



[About the
Modules](#)

[Preface](#)

[General](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Contents](#)

[Introductory
Module](#)

[Module One](#)

[Module Two](#)

[Module Three](#)

[Module Four](#)

[Module Five](#)

[Module Six](#)

[Module Seven](#)

[Copyright](#)

[Home](#)

[Visit our
website](#)

MODULE THREE

UNIT THREE

Staff Motivation

Introduction

The key to effective management is the ability to get results from other people, through other people and in conjunction with other people. If the underlying psychology is wrong, the most carefully constructed system and techniques will fail.

An efficient school head may not necessarily be an effective school head if his or her relationship with the staff is poor. But if relationships are good and the staff are motivated, some administrative or environmental flaws will readily be overlooked.
Individual study time: 3 hours

Learning outcomes

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- define the meaning of motivation
- understand the principles of motivation and its application
- identify factors which can enhance or weaken levels of motivation.

What is motivation?

Motivation is concerned with the cause of behaviour: why people act, speak or think in a particular way. School heads need to know how to motivate. They need to 'get results through people' or 'get the best out of people'.

This is most likely to be achieved if the school head helps the staff experience job satisfaction. This is known as intrinsic motivation, which comes from within, and not extrinsic motivation which is too often based on fear. Results will then be the best that the teacher can produce and be more likely to be in line with the overall goals and ethos of the school.

Principles of motivation

Participation

The staff should be involved in decision-making and in matters which affect them directly. The more the staff become involved, the more they will have a sense of ownership in decisions and be prompted to help in achieving the objectives. Involving the staff in decision-making does not alter the fact that the school head remains accountable for taking the final decisions and for their results.

Communication

If the staff are informed about the objectives and the results achieved, they are inclined to co-operate more and feel that they are part (members) of the staff (group). The opposite is also true: if staff do not know what they are supposed to be achieving, they will show little interest and have little motivation. Staff should not only be informed about results, but also about changes and progress.

Recognition

If staff members receive the necessary recognition for work done, they will be inclined to work harder. Recognition should be given to the staff member as a person and not just as a human resource.

Delegated authority

A school head should be prepared to delegate authority to capable people. In this way a person's post is enhanced, and this serves as a means of personnel development. Delegated authority also means that more people will be allowed to make decisions themselves in connection with their work, within set guidelines. See [Unit 5, Module 2 Principles of Educational Management](#), for more details on delegation.

Activity 3.1

- (1) Reflecting on your own school situation, list the human needs of your staff.
- (2) How are these needs met now?
- (3) How can they be better met in the future?

25 minutes

Motivating staff

The principles of motivation outlined above indicate that there are a variety of factors which influence an individual's level of motivation at work. The school head therefore should not only have some knowledge of the staff but should bear in mind all the different factors which can enhance or weaken motivation. These factors can be divided into four groups: the personal needs of all human beings, factors inherent in the work situation, management methods and the social system as reflected in the community.

Personal needs

The needs of every person should be taken into account, such as the need for recognition, the need to achieve, the need to be a valued person in the community, the need for self-respect and for friendship. If a teacher occupies a temporary post, there is a need for work security. Merit awards and promotion can give the necessary recognition of teachers' achievements. Non-recognition of achievements has a demotivating effect on teachers and can lead to high staff turnover. A sense of responsibility should be cultivated as well as pride in the quality of work done.

Work situation

Factors related to the work itself may also affect levels of motivation, for instance, the nature and type of work, the opportunities for group identity, the chances of

promotion, the work environment, the opportunities and challenges of the work, that is, the opportunities for creativity and renewal. Monotony and routine can be demotivating. Routine work leads to frustration and boredom and to a lack of motivation. One solution can be to rotate some routine activities so that boring chores do not always have to be done by the same person.

Management factors

The quality of management affects behaviour, attitudes and effort. Positive interpersonal relationships are regarded as strengthening motivation. In this respect, communication is of great importance. Teachers like to know and should know what is expected of them and how their tasks form part of a total plan. This should be coupled with competent and just leadership which sets out acceptable tasks together with clear guidelines.

The school head is responsible for planning, guiding and leading the school. Tasks are delegated to teachers, and if a participatory management style is used, with teachers' efforts valued, motivation to work hard is likely to be strong.

Community factors

If the community's values (whether religious, moral, economic, cultural, political or social) differ from those of the teacher, these community factors will have a demotivating effect on the teacher. The personal lives of teachers, such as their relationships with their families, will also influence their behaviour. The head has little control over such motivating factors, but he or she has to deal with the situation should it have a negative effect on a teacher's work.

Therefore it would seem that to motivate staff effectively, a school head should have knowledge of their personal needs, their work circumstances, the requirements of the community, and have an effective management style.

Activity 3.2

Think of a situation in your school where you have encountered a teacher whose pupils' academic results were poor, who was unable to create a positive classroom atmosphere, who had problems with class discipline and who had very little interest in extra-mural activities of the school.

- (1) How did you seek to improve this teacher's performance?
- (2) What other methods could you have used to make the teacher more motivated?

20 minutes

Motivation and the school head

We should remember to use the 'motivators', that is, people's need for achievement, recognition, responsibility, job interest, personal growth and advancement potential. We tend to underestimate the needs of other people in these areas. Involving others in decisions which affect them is one way of meeting all or most of these needs. School heads should avoid window-dressing.

The relative intensity of psychological needs will vary greatly from person to person and from time to time. There are people whose motivation is not work related. If a teacher's spouse loses his or her job, security needs may well be the most important. If there is a marriage break-up, both security and social needs may surface, though these may be followed later by a need to find renewed interest and achievement in the job.

These are predictable and often recognisable behavioural phenomena. However, when symptoms and causes are less obvious, the risk is that we misjudge the needs of colleagues or friends. Some of us have a tendency to assume that the needs of others are the same as our own; others tend to assume the opposite.

We should try to suit our management behaviour to both the personalities and the needs of the situation. Our automatic behavioural reaction may not be the right one. Think about the alternatives!

Despite every effort there will remain individuals who have no wish to be 'motivated' and who view with suspicion any attempt to increase their responsibilities, job interest or involvement. Such attitudes may typically be found in teachers who are frustrated. However, the danger is always that we give up too easily. The right approach may prompt a surprisingly warm response.

Above all, it is necessary for a school head to establish by means of honest self-evaluation what the true nature is of his or her attitude towards staff. It is important that this introspection is honest and open, because experience has shown that it will determine the way the heads leads and motivates the staff. It is indubitably true that the way in which heads treat their staff will, to a great extent, be determined by their outlook on life, their attitudes to motivation as the basis of human behaviour, and the judgement they make of people's behaviour in a specific working situation.

Summary

As the recognised leader of the school community the head has the responsibility for helping staff members get satisfaction from their profession and move towards the fulfilment of their needs and objectives. It is through improving levels of motivation that these needs and objectives can be met.

[Next](#)

