

# The RESOURCE

## ONE MORE TIME: ANSWERS FOR MOTIVATING TODAY'S EMPLOYEES FREDERICK HERZBERG'S RESEARCH ON WORK MOTIVATION AND THE PSP LEGACY

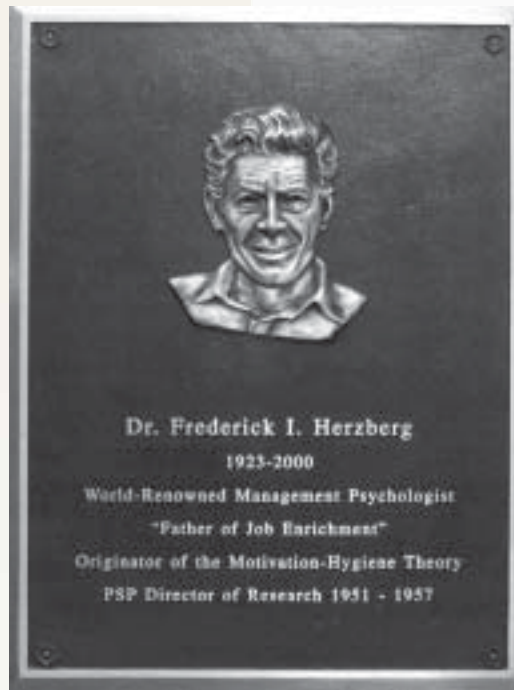
**R**eturning to the foundations of current theory can provide strategies to address today's challenges. In the January 2003 issue, recognizing the continuing critical challenge of employee motivation, the *Harvard Business Review* printed for the third time Dr. Frederick Herzberg's 1968 classic, "One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees?" Even today this is the *HBR*'s most frequently requested article reprint.

Dr. Herzberg conducted his groundbreaking research while employed as PSP's Director of Research. He challenged assumptions that workers are primarily motivated by money and other tangible benefits. He found instead that workers are **motivated by achieving** something in their jobs, being responsible for their job tasks and being able to work with minimal supervision.

In his research at PSP, Herzberg found that what makes people satisfied and motivated at work is much different from what makes them dissatisfied. Satisfaction and motivation come from the actual performance of the work. Herzberg's emphasis on job enrichment led eventually to today's emphasis on multiskilled jobs and self-directed workforces. According to *HBR*, his work helped lead to a major re-evaluation of how jobs are designed and how workers are managed, and influenced a generation of scholars and managers. Dr. Herzberg's research described the importance of work behaviors and job interests to work performance, positive worker attitudes and job satisfaction. Herzberg's research while at PSP was described in his first two books, *Job Attitudes* and *The Motivation to Work*.

Dr. Herzberg was PSP's Director of Research from 1951 until 1957. During this time, support for a study of work motivation came from a grant donated by the Buhl Foundation along with matching funds from a number of PSP client companies including Alcoa, Duquesne Light, Gulf Oil, J&L Steel, Mellon Bank, U.S. Steel and others. Dr. Herzberg interviewed workers

from Pittsburgh and national corporations, and conducted research that led to his now famous Two Factor Motivation Theory describing what he called "hygiene factors" (salary, benefits, working conditions) and motivators (challenge, achievement, responsibility, recognition).



Plaque created for PSP by Matthews International.

Herzberg's and PSP's research found that getting the hygiene factors correct provided only a temporary solution, as workers always want increased hygiene, i.e. salary and benefits. In order to truly **motivate** employees, Herzberg discovered, employers must provide them with interesting work, job challenge and increased responsibility. Herzberg found that the **actual accomplishment** of desirable performance objectives and work outcomes leads to job satisfaction and positive job attitudes, resulting in increased worker motivation.

Herzberg's work at PSP led to greater emphasis on **employee job fit** for both short-term job duties and long-term work expectations. PSP's research today continues to find that different people require different motivators and, as

Herzberg emphasized, it is important to pay attention to how workers feel about their jobs in order to understand their work motivators and job behaviors. Today, more than ever, workers crave both job security **and** increased meaning in their work lives, with the desire to achieve work/life balance as part of this aspiration. Workers are ever more demanding in their job and career expectations. To adapt, companies need to provide opportunities for people to achieve—so they will be motivated in their work.

**The PSP studies on work motivation by Herzberg make one thing clear—a manager's job is not to motivate people to get them to achieve. Instead, the manager's job is to provide opportunities for people to achieve so they will be motivated.**

# ACHIEVING A MOTIVATED WORKFORCE

**H**iring people who are motivated to do what employers need remains one of the biggest challenges in business today. Often, employers think that the best motivators for employees are reasonably good pay or good fringe benefits. Some employers think that employees are motivated by “perks” such as bonuses, parties, gifts or outings. Dr. Frederick Herzberg discovered through research that such things do not motivate employees. They merely prevent workers from becoming unhappy. Current research continues to validate his findings.

What motivates people, Dr. Herzberg found, is the work itself. When the work is meaningful, it provides opportunities for learning, recognition and responsibility. That is when employees will be motivated to make full use of their abilities. This is a somewhat radical idea for employers who think “it’s all about money.”

The truth is, according to Dr. Herzberg, that both meaningful work and adequate money and benefits are necessary. Provide both, he said, and you can get a person to do what you need to have done.

Actually, it’s a bit more complicated than that. Dr. Herzberg recognized that an employer could not take **any** applicant and get them to do **any** job in the company. His PSP research showed that people’s aptitudes, interests and personalities also have great impact on vocational success. He concluded that motivation occurs when an individual’s personal qualities match the rewards available on the job.

## Why Select Motivated Workers?

Dr. Herzberg discovered that the productivity of workers could be traced directly to the correlation between their personal characteristics and the rewards available in the workplace. He believed that productivity in America, in particular, has been receding because of a focus on money and benefits to the exclusion of responsibility and continuous learning. When workers get money without responsibility, their entitlement quotient goes up and their productivity quotient goes down.



When workers are given responsibility without money, they become resentful and less productive. The most productive employees,

Herzberg taught, are the ones who are continually challenged as well as compensated fairly.

How much more work can motivated employees do? Dr. Herzberg did not give an answer, but subsequent studies by Dr. John E. Hunter and colleagues show that motivated workers

produce 50 percent more work than average workers. Subpar workers produce 50 percent less. Selecting motivated workers really pays off! They give an honest day’s work, display dependability and reliability, strive for continuous improvement, and achieve results.

## How to Select Motivated Workers

One way to assess motivation is to take an inventory of what an individual already has achieved. People who are internally motivated usually have an established track record of results. Depending on age and experience, these results could be in the workplace, in school, in competitive events, or in other activities that demonstrate continuous improvement. Motivated people have a history of mastery.



Another way to identify motivated people is with psychological tests. Industrial psychologists are able to assess a variety of internal “drivers,” including such things as work energy, results orientation, desire for continuous improvement, need for recognition, competitiveness, desire for responsibility, ambition for advancement and desire for intellectual stimulation. In the hands of well-trained professionals, validated and reliable psychological tests can identify job applicants who are motivated by the kind of rewards a particular employer has to offer. Assuming the individual has the necessary skills and aptitudes, matching a person’s desired rewards with the incentives available for a particular job is the best way to hire a motivated and highly productive employee.

## Career Development as a Motivator

Once motivated employees are hired, how can an employer keep them motivated? Again, Dr. Herzberg is instructive. His PSP research demonstrated that developing people by enriching their work motivated them. By providing workers with continuous learning opportunity, regular challenge and progressive responsibility, employers can motivate employees to give their best performance on an ongoing basis.

Enriching work through continuous learning is what career development is all about. It benefits both the individual employee and the company. Career development stimulates the employee to improve current performance, as well as to prepare for the future. At the same time, career development helps the company by building bench strength for the succession planning process.

Hiring workers who are internally motivated and maintaining their motivation through career development activities allow companies to increase productivity and competitive advantage.



Dr. Herzberg began his classic research on work motivation while at PSP.

1. Motivation occurs when employees have an “internal generator.” Employers motivate employees by giving them the opportunity to use their abilities. As a result, motivated workers work harder and work more hours.
2. Research shows that 80 percent of satisfying job events comes from the following motivators (the intrinsic elements of the job): achievement, recognition for achievement, the work itself, responsibility, advancement and growth.
3. Only about 20 percent of satisfying job events comes from hygiene factors (the extrinsic elements of the job): company policy and administration, supervision, relationships with coworkers, working conditions, salary, benefits and job security.
4. Providing hygiene factors produces only temporary results.
5. Job insecurity undermines motivation at all levels.
6. To maximize motivation, keep the number of supervisors to a minimum.
7. It is important to remember that people are individuals and are motivated in different ways.
8. You can raise motivation in your staff by increasing their responsibility and thus “enriching” their jobs.
9. Advancement can be a motivator if employees believe that advancement is possible. (It need not be immediate.) Honesty about advancement, however, is always the best policy.
10. Achievement through work performance leads to greater satisfaction and more lasting positive work attitude.
11. To enhance personal responsibility, provide more direct employee contact with customers, both internal and external.
12. Motivation to achieve more than the ordinary requires long-term commitment. Employees are more motivated when they perceive their work as serving a meaningful purpose.

13. Help employees become subject matter experts with hands-on learning and increasing knowledge of products and clients. Give individual employees responsibility for serving a client, train them in all aspects of the job and hold them accountable for meeting that client’s expectations and enhancing that client’s satisfaction.
14. Managers do not motivate employees by giving them higher wages, more benefits or newer status symbols. Rather, employees motivate themselves by their own inherent need to succeed at challenging tasks.
15. Separate compensation from performance appraisal. Use the appraisal process for setting and reviewing goals, leveraging an employee’s intrinsic motivation to get the job done in a quality manner. Hygiene factors, such as the compensation structure, need to be differentiated from intrinsic motivators, such as the desire to perform a job well.
16. Employees work best when they develop a feeling for the products that they make and the customers that they serve.
17. Increase the motivation potential for employees by providing job training to increase the flexibility of workers’ talents. Training results in job growth through greater responsibility; it also results in more interesting work.
18. Reinforce accomplishment rather than careerism and job status.
19. Recognizing good work is as important as rewarding it.
20. This is not a theory for American workers alone. Research by Herzberg and others shows that these principles hold up in diverse cultures and are common characteristics among workers throughout the world.



Dr. Herzberg presents motivation research report to PSP Board of Directors.

## RESOURCES FOR MOTIVATING EMPLOYEES



Dr. Frederick Herzberg's classic article on work motivation—**"One More Time: How Do You Motivate Employees?"**—was first printed by the *Harvard Business Review* in 1968 and is still HBR's most frequently requested article reprint. HBR called it "one of its landmark articles." The ideas continue to be worth the attention of managers today.

Recognizing the ongoing significance of employee motivation, *Harvard Business Review* published a special issue in January 2003 on **"Motivating People: How to Get the Most from Your Organization."** It presents "both timely and timeless insights into personal and organizational motivation," including Dr. Herzberg's article described above. The articles give concrete techniques for managers and seek a new model for motivation appropriate for today's knowledge economy.

***The Motivation to Work***, the first influential book by Dr. Herzberg with coauthors Bernard Mausner and Barbara Block Snyderman (all employed by PSP at the time the data was collected), was based on work done at PSP and published in 1959. This readable book describes their research.

***Work and the Nature of Man*** by Dr. Herzberg is an intellectual and scholarly book. Published in 1966, it was selected by International Press in 1995 as one of the ten most important books impacting management theory and practice in the twentieth century.

***Herzberg on Motivation*** is a 1988 collection of his articles in *Industry Week*. These thought-provoking articles are highly readable and still timely.

In ***The Managerial Choice: To Be Efficient and To Be Human***, Dr. Herzberg emphasized practical applications of his theories. Published in 1976 and revised in 1982, the book is an anthology of his most popular articles.



***For recommendations on training resources on any management topic, contact PSP directly.***

- ❖ Celebrated the 50th anniversary of Dr. Frederick Herzberg's research on work motivation that began at PSP in 1953.
- ❖ Developed the PSP Motivators Profile to assess motivators.
- ❖ Created a new career development program using PSP's patented 360° Survey process to foster greater job motivation.
- ❖ Redesigned a Survey of Leadership Style to measure the motivating skills of managers.
- ❖ Measured motivating skills of first-level supervisors with a new Supervisory Survey.
- ❖ Designed training seminars on motivational techniques for supervisors and managers.
- ❖ Established a library at PSP of Dr. Frederick Herzberg's work on motivation.
- ❖ Researched the connection between Dr. Herzberg's work at PSP and his later writings on motivation.
- ❖ Drafted a white paper on the legacy of Dr. Herzberg and his studies in work motivation.

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