of glasses for looking at life. Some glasses seem to provide a better view of some things but don't seem to work as well as a different pair for looking at other things.

The purpose of this unit is not to learn theories but to become more aware of different ways of looking at motivation, because the more ways we can look at something, the better the chances we will get a good understanding.

Orientation and Onboarding

The First 48 Hours

Why Have Orientation?

Companies spend a lot of time and money recruiting and hiring new employees. Once the hiring decision has been made, many managers feel their job is done. Once the new employee arrives for work, there is very little formal attention paid to reinforce the notion that the employee made the right decision and that they have come to a well-organized, well-run company.

The orientation program actually begins during the interview process, as interviewers give the employee some sense of what the organization is like. The orientation continues either planned or unplanned when the employee arrives at work. The employee is making up their mind about what type of company this is and whether they will want to continue working here.

Most employees arrive for work that first day full of enthusiasm and determined to do a good job. Sure, they are a little bit nervous, but they are confident everything will work out. A poorly-planned or non-existent orientation program will cost the organization more money in the long run and perhaps make the new employee another turnover statistic. You also need to remember the importance of providing an orientation for part-time employees. Over the long term your organization loses if they don't feel you recognize them as a part of the team.

Orientation

This is the initial exposure to the company that takes place in the first couple of weeks on the new job. It is how you share your policies and procedures, introduce the new person, and help them get up and running in the new environment. It can include on the job training, short safety courses, as well as any certifications that need to be secured as the employee starts their new job. (Things like defensive driving, first aid, and company specific tools and software could be included here.)

Onboarding

Onboarding starts during orientation, and can go on for as long as 18-24 months. This is the training and engagement process that helps to link the person to the organization, and where there is an exchange of their value and growth being productive for the company. Onboarding can include a plan for professional development, training, and succession within the new company.

Test Your Knowledge

How Did Your Orientation Rate?

Questionnaire

Think back to your first day on the job with your current company. Read each statement and check True or False as it relates to the orientation you received.

Statement	True	False
I was made to feel welcome.		
I was introduced to other members of my workgroup.		
My boss paid attention to me and made me feel welcome.		
My orientation seemed well planned.		
Company benefits were well explained on the first day.		
My office or workspace was set up and waiting for me.		
I received a tour of the organization by a qualified person.		

Statement	True	False
All the necessary paperwork and forms were available and I received assistance to complete them properly.		
I received a copy of relevant information such as the Employee Handbook, Operations Manual, etc.		
I learned about the company's history and future plans.		
My supervisor reviewed my job description with me and outlined his/her expectations of me.		
I was invited to lunch that first day with my boss or some other key person.		
I met people from other departments.		
I was able to observe colleagues at work before starting a task.		
I was given a specific job assignment, along with instruction or training.		
Office hours, dress code, sick leave, and other policies were explained to me.		
I was shown the necessary systems (telephone, computer, etc.).		
I had opportunities to ask questions.		
Payroll policies (and withholdings) were explained to me the first day.		
At the end of the week I felt like a member of the team.		

Scoring

How did your orientation rate?

- **18-20 True:** Your orientation was outstanding.
- **15-17 True:** Your orientation was above average.
- **11-14 True:** Your orientation was average orientation.
- **10 or Less True:** You have an opportunity to help your organization improve its orientation process.

Test Your Knowledge

Now, answer the following questions.

Think back to that orientation you received at your present job. List the good and the not so good things you remembered.

For each “Not so Good” item, describe how you could improve that experience for the new employees so they do have a good experience in that area.

What things would a new employee need to know?

What impressions or perceptions do I want this new employee to make on this first day?

What key procedures or policies must they know on the first day in order to make the second day better for them?

What can I do so the person does not feel overwhelmed?

What can I have the person do on the first day so they can feel a sense of accomplishment?

What positive experience can I provide on this first day that they can repeat to their family and friends?

How can I be available to the person on the first day so they feel important and a vital part of the team?

Setting Goals

Setting Goals with SPIRIT

Most of us can't hit a target if we can't see it. Before you can develop plans, you have to know what you want to accomplish (your goals or targets); how you want to accomplish those goals or targets; what resources of time, money, and materials you have; and who will carry out the work. So set some targets for yourself that you can see, and then take the first step on your journey to reaching them, and the next step, and so on.

SPIRIT

Each objective should be broken down into several small, achievable goals that will help you get where you want to go. Good goals should have SPIRIT!

Specific

Be specific about what you want or don't want to achieve. The result should be tangible and measurable. "Look gorgeous" is pretty ambiguous; "Lose 20 pounds" is specific.

Prizes

Reward yourself at different points in the goal, particularly if it's long-term. If your goal is to save \$1000 for a weekend vacation, for example, you might cook a special meal when reach the halfway mark.

Individual

The goal must be something that you want to do. If your supervisor wants you to take on an extra project and you are not interested in it, you're not going to want to work towards the goal. Link the goal to something that interests and motivates you, like how great it feels to finish a large assignment.

Review

Review your progress periodically. Does the goal make sense? Are you stuck? Do you need to adjust certain parts of it?

Inspiring

Frame the goal positively. “I don’t like the way I look. I need to get into shape,” won’t inspire you, but “I am working out four times a week and I feel fantastic!” sure can. Make the goal fun to accomplish. You could make a poster of the end result, frame it, and post it on the wall.

Time-Bound

Give yourself a deadline for achieving the goal. If it’s a pretty big objective, split the goal into small parts and give yourself a deadline for each item.

Test Your Knowledge

Goal Setting and Goal Getting!

Use the space below to draw up a goal with SPIRIT.

The Role of Values

Work Values

Motivational speaker Denis Waitley has said that life is a “do it myself” project. Each of us must take the blame or the credit for our performance. We personally have the power to control many more personal aspects of our lives, both mentally and physically, than we have ever thought possible.

Test Your Knowledge

What are some other things you do, or could do, to keep yourself motivated?

Do you think any of these things would also be effective for motivating your employees?

What are some of the things your employees can control in their work life?

Is there any way you can give them more control?

Test Your Knowledge

What Do We Value In Work?

The Importance of Values

Do you know what you value about work? People vary widely in their values, and it becomes an important part of the supervisor's role to understand what their employees value. When an individual's values are markedly different from the organization, it is more likely that the individual will become disconnected from the workplace and they will look for something new, or become disengaged but stay if they think they don't have many options.

It's important for a supervisor to know the values of the organization, and to determine their individual values.

Write down your company's values below.

Identifying Your Values

The list below reflects some common values. **Choose the ten that are most important to you as a person (meaning that they apply both at work and at home).** You can customize the wording, or add your own to the list.

Ability to make decisions and implement them	Ability to persuade and influence others	Achieving excellence
Achieving fame and recognition	Adventure and excitement	Behaving ethically
Being challenged by pressures and deadlines	Being organized and dependable	Being skilled and capable
Building a family	Building meaningful relationships with others	Competition with others
Contributing to society	Cooperation with others	Demonstrating expertise
Diversity in daily tasks	Doing something meaningful	Efficient and effective
Enjoying what you do	Environmental rights	Establishing a reputation
Expressing creativity	Feeling excited and stimulated by life	Feeling independent
Feeling of belonging and community	Feeling of inner harmony	Feeling of patriotism
Financial security	Financial wealth	Free speech/human rights
Freedom to set your own pace and goals	Having a feeling of security	Having power and control
Having privacy	Helping those in need	Religion and/or spirituality
Leading others to success	Moving at a fast pace	Moving at a slow pace
Being productive	Reliability	Self-development
Sense of accomplishment	Serving the public	Spontaneity
Truth and integrity	Working as part of a team	Working individually

We cannot focus on too many things at one time and remain effective, so look at the ten values you selected and **select the five that are most important to you**. Cross the others off. Be firm with yourself if you need to be. Remember, you are focusing on what is really important to you.

Next, reduce the list to just three values. These are the things at your very core. Cross the other two off your list. Put circles around the three items that are your core values.

Test Your Knowledge

Bringing It All Together

Step Two: Define Your Values

Now, outline what success for each of those values would look like.

Value One

Value Two

Value Three

Step Three: Put It All Together

Finally, bring the three statements together into one paragraph. You may feel that you need to go back and re-evaluate your values, or you may want to re-work some sentences to create what is meaningful

to you. That's OK! Above all, this should be a reflection of your innermost thoughts and a roadmap for how you would like to conduct your life and your work.

Write your value statement here.

Creating a Motivational Climate

Behavioral (Reinforcement) Theory

A Focus on Feedback

We respond to praise and positive feedback, almost regardless of where it comes from or for what. Success is a very powerful force and it seems most of us can never get too much praise or too many compliments. We need to feel we are capable, competent people, and positive feedback provides this.

On the other hand, criticism and negative feedback takes the wind out of our sails. We feel less good about ourselves and lose interest in continuing what we are doing. Again, criticism is a very powerful force and even when it is not justified or when the person giving it is not in a position to criticize or judge us, we can still become de-motivated.

While this appears to be a case of external motivation or de-motivation, it really isn't. We decide whether to listen to the person's praise or criticism and how to react to it, although we are strongly conditioned to react almost automatically to praise and criticism.

Reinforcement doesn't only apply to external reward and punishment. If we tell ourselves that we are doing a good job, we reward ourselves and feel good. If we criticize ourselves (even when our performance is good), we tend to feel bad and become de-motivated.

Reinforcement Theory

Reinforcement theory (also called the **behavioral theory**) says that people do, and are motivated to do, what gets rewarded. We avoid doing, or become de-motivated, when we get punished for what we do.

How can you, as a supervisor, use this theory to provide a motivational climate in the workplace? By praising, giving positive feedback, congratulating people when they perform well. As Ken Blanchard puts it, catch people doing things right and praise them.

Test Your Knowledge

What are some other methods of rewarding people for good performance?

The Big Question

Should you, as a supervisor, praise mediocre work?

Generally, no, as you will reinforce mediocrity. However, when people are unwilling or unable to perform at a high standard, you should begin by praising progress. Set your expectations and standards low and then move them higher as the person's performance improves.

This is the same process that is described in Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model. In this model, support (which is viewed as positive) is increased and direction (which tends to be viewed more negatively) is decreased, as individuals or groups increased their task readiness (ability and willingness to accept responsibility for setting and achieving high performance targets).

Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory was developed by Victor Vroom. It assumes that people, when faced with the need to make a decision about how to behave, will be influenced by the possible costs and benefits of each course of action. Individuals will select the course of action with the greatest perceived expected net (positive minus negative) outcomes.

Obviously, if you can get a person to change their perception of the value of a particular outcome or change their estimated likelihood of achieving an outcome, you would change their estimated utilities or expected net outcomes. If, for example, a person began to see more value in a promotion than they previously did, the attractiveness of that outcome (and therefore the motivational "pull" of that outcome) would increase. Perhaps the supervisor could point out some things about getting a promotion that the person had not considered. Likewise, if the supervisor could get the person to modify their expectation of receiving a promotion, they would change the person's level of motivation toward that outcome. Perhaps the person does not consider the likelihood very high of getting a promotion. If the supervisor can (honestly) convince the person that his/her chances are better than they think, the motivational pull will increase.

This theory tends to put things in a pretty simplistic light, and has sometimes been criticized. Even Vroom admits to the simplicity of his theory. However, it does give us a good platform for discussion, and even a debate about how some of the things we try can backfire. For example, if a person works hard to get a raise, but they know the raise will bump them into a higher tax bracket and they will

actually take less pay home, then the money itself is not a motivator and the raise could actually be a demotivator.

McClelland's Needs Theory

David McClelland developed the theory that humans were motivated by three major needs (later expanded to four). These are:

- Need for Achievement: Desire to accomplish something worthwhile, need to set and achieve difficult but realistic goals
- Need for Power (Authority)
- Need for Affiliation: Feeling part of a group, being accepted by others.
- He later developed the notion that the Need to Avoid Failure also plays a major motivation role for some people.

Test Your Knowledge

How could you use McClelland's Needs Theory to create a positive motivational climate?

Applying Your Skills

Situational Analysis

Scenario One

The Acme Airlines Company was in big trouble. With a global recession going on, sales were down, and their largest airplane was frequently grounded for inspections and repair. Imagine the CEO's surprise when the company's employees joined forces, raised \$30 million, and bought the company a new plane.

Test Your Knowledge

What do you think motivated them to do this?

Scenario Two

The Acme Manufacturing Company has a line of exceptionally prepared organic baby food. One day a factory employee was shopping in the local supermarket and she came across a shelf full of jars of baby food from her factory, and all the labels were crooked. She bought all of the jars that the store had and took them to work with her the next day.

What do you think motivated her to do that?

Scenario Three

Up to about 1970, piecework was the most common form of payment in the Swedish engineering industry. But in the late 1960's companies came under a lot of pressure to adopt fixed-wage systems, mostly from people in politics and trade unions who felt that piecework was demeaning, undemocratic, and unnecessary when dealing with an educated, responsible workforce. A lot of companies did change. A study of 73 of these, carried out in late 1971, revealed that, on average, productivity had fallen 10-20% in the three months following the change from paid piecework to fixed salary.

Can you draw any conclusions about motivation from this?

Scenario Four

Car factories are the original and best known examples of production line work. People who work in them stand beside a constantly moving track, repeating the same task over and over again. The pace of their work is dictated by the speed of the line. Suppose that everyone on the line was provided with a button which they could use, at their own discretion, to stop the track running.

What would you predict would happen? Would it motivate people? Would it affect productivity? Why?

Case Studies

Acme Widgets Company

You are high-paid consultants to the manager of the Acme Widgets Company. Drivers pick up widget shipments from the factory and deliver them to a shipping facility, where the appropriate paperwork is processed, and the packages are sent on conveyers to cargo loading docks, where they are routed for the appropriate flights. Each dock handles shipments for a particular destination. Because of the ease of handling, small shipments intended for the same destination fly at lower rates when shipped together in large, standard-sized boxes, called bulk cargo containers, rather than separately as many small packages. Thus, the Acme Widgets Company can reduce its freight costs considerably simply by making more use of bulk cargo containers on the loading docks.

Managers responsible for the shipping facility were under the impression that bulk containers already were being used most of the time. A study showed, however, the bulk containers are being used for only 45 percent of all possible such shipments.

The employees on the shipping dock seem indifferent about whether they use bulk containers or not. The amount of time and effort they have to expend is the same for either method. Relations between them and their supervisors are good.

How can the usage of bulk containers for small shipments be increased?

Acme Telephone Company

You are consultants to the district traffic manager of a telephone company. The traffic department is responsible for information service, long-distance calls, and certain customer inquiries. Most of your employees are operators, both directory assistance (information) and long distance. About 85 percent are women and most are in their late teens and early twenties.

Tardiness and absenteeism have been big problems in this district. As a result, the traffic manager has had to schedule 20 percent more operators than she needs for each shift in order to have fully staffed boards. The personnel costs caused by this overstaffing are unbearable, and action must be taken. If each operator would just show up for work each day, at the appointed time, personnel costs would drop back to their budgeted level.

Develop a plan that will motivate operators to come to work each day and to come on time.

Designing Motivating Jobs

Test Your Knowledge

Designing My Job

Think of a job that would meet your motivational needs. What are some characteristics of that job?

There are five key characteristics of motivating jobs.

Diversity

A motivating job challenges the employee by drawing on different skills and abilities. Not very many people want to do the same single task over and over again each day. Even basic jobs, like operating a cash register at a grocery store, have different components. (Think of all the different things that a grocery store cashier does: scanning items, doing math, providing customer service, and interacting with their teammates.)

Completion

Most people like the satisfaction of completing a project from start to finish. Even if some pieces are done by others, it's nice to see the final result of your hard work.

Importance

We all want to feel like our work matters to others and the organization. To make jobs motivating, show employees how their work counts.

Independence

Giving employees control over their work environment and processes can be very motivating. We've spoken to call center employees whose greatest complaint wasn't the stress, difficult customers, or high workload. Their biggest issue was that their washroom breaks were mandated down to the second.

Guidance

Earlier, we paraphrased a quote from Ken Blanchard: catch people doing things right and praise them. Constructive, consistent feedback is an essential motivational element for any job.

Techniques for Job Design or Redesign

List some specific techniques that you could use to incorporate the five key characteristics into a job.

Characteristic	Techniques
Diversity	
Completion	
Importance	

