

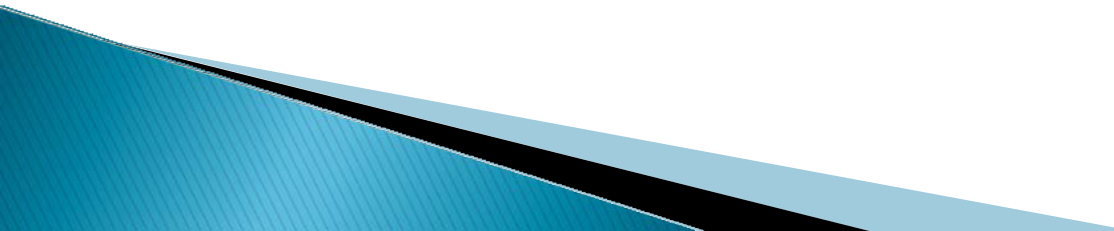
What is motivation and why is it so important?

Motivation defined

Motivation is the decision to try hard in pursuit of a goal.

An employee who spends all day doing something other than his or her job may be highly motivated, but the employee and the company may have different goals.

Motivation is related to employee engagement because a component of employee engagement is willingness to exert discretionary effort, in other words to try harder than necessary.

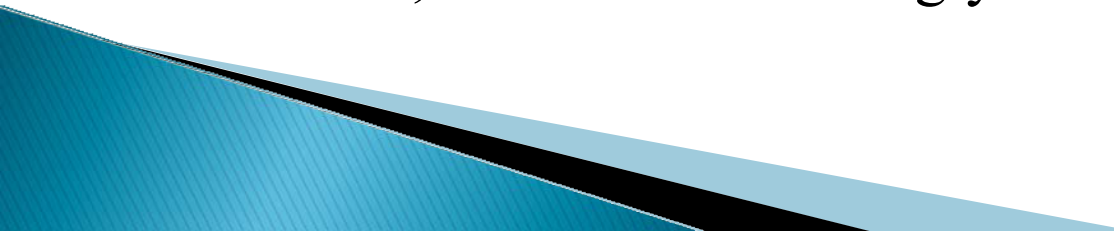


Why is motivation important? (Part I)

The three determinants of performance are motivation, working conditions, and ability. An employee who lacks ability, or an employee with an impossible job, will fail.

But few employees lack ability because we prescreen job candidates using criteria such as educational achievement. Few employees have impossible jobs, necessary work tools such as computers are getting smaller, better, and cheaper.

So an employee with a performance problem is probably an employee with a motivation problem. Because unlike job satisfaction, motivation is strongly related to productivity.



Why is Motivation Important (Part II)?

For physical labor, motivation is visible. For example, it can be determined that one furniture mover is trying harder than another furniture mover, through cues such as sweat, speed, weight of carried objects, interaction with the customer etc.

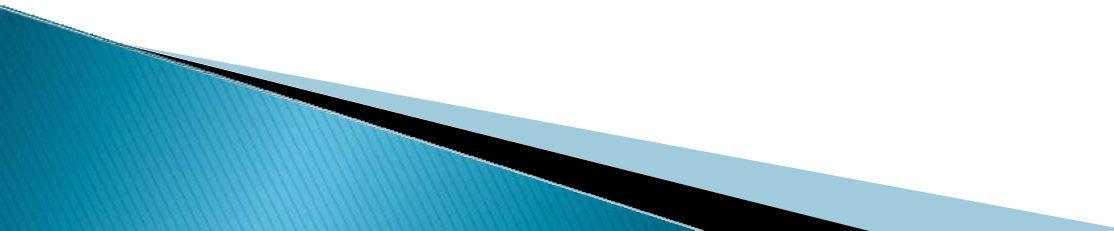
For mental labor, motivation is invisible. For example, you can observe two engineers typing on laptops at the same speed, but one of the engineers may be exerting more mental effort, perhaps solving a more difficult problem; while the other is barely completing tasks.

Your first clue that there is a motivation problem may come in the form of customer complaints or lack in quality.

Why is Motivation Important (Part III)?

Companies tend to pay more for mental labor than for physical labor. Supervisory and executive jobs, for example, exemplify mental labor. Companies also tend to supervise people in these types of jobs more loosely, trusting them to know and make the right decisions.

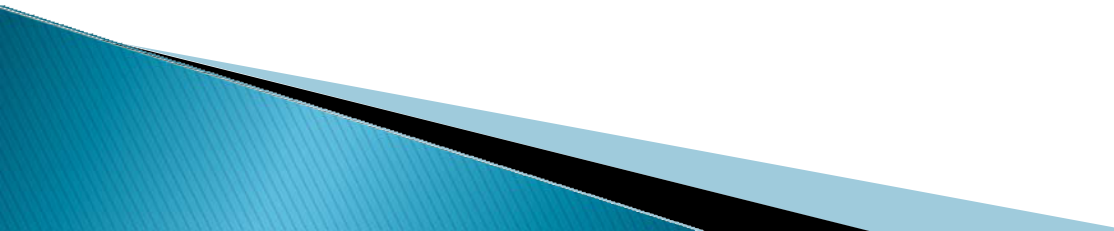
Putting it all together,

- a) Motivation is a major determinant of performance problems at work.
 - b) For non-physical jobs, it's hard to detect motivation problems.
 - c) But these non-physical jobs tend to pay well and be supervised loosely, which raises the costs of motivation problems.
 - d) So motivation is important, especially for people with non-physical jobs (who are sometimes called “knowledge workers.”)
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Four Ways to Improve Employee Motivation

“Management Skills Week Two Lesson One Article” is entitled “Four ways to improve employee motivation.” The article provides good advice, but it offers little in the way of explanation and evidence to support its claims. That is pretty normal for this type of article, but in the other two lessons for the week we will discuss motivation theories which will support claims that motivation is key.

Much evidence supports each of these theories (except the first one discussed in the next lecture) and we know why they work. So students will learn a lot about motivation by the end of this week.



Your research paper (Part I)

Sixteen percent of your final grade is based on a research paper. The topic of your paper is “Do Generation Y employees need to be motivated differently than Generation X employees?”

The paper is due at the end of week 8. But if you're smart, you'll start working on it much sooner. Week 8 also has the final exam and the virtual guest speaker, so if you put the paper off until week 8 then you'll have an exceedingly busy week 8.

The paper needs to be submitted as a Word document. It needs to be 4-6 pages long (double-spaced, 12 point font) and it needs to discuss both sides of this issue before concluding with your opinion.

Will you be motivated to start early?



Your research paper (Part II)

Your paper needs at least four references which must be listed at the end of the paper in any legible format. These must be the references on which you based your paper. Web-based references are acceptable but nothing from Wikipedia is an acceptable reference.

It will be a good idea to use a Rowan University library database or your public library's database. Some databases specialize in business such as ABI/Inform and Academic Search Premier. Search for full-text articles only. The beauty of a library database as opposed to an Internet search engine is that the database will screen out some uninformative sources (e.g., marketing brochures from consulting companies) which the search engine will feature prominently.

Search for "Generation Y motivation" and you should be fine.



Your research paper (Part III)

Your paper also needs excellent spelling, punctuation, and grammar. On a related note, you can't cut and paste others' work and claim it as your own. That is called "plagiarism" and if you are caught then you will get a grade of zero for this paper. The Internet has made it easier than ever to detect plagiarism so don't do it.

You also can't cut and paste huge chunks of others' work even if you put it in quotes and acknowledge the original source. Rephrase what others originally said, so that your professor can evaluate your written communication skills which are an important part of success as an engineering manager

