

Assessing Motivation in Blue-Collar Employees

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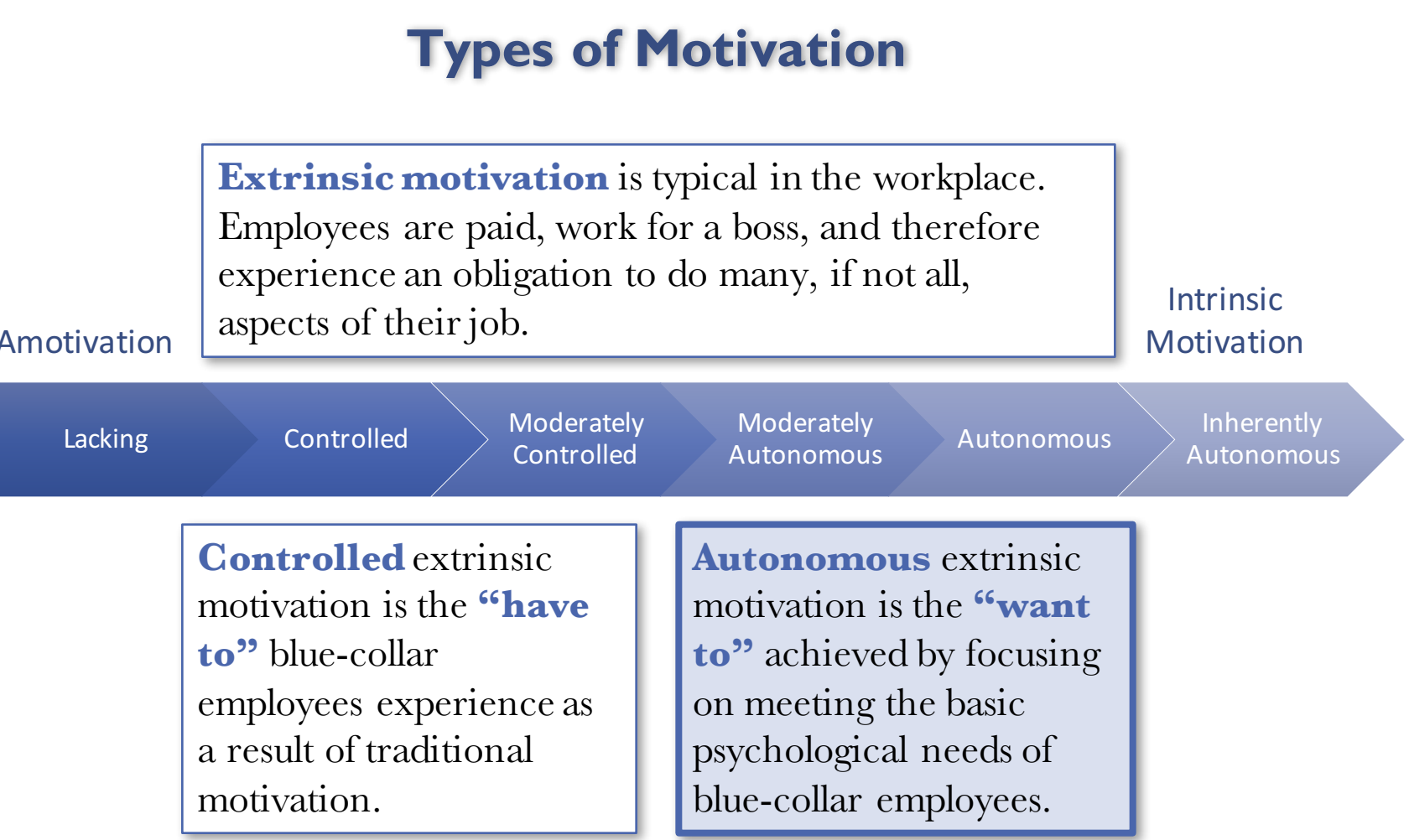
Introduction

Manufacturing organizations are often thought to run like machines. One of the dangers with 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.



Diego Rivera

Background



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 are the adequacy and fairness of rewards. For the blue collar employee, this is the wage. Next are the psychological needs for security, competence, fulfillment, relatedness and autonomy. Finally, leaders need to understand some employees are more naturally motivated than others.

Leaders	
Rewards	Remove the obstacle of inadequate and unfair distribution of wages.
Needs	Focus on satisfying needs for security, competence, fulfillment and relatedness.
Personality	Understand the individual and adjust approach to motivate accordingly.



Dwight D. Eisenhower

“Now I think, speaking roughly, by leadership we mean the art of getting someone else to do something that you want done because he wants to do it, not because your position of power can compel him to do it, or your position of authority.”

The Federal Career Service, A Look Ahead
Remarks by the President of the United States

Analysis

Assessments

For leaders to impact blue-collar employees in ways that produce more autonomous motivation, an assessment of the motivational climate is a necessary first step. Eight questionnaires were identified in the literature as potential measures for creating an “assessment package” organizations can use to accomplish this. Each questionnaire was evaluated against four major criteria to determine their applicability.



Criteria			
Reliability	Validity	Precision	Generalizability
<i>Is the measure reliable?</i>	<i>Is the measure valid?</i>	<i>Is the measure precise?</i>	<i>Is the measure generalizable?</i>
Evidence in the literature of repeated results.	Construct is well-operationalized and is valid for the application.	Questions and response categories are clear and exhaustive.	Questionnaire can be applied to blue-collar employees.

Results

	Survey	Reliability	Validity	Precision	Generalizability
Rewards	PSQ	✓	✓	-	✓
	OJM	✓	-	✓	✓
Needs	BPNS-W	✓	-	-	✓
	BPNSF-W	X	✓	-	✓
Personality	IAF	✓	-	-	✓
	GCOS	-	-	✓	-
Leadership	PAW	-	✓	✓	-
	WCQ	X	-	✓	✓

✓ Meets X Does not meet - Almost meets

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. Using assessment tools to identify gaps in how the employees are lead will help to prioritize interventions.



Ruby Loftus

Major Literature Cited

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