

CHAPTER 4

MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES AND GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL WORK MANAGERS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Motivation is a process of activating the potential in employees and in the context of this study focuses on the motivating role fulfilled by the social work manager. The challenge at hand is finding ways to motivate employees. Managers, as emphasised by Blake and Mouton (1964) in their behavioural model, have "... two major concerns: production and people" and they are held responsible and accountable for the motivation of employees (Amos & Ristow, 1999:135). Employees are supposed to perform certain activities to achieve something (work outputs), which have certain consequences for the organisation as a whole. In order to be able to do the work, employees also need certain things, which shape their inputs in the organisation. The "... individual human needs and the drives..." of employees should not be underestimated (Weinbach, 2003:138). Employees are motivated by job design, job satisfaction and incentives.

The researcher elaborates on different motivational strategies that play a vital role in motivating social workers. In other words, we take a look at functions in the organisation whereby social work managers can manage social workers in such a way that both the employee and the organisation benefit. In addition, guidelines for social work managers, suggested in the literature, are presented here according to categories.

4.2 MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGIES

Researchers like Armstrong (1990), Covey (1999), Hellriegel and Slocum (1996), Luthans (1998), Noe et al. (2000), Reece and Brandt (1993) and Smit and Cronje (1997) give considerable attention to motivational strategies. The rise of international competition and the growing realisation that excellence must be attained, encourages organisations to seek more effective motivational strategies for employees. Six contemporary motivation strategies, namely 1) motivation by job design, 2) motivation by job satisfaction, 3) motivation by incentives, 4) motivation by training, education and development, 5) motivation by performance management, and 6) motivation by empowerment will be discussed.

4.2.1 Motivation by job design

Noe et al. (2000:127,128) refer to *job design* as the process of defining the way work will be performed and the tasks that will be required in a given job. Job redesign refers to changing the tasks or the way work is performed in an existing job. To effectively design jobs, one must thoroughly understand the job as it exists (through job analysis) and its place in the larger work unit's workflow process (work-flow analysis). According to More and Wegener (1992:174) job design involves deliberate and purposeful planning in order to bring both the structural and psychosocial aspects of the activity together in one basic process. Properly designed jobs are interesting, challenging, achievable, and rewarding. Managers must prepare job descriptions that spell out the duties, processes, authority, responsibility and accountability inherent in a given job.

By designing jobs that enable people to have their needs fulfilled, organisations can bring about higher levels of motivation. The social work manager must assist the organisation to create the opportunity for individuals to make choices about the kind of work they prefer to do (by specialisation) so that everyone can experience job enrichment (Kolb et al. 1991:105-107). For Covey (1999:185,186) job design is important for a clear sense of *what* the job is all about, *how* to relate to the mission of the organisation and *what* personal contribution employees can make. Resources and support systems that can be used must be available. Employees should also enjoy some degree of autonomy to choose methods to achieve the desired results.

The motivational approach to job design has its roots in Organisational Psychology and management literature. It focuses on **job characteristics** that affect the psychological meaning and motivational potential, and it views attitudinal variables (such as satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, job involvement and behavioural variables such as attendance and performance) as the most important outcomes of job design. The motivational job design approach includes the following elements, namely autonomy, intrinsic and extrinsic job feedback, social interaction, task/goal clarity, task variety and identity, ability/skill-level requirements, ability/skill variety, task significance and growth/learning (Noe et al. 2000:128).

The researcher identified at least three job design options in the literature, namely job rotation, job enlargement and job enrichment, which will be briefly discussed as follows:

Job rotation involves allowing employees to move through a variety of jobs, departments or

functions. Job rotation can be simple or sophisticated depending on the abilities and motivation of the employees involved. Job rotation facilitates career advancement by cross-training workers and also allows management a hedge against absenteeism (Reece & Brandt, 1993:166).

According to Smit and Cronje (1997:257) **job enlargement** implies that an employee carries out expanded tasks and activities that are more interesting and challenging because they are more varied. Job enlargement strategies are built on the assumption that variety is the spice of life. Job enlargement refers to taking a fairly repetitive, boring job and injecting some variety by introducing different, yet similar, kinds of tasks. Job enlargement motivates employees to improve on-the-job performance and increase their productivity.

Job enrichment involves measurable goals and decision making. It refers to tasks performed by the person responsible for the actual job and not by people in the higher levels of management (Smit & Cronje, 1997:324,325). Job enrichment models focus on changing specific job characteristics in order to motivate and promote job satisfaction by addressing employees' higher level needs. The Hackman-Oldham model indicates that three crucial psychological states - experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility, and knowledge of results - affect motivation in the workplace. This model suggests that employees' jobs should be studied to identify core job characteristics that can be changed (Hellriegel & Slocum, 1996:421,423).

4.2.2 Motivation by job satisfaction

Schermerhorn et al. (2000:118) define **job satisfaction** as the degree to which individuals feel positive or negative about their jobs. It is an attitude or emotional response to one's tasks as well as to the physical and social conditions of the workplace. Job satisfaction is motivational and leads to positive employment relationships and high levels of individual job performance. On a daily basis, social work managers must be able to evaluate the job satisfaction of employees by careful observation and interpretation of what they say and do while going about their jobs. According to Werner (2001:587) the five facets of job satisfaction measured by the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) are as follows:

- *The work itself* – responsibility, interest and growth.
- *Quality of supervision* – technical help and social support.
- *Relationships with co-workers* – social harmony and respect.

- *Promotion opportunities* – chances for further advancement.
- *Pay* – adequacy of pay and perceived equity vis-à-vis others.

The importance of job satisfaction can be viewed in the context of two decisions people make about their work. The first is the decision to belong – that is, join and remain a member of an organisation. The second is the decision to perform – that is, to work hard in pursuit of high levels of task performance. Job satisfaction influences absenteeism, or the failure of people to attend work. Job satisfaction can also affect turnover or decisions by people to terminate their employment. Job satisfaction alone is not a consistent predictor of individual work performance (Schermerhorn et al. 2000:118-120).

Schermerhorn et al. (2000:113, 114) regard it necessary for social work managers in their capacity as motivators to have a working knowledge of Herzberg's two-factor theory on 1) job context as source of job dissatisfaction and 2) job content as source of job satisfaction. A research study by Ehlers (1994) that focuses on the role of the supervisor in the promotion of job satisfaction of social workers concluded that the behaviour of supervisors has an important influence on the social worker's job satisfaction. Hendriks (2000) likewise recommended that social work managers should be made aware of the importance of motivating employees because of the value it holds for promoting the job satisfaction of grassroots social workers.

4.2.3 Motivation by incentives

Incentives are programmes designed to reward employees for good performance. They come in many forms and can be monetary or non-monetary (Schultz, 2001:281). Many organisations use incentives to encourage employees to develop good work habits and to repeat behaviour that is beneficial to themselves and the organisation.

Monetary incentives are usually the promise of additional money for achieving certain improvements in performance. Reece and Brandt (1993:153,169) state that these incentives might take the form of cash payments for achieving production goals, profit sharing, or increased pay to reward a worker who has acquired new knowledge or skills. *Non-monetary incentives* include "... interesting, challenging jobs, good fellow workers and suitable rewards" (Kroon, 1995:9). Non-monetary awards are widely recognised as powerful incentives. Merchandise and travel awards are highly promotable

and involve the participant's entire family. Unlike cash, these awards create memories people will have for a lifetime (Internet 2: 10/17/01).

Remuneration a synonym for pay and compensation, influences the motivation levels of many employees. On one hand, it may be considered a source of motivation for some employees, and on the other hand, it could be a factor to prevent employee dissatisfaction. The term *compensation* is often used interchangeably with wage and salary administration. Compensation also refers to rewards such as recognition, the chance for promotion and more challenging job opportunities. Compensation is what employees receive in exchange for their work. It is an important aspect of personnel management. The compensation system has the following advantages for an organisation:

- Ensures that the institution can recruit the quantity and quality of staff it requires.
- Encourages suitable staff to remain with the institution.
- Provides rewards for good performance and incentives for further improvements in performance.
- Achieves equity in pay for similar jobs.
- Is simple to explain, understand, operate and control.
- Operates flexibly to accommodate organisational change.
- Is cost effective in the sense that benefits of the system are obtained without undue expense (Cheminais et al. 1998:158,159-161).

Generally organisations reward people for membership rather than performance. Social work managers must play an active role where organisations do pay for performance as a motivational device. They frequently negate the motivational value of the system by keeping pay secret and therefore preventing people from observing the pay-to-performance relationship that would serve to create positive, clear and strong performance-to-reward expectancies. The social work manager must be aware that money as motivator may be the main reason why people go to work (Jones, 1995:2). The right amount of money will keep employees in most organisations and ensure that they stay in South Africa. Money can provide positive motivation in the right circumstances (Armstrong, 1990:79).

According to Smit and Cronje (1997:321,323) money does play a role in motivation, but researchers agree that a reward system should also satisfy other requirements. The monetary reward that employees receive is a package comprising salaries or wages and fringe benefits such as medical

schemes, insurance, holiday bonuses, sick leave and housing schemes. Werner (2001:340) refers to Mol (1990:59) who states that money does not motivate, but moves a person to achieve a goal in order to obtain the reward. Money can only serve as a motivator if it is a means to satisfy a need. Money can be used to satisfy many needs but the effect of money as a motivator depends largely on the pay system used in the organisation. When pay systems are not designed well, they either do not motivate or motivate the wrong behaviour.

There is also a feeling among experts that incentives often create too much person-to-person competition and therefore interfere with teamwork. Beck (2000:203) is of the opinion that incentives do motivate human behaviour. According to Cheminais et al. (1998:160) incentives too are very important motivational tools in the workplace. The result is a greater commitment towards improving performance productivity and quality through teamwork. The social work manager must identify and include all the important incentives for motivation in the work environment.

4.2.4 Motivation by training, education and development

According to Meyer (2002:363) training entails the transfer of specific skills to a staff member so that he/she can perform a very specific job or task. Education is defined as "... all activities directed at providing the knowledge, skills, moral values and understanding required..." for staff members to do the job (Meyer, 2002:360). Development, according to Meyer (2002:360) occurs when continuing learning opportunities are created so that staff can improve and develop to maintain high levels of performance while doing the job.

Learning opportunities, both on and off the job, can be a strong motivational force. Reece and Brandt (1993:168) quote Rosabeth Moss Kanter who said, "The chance to learn new skills or apply them in new arenas is an important motivator in a turbulent environment because it's oriented towards securing the future". In order for employees to undergo continuous stimulation, growth and development and to attain high levels of performance a different approach to development other than the traditional one is needed.

According to Botha (2000:67) personnel development can be regarded as a double-medium programme, because it contains elements of both the training and educational functions. Personnel development is usually short-term and intensive with a limited focus; usually addressing the needs of

employees on current, recently identified needs or to acquaint employees with new procedures that have been developed. The social work manager must provide management with the tools to facilitate personnel growth. Employees are keen on becoming involved in new or developing knowledge and are therefore positively inclined towards personnel development.

The development of employees calls for the measurement of skills: it involves a process whereby each leader studies the employees he/she leads and selects those with potential. The following are some of the ways in which the social work manager can develop employees:

- Allowing employees who qualify to attend tertiary educational institutions (universities, technikons or technical colleges) to enable them to obtain improved qualifications.
- Establishing training programmes. These programmes could make use of special training staff employed by the organisation.
- Identifying employees who show potential so that they can be promoted to senior positions and to give them special opportunities to demonstrate whether they possess exceptional abilities (for example in project work) (Craythorne, 1997:318-323).

Systematic training and development programmes will provide motivation by giving people the opportunity to enhance their skills and to achieve positions of greater responsibility. Sending someone away on a course can be a good way of showing him/her that he/she is valued and helps to improve their identification with the organisation (Armstrong, 1990:81). Training, education and development of staff is provided to facilitate improvements in attitude, knowledge and skills.

4.2.5 Motivation by performance management

To understand performance management as a process, it is necessary to analyse the components of performance management. *Performance* refers to the effort a team member makes to deliver outputs in the form of a product or service. *Management* refers to certain functions (including planning, organising, leading and controlling) a team leader carries out for a specific purpose. Liebenberg and Van der Merwe (1999:263-265) define performance management as a process during which the team leader:

- Plans (decides what outputs are required and when and according to what standards they are acquired).
- Organises (what resources should be made available and when).

- Leads (observes performance, evaluates it, recommends improvements and provides support).
- Controls the performance of team members (evaluates whether the performance results comply with the set standards).

Kolb et al. (1991:104-105) are of the opinion that managers need to do the following when assessing both the person and the environment in order to motivate good performance:

Figure out what outcomes each employee values. There are various ways of determining this, including 1) finding out employees' desires through some structured method of data collection, such as a questionnaire, 2) observing the employees' reactions to different situations or rewards, or 3) the fairly simple act of asking them what kinds of rewards they want, what kind of career goals they have, or "what's in it for them".

Determine what kinds of behaviour are desired. Managers need to define good performance and what are adequate measures or indicators of performance (quantity, quality). It also involves defining observable and measurable behaviour.

Make sure desired levels of performance are attainable. The levels of performance, which are set as the points at which individuals receive desired outcomes, must be reachable or attainable by these individuals.

Link desired outcomes to desired performance. Outcomes must be directly, clearly and explicitly linked to those desired by employees and to the specific performances desired by the manager. If the employee values external rewards, then the emphasis should be on rewards systems concerned with promotion, pay and approval. If the employees value internal rewards for example achievement, then the manager should concentrate on changing the nature of the person's job, for he/she is likely to respond well to things such as increased autonomy, feedback and challenge, because these will lead to a situation where good job performance is inherently rewarding.

Analyse the total situation for conflicting expectancies. Managers have to look at the entire situation to see if other factors (informal work groups, other managers, the organisation's reward systems) have set up conflicting expectancies in the minds of the employees. Motivation will only be high when people see a number of rewards associated with good performance and few negative outcomes. If there is major conflict the manager needs to make adjustments, either in the performance and reward structure, or in the other sources of rewards or punishments in the environment.

Make sure changes in outcomes are large enough. The manager needs to make sure that changes in

outcomes or rewards are large enough to motivate significant behaviour and motivate individuals to put forth the effort required to bring about significant changes in performance.

Check the system for its equity. The uniqueness of individuals requires that different rewards must be used to motivate different individuals. For a motivational system to work it must be a fair one – one that has equity (not equality). Good performers should see that they get more desired rewards than do poor performers and others in the system should also see that (Kolb et al. 1991:104-105).

Schermerhorn et al. (2000:116,117) summarise the link between performance and motivation as follows: 1) Vroom's expectancy theory argues that work motivation is determined by individual beliefs regarding effort/performance relationships and work outcomes, 2) expectancy is the probability that work effort will be followed by performance accomplishment and 3) instrumentality is the probability that performance will lead to various work outcomes.

4.2.6 Motivation by empowerment

Empowerment is described as those efforts made to move authority and responsibility to the lowest ranks of the organisation. These efforts intend to give workers a feeling of pride, self-expression, and ownership as well as to motivate them (Reece & Brandt, 1993:169).

Hellriegel and Slocum (1996:446) believe that empowerment occurs when a leader shares influence and control with followers. Empowerment helps to satisfy the basic human needs for achievement, a sense of belonging and self-esteem. The test of managing relationships with people always involves improving their ability to perform. As a result, individual and organisational learning has become a primary strategy for achieving a competitive advantage. This makes sense, for when people enhance their skills or learn new ones they become motivated and consequently business operations improve.

According to Covey (1999:216) managers, can within their circle of influence, improve conditions that lead to empowerment in organisations by focusing on the following aspects: take inventory and evaluate personal and organisational effectiveness; focus on creating change in personal character and skills; start the process of creating win-win agreements with supervisors or subordinates; work to create and strengthen supportive systems and structures within the organisation; and teach, exemplify, and reinforce.

The social work manager can apply motivational strategies as a tool in contributing to the motivation of social workers, as a means to motivate the unmotivated or to maintain existing high levels of motivation.

<p style="text-align: center;">JOB DESIGN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job characteristics have psychological meaning (satisfaction, involvement, etc.) and motivational potential (autonomy, social interaction, etc.) • Job rotation has career advancement and low absenteeism • Job enlargement improves on-the-job performance and productivity • Job enrichment motivates employees and promotes job satisfaction 	<p style="text-align: center;">TRAINING, EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation to learn promotes success for employees and the organisation • Encourage employees to be more responsible • Facilitate improvement in attitudes and knowledge
<p style="text-align: center;">JOB SATISFACTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leads to positive employment relationships and high levels of individual job performance • Influences absenteeism, positively or negatively depending on satisfaction/dissatisfaction • Affects turnover depending on satisfaction/dissatisfaction 	<p style="text-align: center;">PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides agreement on performance standards • Leads to satisfaction (fairness and motivation) • Guarantees individual growth, group and system development • Contributes to organisational effectiveness and change
<p style="text-align: center;">INCENTIVES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reward good performance • Encourage employees to develop good work habits • Improves commitment towards improving productivity and quality through teamwork • Motivates human behaviour • Move employees to achieve goals to obtain rewards 	<p style="text-align: center;">EMPOWERMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes to shared authority and responsibility for every employee • Promotes a feeling of pride, self-expression and ownership • Satisfies needs for achievement, a sense of belonging and self-esteem

TABLE 4.1 Outcomes of motivational strategies for social work managers

Source: Armstrong (1993), Covey (1999), Hellriegel and Slocum (1997), Luthans (1998), Noe et al. (2000), Reece and Brandt (1993) and Smit and Cronje (1997).

TABLE 4.1 displays motivational strategies and their outcomes that are useful for social work managers in motivating social workers.

4.3 MOTIVATIONAL GUIDELINES

Guidelines, as defined by Sheafor, Horejsi and Horejsi (1997, preface xviii), "... are a set of directions intended to influence the social worker's behaviour and decisions".

The researcher categorised the motivational guidelines, as referred to by De Beer (2002:135), Du Toit (1995:347-348), Robbins and Coulter (1996:557-559), Smit and Cronje (2002:346-359) and Werner (2001:342) in: 1) guidelines for permanent employed social workers, 2) guidelines for part time social workers and 3) guidelines for dealing with unmotivated social workers. Social work managers can apply these guidelines individually or integrated to facilitate the motivational function of management.

4.3.1 Guidelines for permanent employed social workers

- Subordinates must be suited to the work and this depends on their individual characteristics and inspirations. Managers can motivate social workers by identifying their real needs as employees in terms of **Maslow's hierarchy of needs**.
- Objectives must be used to motivate employees. Employees, particularly those who have a need to achieve high levels of performance, should have challenging and specific objectives set for them upon which feedback should be based. This guideline is supported by the **McClelland's achievement motivation theory**.
- Objectives must be perceived as achievable and the subordinate should be confident that his/her efforts could lead to the achievement thereof. Social work managers can motivate employees applying the **expectancy theory**.
- Rewards must be individualised in line with the **equity theory of motivation**. The employee should receive the reward that is consistent with the inputs made. Management should use their experience and knowledge of individual differences to distinguish between rewards over which they have control.
- Rewards must be linked to performance and should be made dependent on performance and used to reinforce performance. This guideline is linked to the **expectancy theory of motivation**.
- The importance of money must not be disregarded. Managers should not underestimate the **value of reinforcement theories**. The implementation of performance evaluations and other financial incentives are important in determining the employee's level of motivation.
- Eliminate dissatisfaction. **Positive reinforcement** must be done in accordance with **Herzberg's theory** by creating an environment that is conducive to work, giving praise, removing obstacles to performance, effective planning and organising, control through feedback, the expansion of communication and providing opportunities for growth,

achievement and responsibility.

- The activity trap must be avoided. The activity trap is the situation where management sets its rewards based on criteria other than the main purpose of the reward. Rather than rewarding performance, the reward is aimed at effort, seniority, skill level and other issues not really related to performance. The individual's attention is therefore distracted from his/her real task. The deliberate misuse of rewards can be avoided by applying rewards based on the beliefs of **Vroom's expectancy theory**. (De Beer, 2002:135; Du Toit, 1995:347-348; Robbins & Coulter, 1996:557-559; Smit & Cronje, 1997:318-320, 2002:346-359).

4.3.2 Guidelines for part time social workers

- Appreciate part time employees for the job they do. Recognition and appreciation are only achieved if goals are set, performance measured and feedback given.
- Treat part time employees the way you want them to act. If it is important for them to have a long-term perspective, then talk about their relationship with the organisation, their goals and the skills they need or are interested in learning.
- Provide new challenges through job rotation. Provide a choice of assignments where possible.
- Assign a mentor to the part time social worker. This will ensure that he/she internalises the values and attitudes of the organisation.
- Encourage part time social workers to take initiative in providing better services to clients.
- Provide orientation, specific training and the resources required to successfully execute the job.
- Communicate. Part time social workers are easily excluded from meetings and discussions that concern their jobs. Allow ample opportunity for communication. Encourage part time social workers to initiate communication.
- Make part time social workers feel part of the team. They also have affiliation needs and want to feel accepted in the organisation. Invite them to attend formal and informal meetings.
- Make it fun. Create an enjoyable work environment. Employee turnover is very high with part time social workers. High employee turnover is not only disruptive, but also affects client satisfaction (Werner, 2001:342).

4.3.3 Guidelines for dealing with unmotivated social workers

The management literature (Robbins & Coulter, 1996:557-559; Smit & Cronje, 2002:354-364) gives specific recommendations for unmotivated employees:

- Recognise individual differences. Employees have different needs. They also differ in terms of attitudes, personality and other important individual variables.
- Match people to jobs. There is a great deal of evidence showing the motivational benefits of carefully matching people to jobs.
- Treat employees fairly. Managers should be open and honest about employees' inputs and outputs.
- Increase the variety of tasks. Managers should use job enlargement as a motivational technique (see page 46).
- Extend employees' jobs. Managers should delegate tasks performed by people in the higher levels of management (see page 46).
- Make use of the job characteristics model. Managers should redesign jobs to enhance the motivation of employees (see page 45).

4.4 SUMMARY

Motivation is fascinating to study as it affects employees (the main internal asset of the organisation) and consequently influences the very existence of the organisation. Activities/strategies used by organisations to improve performance levels and productivity of employees are linked to motivation.

Motivational strategies discussed include: job design by expanding the job through job rotation, job enlargement and job enrichment; job satisfaction termed by Herzberg as "hygiene factors" and "motivator factors"; incentives in monetary and non-monetary form; training, education and development used to describe the practices that promote and support learning; performance management, which involves performance evaluation and reward allocation; and empowerment, which involves shifting authority and responsibility to a grassroots level in the organisation. The discussion on motivational strategies emphasised how each of these impacts on the individual.

Motivational guidelines were interpreted in an attempt to broaden the knowledge and understanding of social work managers with regard to motivating permanent employed social workers, part time

social workers and unmotivated social workers. The value of motivation for the social worker, social work manager and the organisation was highlighted in this discussion.

The findings of the research study are presented in chapter five. These findings will be compared and integrated with to the literature that was studied.