

Medical Institution's Staff Motivation through Satisfying Their Needs

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Summary: *In the context of the external marketing for staff, the primary goal is that the hospital attracts the interest of potential new employees on the competitive market. For that purpose an employer's own individual brand, if possible, should be created. The desired positive effect may be achieved by contemporary marketing tools attractive for the target group. In the process of staff recruitment, due to the lack of candidates, the requirements for the new jobs are often degraded. The less choice however does not mean that no selection is to be made. When a new employee is interested in and has chosen a given organisation it is of great significance to achieve integration during the period of induction. This includes the professional as well as the personal and social integration. Clearly expressed efforts in the sensitive induction period are a key precondition for the long-term emotional connection between any (new) employee and the organisation. Also with the individual support in the context of staff development it is possible to attract new employees and to retain the existing ones. Another aspect is the respectful situational or flexible management of employees to which the modern management and the human resources management shall actively devote to. The survey was conducted among 100 medical specialists and administrative employees in the period January – December 2016 at the Medical Complex Doverie, Sofia City, Bulgaria.*

Key words: *motivation, medical specialists,*

I. Introduction

While a few years ago economic management was of primary importance for the medical institution, today it is substituted by the human resources management. The biggest challenge however is finding new (qualified) specialists and managerial staff, the personal positioning as an attractive employer and most of all retention of the existing employees in the organisation.

Considering the permanently increasing requirements to each manager, he/she should feel individual support to be able to handle the challenges. This may happen by further education or training. Other often overbuilding area is the (production) management in Healthcare. When in addition to measures for health protection, additional systems of incentives are introduced that meet the employees' needs and they are perceived as attractive, fair and transparent, the medical institution would have already created good preconditions for the efficient attracting of new employees and simultaneously for permanent improvement of the motivation and the job satisfaction of the existing employees.

Subjectivism of staff motivation

While one employee may be strongly motivated and happy by his/ her job, other employee may be rather unmotivated and unhappy. As a rule the degree of motivation has direct influence on the quality of work and even from that point of view the theme deserves more attention.

In order to motivate one employee, first it should be clear how this may be achieved. The approach is very different depending on the individuality. However, what unites all people and their motivation is their basic needs. Only when the needs connected with the workplace are satisfied, the motivation may be overbuilt. One look at the A. Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the review how these basic needs may be satisfied by the enterprise, gives the first and important ground for the path to the purpose of motivation.

In his scheme Maslow presents all needs for personal realization as the so called deficiency needs. It means that needs shall be satisfied. Especially in the field of healthcare and medical specialists, many employees take to heart the attitude to their colleagues and therefore the organisation should more often take in the limelight the social aspects. Of course - and to a great extent the manager is involved here too - the assessment of the values and the assessment of the achievement are of great importance. Only feedback from the employees during the annual interviews with them is absolutely insufficient. In this regard it is much more necessary that the managers constantly reward their employees (and the team) for their achievements. This may include cash rewards but non-cash incentives as well as the increased responsibility or praises may also motivate employees to be more diligent. Within the personal realization, an employee may be motivated with new challenges, new work tasks or appropriate qualification. In any case, however, there should be a dialogue referring to the needs and the wishes of each individual.

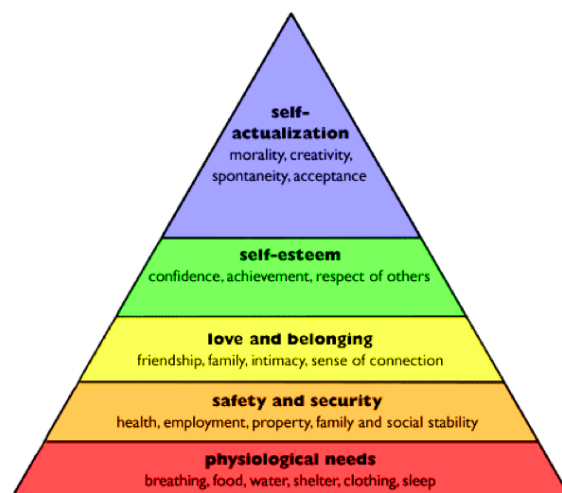


Figure. 1. The Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

II. Results and discussion:

The needs of people are different not only for their self-consciousness but also according to their current condition and changes. Employees give the following recommendations to the management if it wants to show recognition and satisfaction with their work: One third of the respondents specify the higher remuneration or the bonuses as a stimulus; in second place, 27%, have specified the opportunity to attend additional qualification courses. Many of the respondents say that such courses will help them get promotion and receive higher remuneration. The social benefits and the promotion are specified by 17%, respectively 11% of the employees.

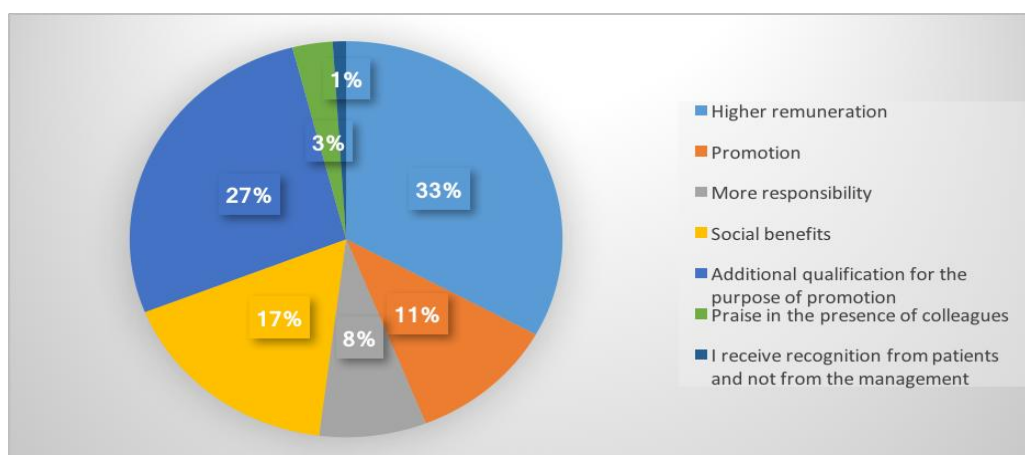


Figure. 2. Stimuli recommended by employees for recognition of their work.

If we review the Maslow's pyramid as a ladder, the higher we climb and satisfy needs at a higher level the more will be the spiritual thoughts that excite our consciousness. The survey of the employees' opinion about whose opinion contributes most for their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their work, expressed in provoking negative emotions upon negative reaction by a third person, showed the following results: for most employees (40%) the dissatisfaction expressed by the management brings negative emotions, 32% are most influenced by the patients, 11% consider that the opinion of their colleagues is the most important assessment for their work, 17% do not consider it necessary to experience negative feeling because someone is dissatisfied with their work.

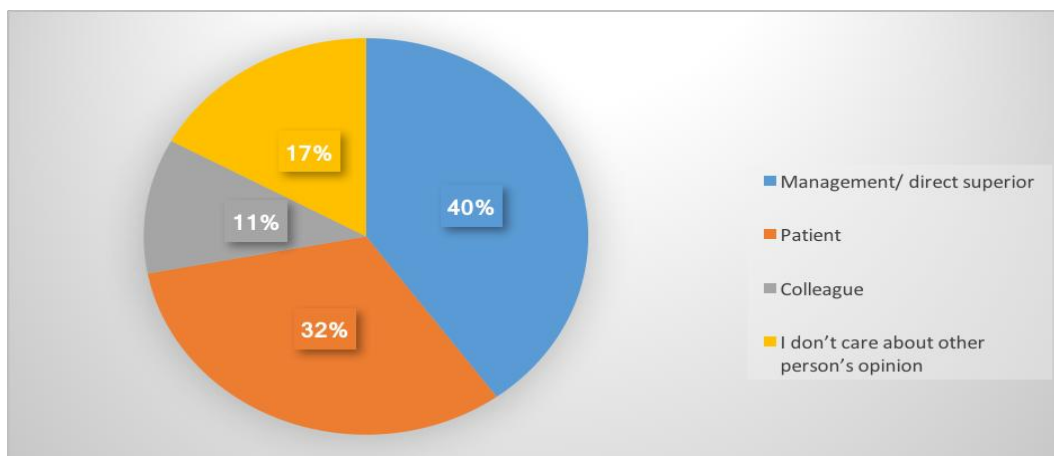


Figure. 3. Carriers of dissatisfaction causing negative emotions to employees.

Motivation and incentives do not aim only at attracting and retaining employees. Provision of high quality service is also important. Generally motivation may follow three directions:

- Prompting employees to perform specific work;
- Prompting employees to integrate their work with the others' work;
- Prompting employees to keep their affiliation to the organisation.

It is important to understand that often it is about small things, i.e. "reading between the lines", for asking how somebody feels, for a positive answer. This is also why the issue for assessment of values plays an important role for the management success.

To build reputation, the organisation shall act in an attractive manner and really be person-oriented. If the conceptual promises are not actually implemented, the medical institution will quickly lose confidence and therefore attractiveness. The surveys in the branch always show that employees feel to a great extent that they are appreciated and that insufficient respect is most detrimental for motivation. Employees involved in provision of medical care also wish more recognition for their professional and personal work. The employees of Medical Complex Doverie give positive opinion on this issue. 67% consider that they feel quite comfortable to notify and ask for help their direct superior if they experience difficulty in doing their work and assigned tasks and 61% of these 67% disagree with receiving lower pay but 6% agree with that provided that they will be able to do their work. One fifth of respondents consider that their colleagues have the potential to support them and to solve the case and 12% rather don't care about the results from their work.

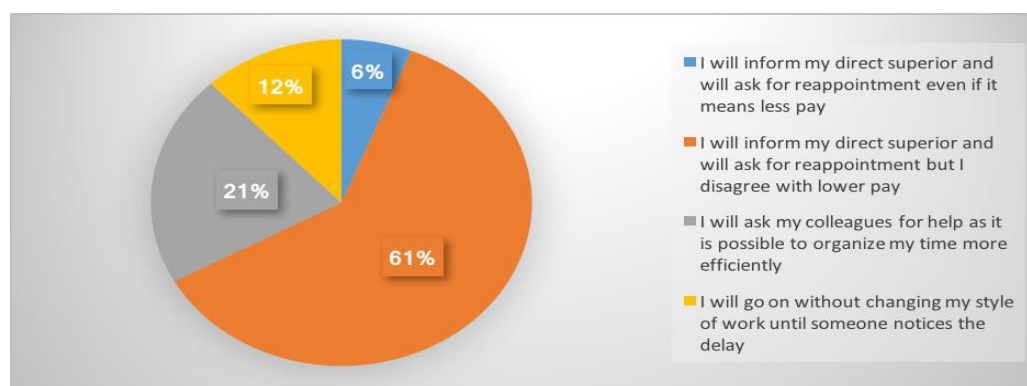


Figure. 4. Activities, which the respondents will perform upon failure to handle difficulties at work

Based on the conducted surveys as well as the change in the strategy of the organisation, the Medical Complex Doverie prepared a handbook for handling different situations related to human resources management. Recognition and respect are closely connected with the motivation and the incentives. The biggest difference between them is that recognition (as well as respect) is individual to any person. Most incentives are generally given to a large part of the employees or to all employees. The systems of incentives, however, provide a good tool for motivation and binding the employees even if they act more anonymously with regard to personal respect. Using recognition and respect actually means more commitment for the individual manager but it has stronger and more permanent effect. But which are the particular abilities to show respect to employees on a daily basis?

Time is something which always lacks but is a very important element for respect. Respect is time and showing respect often means "only" devoting time. For any given employee, you only need to spend a couple of minutes in order to make him feel appreciated. He must be asked about his condition, successes and must also be praised. One must also listen very carefully as there might be a hidden message and the employee might need help or support at a given moment. When one manages, continuously or for a short time, to talk with his/ her employee, he/she will quickly notice the changes in feelings and moods. A frank interest is shown that the employee is valuable to him/ her.

Meaning and place of human resources management in the modern hospital management

The question of whether or not an establishment is successful always comes down to the personnel. While other industries might have more or less qualified personnel or vacancies can easily be filled, the situation in healthcare and more specifically with the medical personnel is very different. Looking into the future, but also from the newest present experience, the decision-makers in this area know well that the "war for talents" is now "war for all". Finding employees and their retention is the focus area of the next few years. While not long ago the issue for personnel management in medical institution was often underestimated priority, today modern management cannot ignore the fast growth of the importance of the human resources management. The main causes highlight once again this importance:

- Demographic change;
- Need of care;
- Lack of qualified and managerial staff;
- Necessary guarantee for quality of care through constant care and services

The population in Europe in the next 40 years is getting older. With the increasing life-expectancy the "over 65 years old" group will keep increasing. Need of medical care will also increase. There probably won't be need of new potential clients. On the contrary, even today some hospitals refuse to take new patients. The sphere of employees is in a different situation. The employed will be able to choose between workplaces in the next years. They will look more precisely at what a given medical institution offers them and how much that satisfies them. Modern management has to be active, plan strategically its human resources management, be adequate and present and profit from this with a clear goal in mind. Only then will the hospital have a long term chance of cementing itself on the market and actively attract employees.

With the growing complexity of this sphere and the new meaning (along with the classic one like appointment, management, staff development and so on) for positioning as an attractive employer, recruiting employees, creating systems of incentives etc. lies the question of how well this can be accomplished by current managers. In order to satisfy all requirements, realistically more than one or two people should be engaged in most cases – especially when they are very busy with their positions. That supposes realizing the future challenges and honestly admitting the weaknesses and risks while at the same time this may mean at least abandonment in the course of time of the current priorities.

First the meaning, which the human resources management in medical institutions has and must have in the future, must be clearly defined. Only then can responsibilities be organized, which must be spread on the basis of the heightened importance and in certain cases, between multiple people. That is why taking responsibility and starting a strategic planning in the sphere of staff management must work out and fulfil the existing elements of management with the missing tools for motivation and controlling human capital. However, it is hard to put theory to practice. The vision must be organized in the frame of understandable living models and principles, before they can be applied again in operational strategies and daily rules. This in practice often represents one of the hardest obstacles, because if the theoretical musings are not felt in the daily work, they will sooner or later become unusable for the employees as well as for the entire hospital.

The principles that must be realized in the framework of human resources management must be hardcoded into the culture of managed structure, as only then will the necessary combination of various measures, tools and their implementation be possible.

Employees must personally participate in all discussions. Even when the management must decide the goals and higher strategies, experts must be attracted to staff management. In most cases the employees are glad when they can offer their engagement, be asked and listened to and in certain cases take on extra responsibility. In order for the initiated rules and strategies to become reality it is of major importance that employees be involved in their development from the very beginning. That way the acceptance of these measures will increase much more and resistance to new implementations will be avoided.

The successful result is a reason for complete satisfaction and not its consequence. For that to be achieved there must not only be efforts but also capable people and appropriate rewards, adequate perceptions of rewards and values.

Lessons learnt:

As a result of the survey made among the medical and other specialists, working at Medical Complex Doverie, the following conclusions may be made:

1. The most important motivational drivers for the employees are the “Possibility of career growth and development”, “Possibility of raising qualification” and “Moral satisfaction of a job well done”.
2. Successful marketing strategy requires modern education of managers in the healthcare system who are responsible for developing the package of health services and products, pricing and distribution, analysis of the behaviour of consumers, creating a marketing plan and deciding on the market.
3. Applying the marketing to the medical institution helps create a more effective way of controlling resources of the institution and puts the needs of an individual (a patient or an employee) as top priority of the activity and the result.
4. The organizations in the sphere of healthcare are actively trying to attract experts and their employees in developing and applying proper strategies for action. The employees are the key to the success and on the basis of their experience they can contribute to certain possibilities, necessities and limits.
5. Good management is controlled by two kinds of goals in human resources management – economic and social. Only their parallel balancing helps for motivated personnel.

III. Conclusion

In conclusion, what must be noted is that the European and world practice in the sphere of hospital marketing is a good base for the future development of this activity in every medical institution in the Republic of Bulgaria. The high added value for patients requires intensity and consistency in investing in education for medical specialists and the demand of higher quality from them. The medical sphere is moving more and more towards telemedicine, electronic healthcare and last but not least - personal medicine. To have a better quality of service, high satisfaction of the population by the healthcare system, mostly by the product they get, the main requirement must be complied with – competition when offering healthcare services and products. Services that do not satisfy patients are not just those they receive in medical establishments, but a totality of bad cooperation in the healthcare system. This leads to the conclusion that the National Health Fund as a monopolist structure in a country with a market economy does not meet the worldwide goals of democratising and opening the market for healthcare services.

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