

Siemens - Summary

Motivation within a creative environment

Introduction

Siemens is an engineering group that designs and manufactures many different products, from domestic appliances to wind turbines. For example, its wind turbines generate about 40% of the UK's wind energy. It also hosts, supports and maintains the BBC's website, including the development of the BBC iPlayer.

Engineers use scientific principles to develop products or systems to solve real-life problems. Siemens provides opportunities for young people to become engineers. For instance, there are apprenticeships and graduate schemes. Siemens has an open culture with opportunities for advancement at all levels.

Motivation

Motivation gives people a reason or incentive to do something. Motivated people will feel fulfilled and be more productive. Many factors motivate people. At Siemens employees enjoy challenges, a creative setting and responsibility. The company's culture motivates staff by empowering and trusting them to improve processes. A motivated workforce creates low absenteeism and employees are more loyal. This has a positive impact on Siemens productivity and quality.

Scientific management

Frederick Taylor believed in breaking down tasks into smaller units of work. Workers undertook tightly defined tasks which gave them little flexibility or input into the process. Payment systems rewarded those who produced the most. Control such as Taylor suggested is not appropriate to modern businesses, like Siemens. Siemens' culture allows staff to become involved in their work. Control still exists, but employees are encouraged to work as a team and become involved in decisions.

Hierarchy of needs

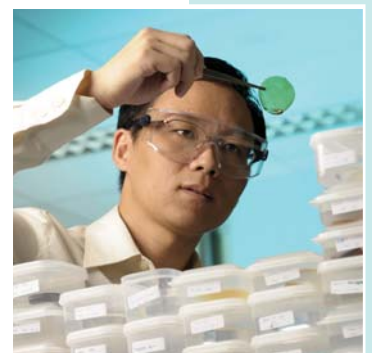
Maslow developed a 'hierarchy of needs' with survival needs at the bottom and more complex ones, such as fulfilling potential, at the top. Between these are safety needs, social needs and self-esteem needs (i.e. needing respect). Siemens provides the chance for employees to fulfil higher-order needs. It runs schemes in which suggestions and projects for improvements are rewarded. Siemens allows staff to fulfil their potential by allowing them to take responsibility for their own jobs. It also offers training and development opportunities.

Satisfiers/dissatisfiers

Herzberg believed that needs should be satisfied in the workplace in order for workers to be productive. He suggested that there were two influences:

1. Motivators (satisfiers that give job satisfaction) include:

- personal development opportunities
- achievement
- recognition
- promotion
- responsibility.



2. Hygiene factors (dissatisfiers) are important (for example, pay and working conditions), but do not necessarily motivate employees. However, hygiene factors can cause dissatisfaction if they are poorly managed.

These factors may include:

- company policies
- excessive rules or paperwork
- not being valued.

Siemens has to balance dissatisfiers against satisfiers to improve employee performance. It ensures hygiene factors are managed by raising awareness of issues with staff. Motivating factors at Siemens include the creative environment for its engineers to develop in and the fact that employees can influence their jobs.

Conclusion

Various motivation theories link pay and output. Some recognise that people are also motivated by higher order needs. Taylor's scientific management restricts employee contribution which is not relevant to a modern engineering environment like Siemens. Maslow and Herzberg's theories apply to Siemens. Herzberg discovered workplace elements that can satisfy and dissatisfy employees. Siemens meets Maslow's lower order needs through good pay and a safe workplace. Higher order needs are met through challenging and creative work, training and development prospects and being recognised for contributions in the workplace.

