Assessing Motivation in Blue-Collar Employees

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Introduction
Manufacturing organizations are often thought to run like machines. One of the dangers of this perspective is to lose sight of the human dimension. Blue-collar employees, the skilled and unskilled men and women who work with their hands and operate machinery, are primarily motivated by rewards and punishments. Intervening to create a shift toward more internal motivation, rather than just external, can ultimately improve performance and well-being.

Background
Types of Motivation

- Extrinsically motivated: their prime reason for doing the job is external rewards and punishments; depend on external motivational influences to function;
- Intrinsic motivation: employees are primarily driven by intrinsic factors related to the nature of the job itself, such as enjoyment, satisfaction, and challenge.

The Art of Holistic Motivation
Leadership within manufacturing organizations is key to providing the environment and support for autonomous motivation to thrive. Beyond the traditional rewards and punishments style of motivation, there are other factors that can influence job satisfaction. Blue-collar employees, in particular, respond well to autonomy and control. However, it is often challenging for managers to create a balance between control and autonomy. Managers need to understand how some employees are more naturally motivated than others.

Analysis

Assessments

- Professionals Questionnaire (PQ)
- Organizational/Industrial Measure (OIM)
- Index of Autonomous Function (IAF)
- General Causal Orientation Scale (GCOS)
- Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction & Frustration Scale (BPNS)
- Basic Psychological Need Satisfaction at Work Scale (BPNS-W)
- Causality Orientations Scale (GOCS)
- Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (JSQ)
- Work Domain Questionnaire (WDQ)

Criteria

- Reliability
- Validity
- Response homogeneity
- Frustration and enjoyment in work
- Problem-solving proficiency
- Generalizability
- Reliability and validity

Results

- Survey
- Internship
- Job
- Graduation

Conclusions

The questionnaires analyzed in this project provide a foundation to further develop an applicable assessment package for manufacturing organizations. However, more research is needed before this tool can be used to gauge blue-collar employee motivation.

Manufacturing organizations stand to benefit from taking the human dimension perspective when it comes to motivating their blue-collar employees. By using assessment tools to identify gaps in how the employees are lead, it will help to prioritize interventions.

Major Literature Cited


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