

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg departed from the need theories of motivation and examined the experiences that satisfied or dissatisfied people at work. This motivation theory became known as the two-factor theory.⁴⁵ Herzberg's original study included 200 engineers and accountants in western Pennsylvania during the 1950s. Herzberg asked these people to describe two important incidents at their jobs: one that was satisfying and made them feel exceptionally good at work and another that was dissatisfying and made them feel exceptionally bad at work.

Herzberg and his colleagues argue that people have two sets of needs: one related to the avoidance of pain and the other related to the desire for psychological growth. Conditions in the work environment would affect one or the other of these needs. Work conditions related to satisfaction of the need for psychological growth are labeled **motivation factors**. Work conditions related to dissatisfaction caused by discomfort or pain are labeled **hygiene factors**. Each set of factors relates to one aspect of what Herzberg identified as the human being's dual nature regarding the work environment. Thus, motivation factors relate to job satisfaction, and hygiene factors relate to job dissatisfaction,⁴⁶ as shown in Table 5.2.

Motivation Factors

Job satisfaction is produced by building motivation factors into a job, according to Herzberg. This process is known as job enrichment. In the original research, the motivation factors were identified as responsibility, achievement, recognition, advancement, and the work itself. When these factors are present, they lead to superior performance and effort on the part of job incumbents.

Figure 5.3 shows that salary is a motivational factor in some studies. Many organizational reward systems now include other financial benefits, such as stock options, as part of an employee's compensation package. A long-term study of young men in the United States and the former West Germany found job satisfaction positively linked to earnings and changes in earnings, as well as voluntary turnover.⁴⁷

Motivation factors lead to positive mental health and challenge people to grow, contribute to the work environment, and invest themselves in the organization. According to the theory and original research, the absence of these factors does not lead to dissatisfaction. Rather, it leads to the lack of satisfaction. The motivation factors are the more important of the two sets of factors because they directly affect a person's motivational drive to do a good job. When they are absent, the person is demotivated.

4 Describe the two-factor theory of motivation.

motivation factors

A work condition related to satisfaction of the need for psychological growth.

hygiene factors

A work condition related to dissatisfaction caused by discomfort or pain.

TABLE 5.2 Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory

Hygiene Factors: Job Dissatisfaction	Motivation Factors: Job Satisfaction
• Company policy and administration • Interpersonal relations • Supervision • Working conditions • Salary • Status • Security	• Achievement • Recognition of achievement • Work itself • Responsibility • Advancement • Salary • Growth

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