

What's Important to Employees?

There are many possible rewards that employees may receive. Listed below are ten possible job reward factors. Rank these factors three times. First, rank them as you think the average employee would rank them. Second, rank them as you think the average employee's supervisor would rank them for the employee. Finally, rank them according to what you consider important.

Your instructor has normative data for 1,000 employees and their supervisors that will help you interpret your results against them in the context of Maslow's need hierarchy and Herzberg's two-factor theory of motivation.

Employee	Supervisor	You
		1. Job security
		2. Full appreciation of work done
		3. Promotion and growth in the organization
		4. Good wages
		5. Interesting work
		6. Good working conditions
		7. Tactful discipline
		8. Sympathetic help with personal problems
		9. Personal loyalty to employees
		10. A feeling of being in on things

SOURCE: "Crossed Wires on Employee Motivation," *Training and Development* 49 (1995): 59–60. American Society for Training and Development. Reprinted with permission. All rights reserved.

high motivation and few complaints among employees. Second, a job low in both factors leads to low motivation and many complaints among employees. Third, a job high in motivation factors and low in hygiene factors leads to high employee motivation to perform coupled with complaints about aspects of the work environment. Fourth, a job low in motivation factors and high in hygiene factors leads to low employee motivation to excel but few complaints about the work environment.

Two conclusions can be drawn at this point. First, hygiene factors are of importance up to a threshold level. Once this threshold is reached, however, there is little value in improving them. For example, once workers feel that their working conditions are safe and secure, there is little value in making them safer and more secure. Second, the presence of motivation factors is essential to enhancing employee motivation to excel at work. You 5.2 asks you to rank a set of ten job reward factors in terms of their importance to the average employee, supervisors, and you.

Critique of the Two-Factor Theory

Herzberg's two-factor theory has been critiqued on a number of grounds. One criticism concerns the classification of the two factors. Data have not shown a clear dichotomization of incidents into hygiene and motivator factors. For example, employees almost equally classify pay as a hygiene factor and a motivation factor. A second criticism is the absence of individual differences in the theory. Specifically,