# MOTIVATION THEORIES

Motivation is a state of mind, filled with energy and enthusiasm, which drives a person to work in a certain way to achieve desired goals. Motivation is a force that pushes people to work with a high level of commitment and focus, even if things are going against them. Motivation translates into a certain kind of human behavior. In short, motivation is the driving force behind human actions.

There are many different forces that guide and direct our motivations. It is important to ensure that every team member in an organization is motivated and meets the best project management course bottom line. Various psychologists have studied human behavior and have formalized their findings in the form of various motivational theories. These motivational theories provide insights into the way people behave and what motivates them.

Motivation theory is a way of looking at the motivation of a person and how this influences their behavior, whether for personal or professional reasons. It's important to every aspect of society but is especially relevant to business and management. Motivation is the key to more profitable employees, as a motivated employee is more productive.

## The 5 Theories of Motivation

Motivation is a huge field of study. Psychologists have proposed many different theories of motivation. Some of the most famous motivational theories include the following:

### 1. Maslow's Theory of Hierarchical Needs

Abraham Maslow postulated that a person will be motivated when all his needs are fulfilled. People do not work for security or money, but they work to contribute and to use their skills. He demonstrated this by creating a pyramid to show how people are motivated and mentioned that ONE CANNOT ASCEND TO THE NEXT LEVEL

UNLESS LOWER-LEVEL NEEDS ARE FULFILLED. The lowest level needs in the pyramid are basic needs and unless these lower-level needs are satisfied people do not look at working toward satisfying the upper-level needs.

**Below is the Hierarchy of Needs:**

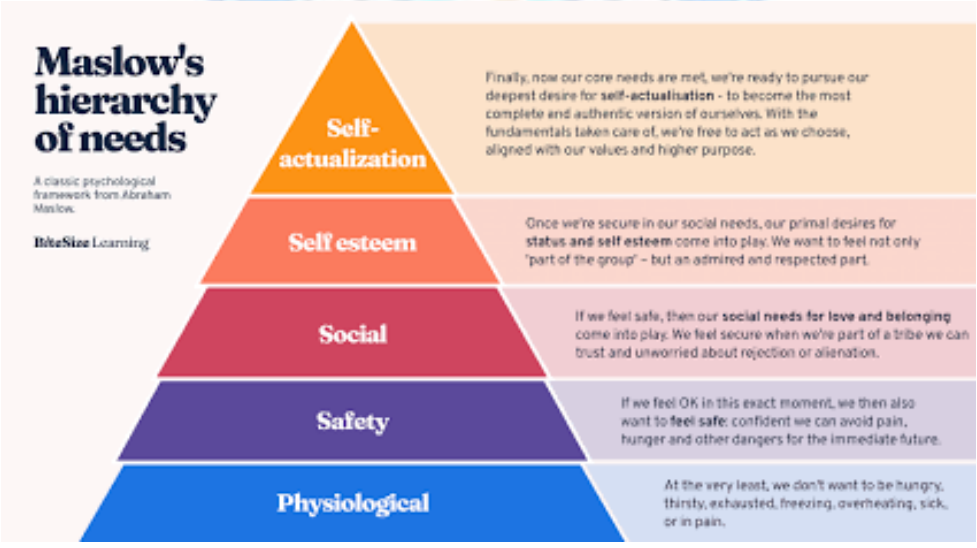
1. **Physiological Needs:** are basic needs for survival such as air, sleep, food, water, clothing, sex, and shelter.

2. **Safety Needs:** Protection from threats, deprivation, and other dangers (e.g., health, secure employment, and property).

3. **Social (belongingness and love) Needs:** The need for association, affiliation, friendship, and so on.

4. **Self-Esteem Needs:** The need for respect and recognition.

5. **Self-Actualization Needs:** The opportunity for personal development, learning, and fun/creative/challenging work. Self-actualization is the highest-level need to which a human being can aspire.




The leader will have to understand at what level the team members are currently, and seek out to help them to satisfy those specific needs and accordingly work to help fulfill those needs. This will help the team members perform better and move ahead

with the project. A PMP certification will help you better understand this concept. Also, as their needs get fulfilled, the team members will start performing, till the time they start thinking of fulfilling the next upper level of need as mentioned in the pyramid.

**2. Hertzberg's Two-factor Theory**

Hertzberg classified the needs into two broad categories; namely hygiene factors and motivating factors:

1. Poor hygiene factors may destroy motivation but improving them under most circumstances will not improve team motivation.

2. Hygiene factors only are not sufficient to motivate people, but motivator factors are also required.

**3. McClelland's Theory of Needs**

McClelland affirms that we all have three motivating drivers, which do not depend on our gender or age. One of these drives will be dominant in our behavior. The dominant drive depends on our life experiences.

**The Three Motivators Are:**

1. **Achievement:** a need to accomplish and demonstrate own competence. People with a high need for achievement prefer tasks that provide for personal responsibility and results based on their own efforts. They also prefer quick acknowledgment of their progress.

2. **Affiliation:** a need for love, belonging and social acceptance. People with a high need for affiliation are motivated by being liked and accepted by others. They tend to participate in social gatherings and may be uncomfortable with conflict.

3. **Power:** a need for controlling own work or the work of others. People with a high need for power desire situations in which they exercise power and influence over others. They aspire for positions with status and authority and tend to be more concerned about their level of influence than about effective work performance.

**4. Vroom's Theory of Expectancy**

Vroom's expectancy theory of motivation says that an individual's motivation is affected by their expectations about the future. In his view, an individual's motivation is affected by:

1. **Expectancy:** Here the belief is that increased effort will lead to increased performance i.e., if I work harder then it will be better. This is affected by things such as:
a. Having the appropriate resources available (e.g., raw materials, time).
b. Having the appropriate management skills to do the job.
c. Having the required support to get the job done (e.g., supervisor support, or correct information on the job).

2. **Instrumentality:** Here the belief is that if you perform well, then the outcome will be a valuable one for me. i.e., if I do a good job, there is something in it for me. This is affected by things such as:
a. A clear understanding of the relationship between performance and outcomes – e.g., the rules of the reward 'game'.
b. Trust in the people who will take the decisions on who gets what outcome.
c. Transparency in the process decides who gets what outcome.

3. **Valence:** is how much importance the individual places upon the expected outcome. For example, if someone is motivated by money, he or she might not value offers of additional time off.

**Motivation = V * I * E**
The three elements are important when choosing one element over another because they are clearly defined:

1. **E>P expectancy:** our assessment of the probability that our efforts will lead to the required performance level.

2. **P>O expectancy:** our assessment of the probability that our successful performance will lead to certain outcomes.

**5. McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y**

Theory X and Theory Y were first explained by McGregor in his book, "The Human Side of Enterprise," and they refer to two styles of management – authoritarian (Theory X) and participative (Theory Y).

**Theory X:** Managers who accept this theory believe that if you feel that your team members dislike their work, have little motivation, need to be watched every minute, and are incapable of being accountable for their work, avoid responsibility and avoid work whenever possible, then you are likely to use an authoritarian style of management. According to McGregor, this approach is very "hands-on" and usually involves micromanaging people's work to ensure that it gets done properly.

**Theory Y:** Managers who accept this theory believe that if people are willing to work without supervision, take pride in their work, see it as a challenge, and want to achieve more, they can direct their own efforts, take ownership of their work and do it effectively by themselves. These managers use a decentralized, participative management style.

**6. Alderfer's ERG Theory**

C. P. Alderfer, an American psychologist, developed Maslow's hierarchy of needs into a theory of his own.

His theory suggests that there are three groups of core needs: existence (E), relatedness (R), and growth (G). These groups are aligned with Maslow's levels of physiological needs, social needs, and self-actualization needs, respectively.

**Existence needs** concern our basic material requirements for living, which include what Maslow categorized as physiological needs such as air, sleep, food, water, clothing, sex and shelter and safety-related needs such as health, secure employment, and property.

**Relatedness needs** have to do with the importance of maintaining interpersonal relationships. These needs are based on social interactions with others and are aligned with Maslow's levels of love/belonging-related needs such as friendship, family, and sexual intimacy and esteem-related needs such as gaining the respect of others.

**Growth needs** describe our intrinsic desire for personal development. These needs are aligned with the other part of Maslow's esteem-related needs such as self-esteem, self-confidence, and achievement, and self-actualization needs such as morality, creativity, problem-solving, and discovery.

Alderfer is of the opinion that when a certain category of needs is not being met, people will redouble their efforts to fulfill needs in a lower category.

Maslow's theory is very rigid and it assumes that the needs follow a specific and orderly hierarchy and unless a lower-level need is satisfied, an individual cannot proceed to the higher-level need i.e., an individual remains at a particular need level until that need is satisfied.

Whereas, according to Alderfer's theory, if a higher-level need is aggravated, an individual may revert to increasing the satisfaction of a lower-level need. This is called the frustration-regression aspect of ERG theory. ERG theory is very flexible as Alderfer perceived the needs as a range/variety instead of perceiving them as a hierarchy i.e., an individual can work on growth needs even if his existence or relatedness needs remain unsatisfied.

For e.g., when growth needs aggravate, then an individual might be motivated to accomplish the relatedness need and if there are issues in accomplishing relatedness needs, then he might be motivated by the existence needs. Hence in this manner, frustration or aggravation can result in regression to a lower-level need.

Another example could be, if someone's self-esteem is suffering, he or she will invest more effort in the relatedness category of needs.

**Implications of the ERG Theory**

All managers must understand that an employee has various needs that must be satisfied at the same time. According to the ERG theory, if the manager focuses solely on one need at a time, then this will not effectively motivate the employee. The frustration-regression aspect of ERG Theory has an added effect on workplace motivation. For e.g., if an employee is not provided with growth and advancement opportunities in an organization, then he or she might revert to related needs such as socializing needs.

To meet those socializing needs, if the environment or circumstances do not permit it, he might revert to the need for money to fulfill those socializing needs. By the time the manager realizes and discovers this, they will take more immediate steps to fulfill those needs which are frustrated until such time that the employee can again pursue growth.