

Nuclear Decommissioning Authority - Summary

Developing a motivated workforce

Introduction

In 2005, the government brought the work of dealing with nuclear waste and decommissioning nuclear reactors under the control of the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA). To achieve its objectives NDA must recruit and retain talented staff. It faces challenges due to its ageing workforce and the image of nuclear power held by some people. NDA holds 'Investors in People' status gained by meeting the needs of its employees. This involves:

- retaining staff through training
- encouraging GCSE science students through the Energy Foresight programme
- sponsoring university students
- a graduate scheme giving two years professional development
- linking with national initiatives
- promoting postgraduate research.

Developing a motivated workforce enables NDA to deliver safe and sustainable solutions.

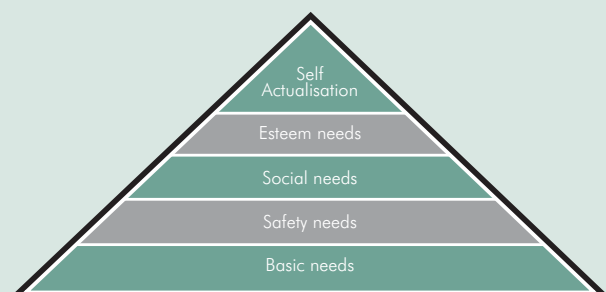
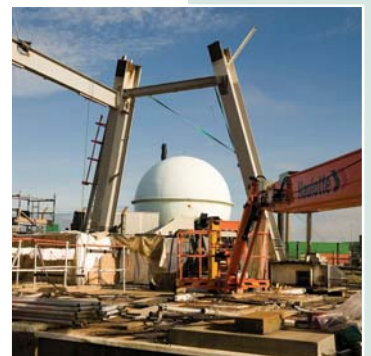
The value of motivation

Motivation refers to the commitment with which a person carries out a task or role. It affects almost every aspect of business. Motivated staff work harder and to higher standards because they care about their work. Achieving a motivated workforce is not easy. However, an unmotivated workforce could have a negative impact on the business. Various management theories have tried to explain motivation. Taylor (1911) introduced 'scientific management' where tasks were broken down into simple steps. This was useful in mass production industries, like car manufacturing, but is not suitable for a knowledge-based organisation like NDA. In the 1930s, Mayo concluded that motivation relies on teamwork and on managers taking an interest in workers.

Motivation and business growth

In 1943, Maslow suggested people are motivated by a 'hierarchy of needs'. These range from survival at the bottom level to 'self-actualisation' (achieving personal goals) at the top. The different levels of need are recognised by NDA. NDA provides more than just competitive pay. It also provides a way to satisfy the self-esteem of its employees through training or promotion.

In 1960, McGregor described two management styles. Theory X managers believe workers need discipline. Theory Y managers saw self-motivated employees who wanted to achieve more. This second view is shared by NDA. The NDA Way shows how the organisation demonstrates its values and provides the setting for motivating employees. It allows Maslow's lower and higher order needs to be met by providing a secure environment and good conditions, by increasing skills and developing talent and by challenging people to improve.



Motivation in practice

Hertzberg found that achievement and interest in the work were real motivators. Working conditions and pay were 'hygiene factors'. They were important, but could not motivate by themselves. However, 'hygiene factors' could cause dissatisfaction if they were absent. NDA offers pay and working conditions in line with the private sector. It also goes further. NDA rewards employees who achieve agreed targets with performance related pay bonuses. It also provides training and development to increase job and personal satisfaction.

Meeting individual and business needs

Nuclear decommissioning involves a variety of projects. Each project may have a number of activities. This poses a challenge for NDA to ensure each project group has the right skills to meet project objectives. NDA needs flexible people, able to work in teams and learn from experience. Team working links with Mayo's idea of motivation. As an additional motivator, it is also NDA policy to help staff find an effective work-life balance.

Conclusion

Leadership and the organisational culture can determine whether people feel enthusiastic about work or not. NDA operates in an industry where attracting and retaining skilled staff as well as motivating people to achieve the highest standards is a top priority. It achieves its objectives through its HR strategies.

