

Social Influences of Project Management - Employee Motivation in Project Management

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## Introduction

Today, after I have reviewed a paper entitled, Motivation in Project Management: The Project Manager's Perspective published in June 2008 in the Project Management Journal (Schmid & Adams, 2008). "Motivation is the driving force within individuals that compels them physiologically and psychologically to pursue one or more goals to fulfill their needs or expectations," (Lam & Tang, 2003). I came up with some significant information related to social influences of project management, and how that influences on the organizations' outcome. I will go through the considerations for project management decision makers, and how the stability on the social life will help in motivate people. I will provide some statistics and surveys that I have done on this matter. As we know, most organizations' departments are formed in teams which they are formed with intent. A clear view of this the common goal or purpose in which each member works in coordination with fellow team players. Therefore, in order to reach that goal, then we need to know their social life off and on work which will impact on organization goal.

## Statement of the Problem

Lately, the main concern in project management has been changed from scientific and technical sides of work such as (planning, estimating, scheduling, and controlling) to people social life aspects such as motivation. Google dictionary defined word motivation as "The reason or reasons one has for acting or behaving in a particular way and the general desire or willingness of someone to do something" (Google Inc., 2009) and the PMBOK defined it as, "energizing people to achieve high levels of performance and to overcome barriers to change." ((PMI), 2004) These definitions are influencing in both work-place and academic world. In other words, we noticed that there is increasing in research papers and courses on leadership and

motivation. As a result, Abraham Maslow and Frederick Herzberg defined motivation as “industrial psychologists, working separately, found that human motivation is driven by needs. When we have a need, we undergo tension that increases until we satisfy it.” (Teambuilding Inc., 2001). As a consequence, the authors have done their studies with active project managers about what motivates people. My research is study involving the motivation itself and how that reflects project teams’ outcome. I came up with the calculation that motivation is the important input to be a successful in a project and to meet your goal. Nevertheless, that is not just the key however for a person to be active and creative that person needs to love and be loved, and that is what they called person’s social needs (Figure 1).

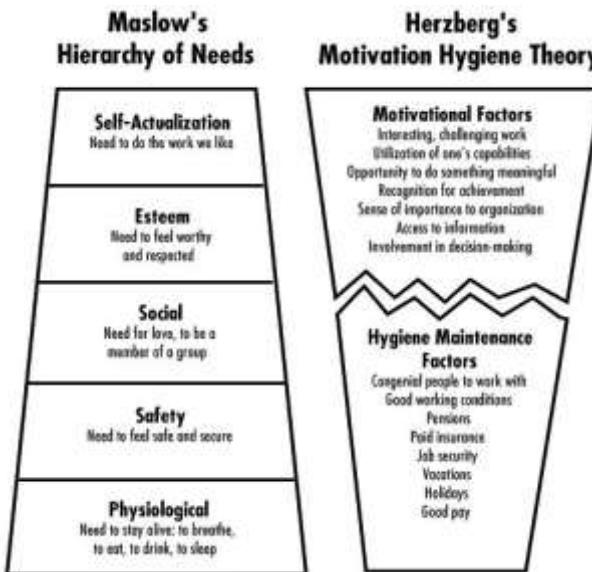


Figure 1. Maslow's and Herzberg's Theories

### Objective of the Research

We believe that Google, Inc. has motivated their employees by the work environment that the company has created; therefore, the employees love their job. Google, Inc.’s CEO, Erin Schmitt, adopts on his company this theory “fun is good”, and says “work should be challenging, and the challenge should be fun” (Google, 2009). Therefore, fun will motivate employees to love

their job, and by loving their job, that will make them to work more professionally, and by working professionally, that will increase the quality of work which will increase the rate of the return to Google, Inc or any organization applies it.

Google, Inc supports modernization and skills, and that's what the people from all over the world are looking for, and that what makes them to come and join Google, and of course all of that based on their capabilities. There is no official hierarchy has used, which makes everyone be at the same level and be open to speak out their minds. In this case, employees have many workplace attractions that keeps them motivated and love to work, such as, 8 hours per week to do your own project, snack & cafe rooms, barbershop, workout rooms, and etc..

Therefore, I did a survey starting with asking them about their gender and age to determine what kind and level of people that I am dealing with, then ask them this main question which is “when I am working for a company, I am motivated by having a good (.....) at my workplace.” I will have some factors as answers to be scaled and ranked by 1-5, by having number 5 represents “Strongly Agree”, number 1 represents “Strongly Disagree”, and number 3 represents “It does not matter”. The factors are: work environment, financial rewards, higher status in my team work, fun environment, snack & cafe rooms, 8 hours per week to do my own project, competition with others, barbershop, and workout rooms.

Therefore, my theory is how to motive your employees like what Google, Inc did, and is that really affective? Thus, I asked this question: What do you like and value most at your job? In this case, I focused my work on what motivates people to work, and that will give me how their social life off-work and on-work will influence on their job, and especially on the project management side, such as the financial rewards will reflect their social life off-work and work environment will reflect it on-work and so on. These are basically what I did to develop a plan to

implement motivation in an organization and wrote my final paper about. Another reason of this paper is to explain what is well-known about motivating employees in project management.

#### Nature and Significance of the Problem

Since the concern in project management has been changed from scientific and technical sides of work such to people social life aspects such as motivation, and as a result that project management becomes more popular. Many researches have shown that the outcome of any project has related to the social needs of the employee him/her-self, thus motivated employees helping you getting creative work more than unmotivated employees.

#### Hypothesis and Research Questions

I used a survey with few questions that gave me what I was looking for, moreover, my experiments was to collect data from the regular employees and ask them what work environment makes them more motivated, on the other hand, Schmid and Adams did their study on project managers thoughts. My survey was as follows:

We believe that Google, Inc. has motivated their employees by the work environment that the company has created; therefore, the employees love their job.

What do you like and value most at your job?

1. What is your age range?
2. What is your gender?
3. When I am working for a company, I am motivated by having a good (.....) at my workplace.
  - a) Work environment
  - b) Financial rewards
  - c) Higher status in my team work

- d) Competition with others
- e) 8 hours per week to do my own project
- f) Snack & cafe rooms
- g) Barbershop
- h) Workout rooms
- i) Fun environment

In addition, and as I mentioned on Objective of the Research section on page 2 that I had scaled and ranked the choices by 1-5, by having number 5 represents “Strongly Agree”, number 1 represents “Strongly Disagree”, and number 3 represents “It does not matter”.

#### Assumptions

It is assumed from the responses that I had since they are regular employees will provide balanced responses for the questions on this survey, and since I just had few questions and my survey was online, that will make the answers to be more true, and on Data Collection and Data Analysis sections on page 8 & 10, I explained how the responses that I had were not fake.

I am assuming always if you make a short survey that has all what you need, and make you able to analysis the data, then you do not have to worry about any fake response, because long online survey is uninteresting for some people.

#### Review of Literature

One of the mainly subjects in social life influencing organizational behavior is Motivation (Robbins, 2005). Currently, the organizations are trying to instruct their managers about the concept of motivation, and how to apply those motivation theories on their employees. I found a large variety of theories on that subject, and in this case they need to focus on social-

life motivation and the good managers who know how to apply the effective theory to motivate their employees.

### Literature Related to the Research

#### *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*

A Theory of Human Motivation, which is a paper published by Abraham Maslow (Maslow, A theory of human motivation, 1943) talked about motivation, and according to his paper, the answer to the question, “why people are motivated?” is that they are motivated by a variety of needs (Maslow, Motivation and personality, 1970). In his paper, he listed all the human needs and divided them into five “needs” that can then be organized in levels by importance. Therefore, Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs is organized from the lowest level to the top highest level as the following: physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self-transcendence (See Figure. 1).

*Physiological needs:* physiological needs are placed at the very lowest level of Maslow’s needs, which are the most necessary needs for human and for any human survival, for example, food, water, breathing, sleep, and etc.

*Safety needs:* needs to feel in safe, which include: financial security, job security, personal security, health, insurance for illness/accidents.

*Social needs:* needs to love and be loved, and needs to feel a sense of belonging of a group and recognition.

*Esteem needs:* needs to be respected, confidence, self-worth, self-respect, and self-esteem. These include any respect that the employees get when they achieve what they had to do.

*Self-actualization:* this is at the highest top level of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, that is including truth, honesty, knowledge, and meaning, and in other words, the person needs to do the work that he/she wants and likes to do. Maslow said "only a small percentage of the population reaches the level of self-actualization." (Maslow, Motivation and personality, 1970)

### *Herzberg's Motivation Hygiene Theory*

Frederick Herzberg with two of his friends published a book titled "The Motivation to Work" and it has two factors on the human motivation (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959). However, Herzberg's Motivation Hygiene Theory was based on studies of surveys in a work-place that shows the way of employees' happiness and satisfaction by asking them this question: "What do people want from their jobs?" Herzberg's survey was titled by, "What do people want from their jobs?" (Herzberg F. , 2003) As a result, he came up with these two factors: (See Figure. 1)

*Motivational Factors:* employees will be motivated in/to work if they have access to information on their projects, involvement in the organization decision-making, and self-esteem.

*Hygiene Maintenance Factors:* financial security, job security, health insurance, and work environment.

### Literature Related to the Research Design

Speaking of Schmid and Adams paper, they did their study with an online survey service company called SuiveryZ, and they sent the invitation for this survey by e-mail (Schmid & Adams, 2008). I am using quantitative research designs with non-experimental research since the experience of my participants was normal, and I was not looking to solve the issue other than looking for the result that I found after my research.

## Methodology

A short analysis of literature on the researches of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Motivation Hygiene Theory, and an online survey. My survey was by an online survey service company called SurveyMonkey, the survey was sent as a hyperlink by e-mail to 75 participants, and I had 52 responses on one week.

### Research Design

I am using quantitative research designs with non-experimental research since the experience of the participants was normal, and I was not looking to solve the issue other than looking result that I found after my research.

### Population, Sample, and Subjects

On my survey I had 53 responses out of 75 e-mails I sent, which is 70.6%. My survey question will determine the samples that I had. For example, I started by asking about the age range to see who I am dealing with, and based on that my result will reflect by this age range on my main survey. After that, does the gender matter? Let's see the result on my Data Analysis section on page 10.

### Data Collection

I had 52 people answered this question and 1 person skipped this question. As we see that the age range of 22-30 was 55.8% from the overall, see figure 2:

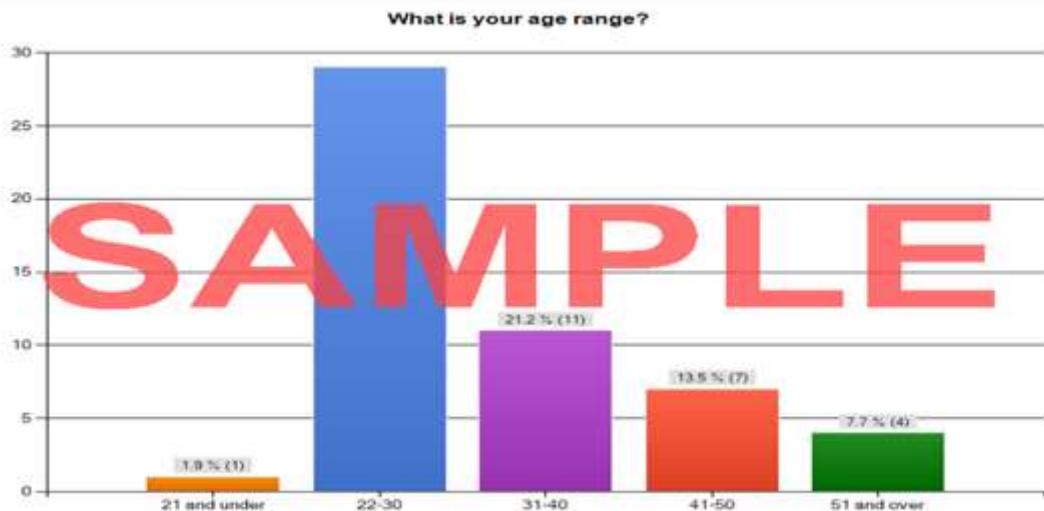


Figure 2. What is your age range?

I had 48 people answered this question and 5 people skipped this question, thus, 31 male and 17 female, which makes 14 people difference on the male side by 29.2% more, see figure 3:

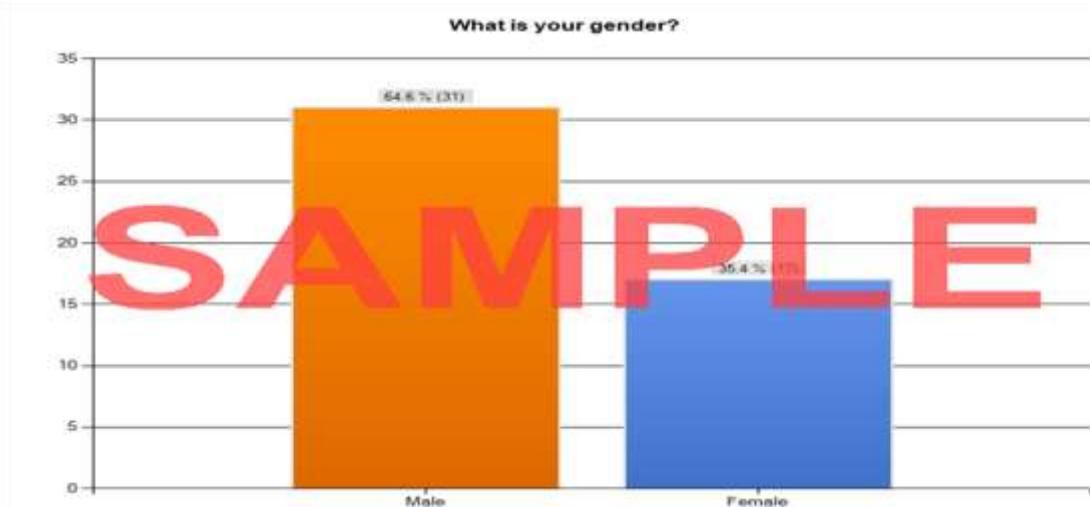


Figure 3. What is your gender?

Finally, based on my main question, this is the result, see figure 4:

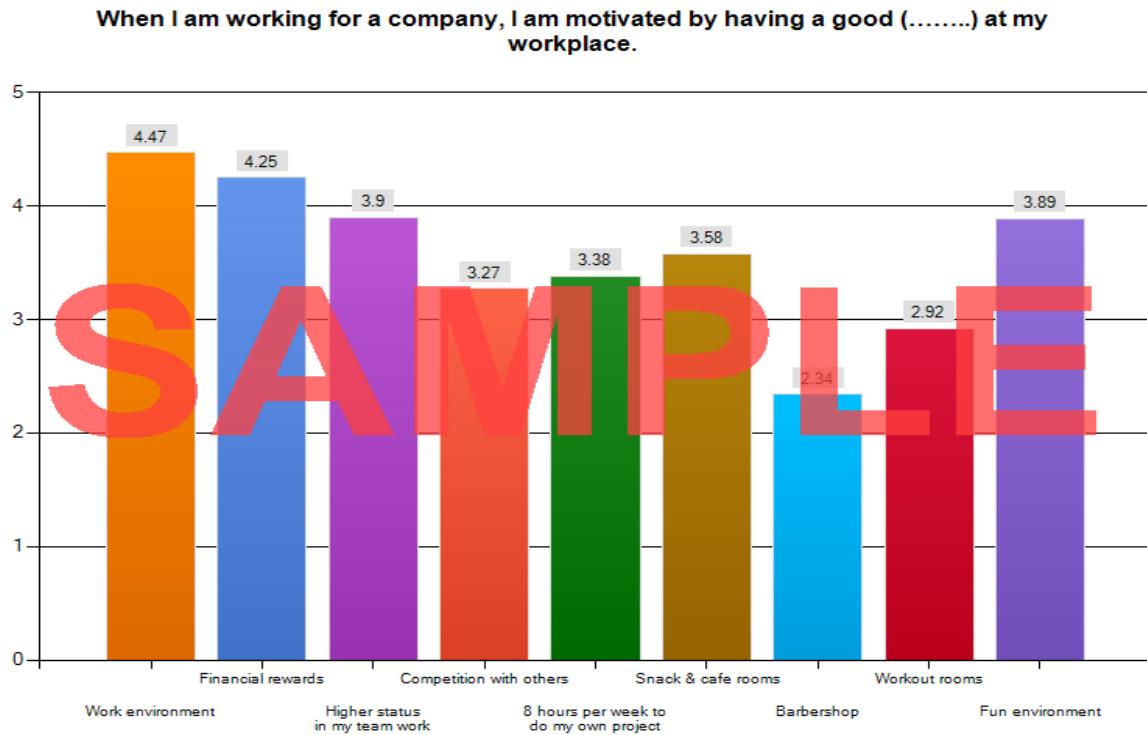


Figure 4. Main question

I had all the 53 people answered this question, and my scale was ranked by 1-5, by having number 5 represents “Strongly Agree”, number 1 represents “Strongly Disagree”, and number 3 represents “It does not matter”.

### Data Analysis

Based on the result that we have I assume that if there is a fake respond will not reflect my theory, because all of the responses on my main question are above 2.34 out of 5, that will lower the chance of having any fake respond reflects my conclusion. I could come up with this, that the people between 22-30 years old and male they agreed that they will be motivated by having a good work environment and financial rewards at their workplace. In the same time, if I

take the responses that above 3.00 out of 5 on my scale, which means above “It does not matter” answer to “Strongly Agree”, then I will come up with:

*Work environment 4.47/5 (89.4%):* That proves the work environment is extremely important for the people at work, and it supports one of Herzberg's hygiene maintenance factors that is on the figure above. The highest factor rate was Strongly Agree by 64.2%.

*Financial rewards 4.25/5 (85%):* That proves the financial rewards are extremely important for the people at work, it supports one of Herzberg's hygiene maintenance factors that on the figure above, and it supports one of Maslow's hierarchy of needs Physiological that is on the figure above as well. The highest factor rate was Strongly Agree by 49.1%.

*Higher status in my team work 3.9/5 (78%):* That proves the higher status in the team work is very important for the people at work, it supports one of Herzberg's hygiene maintenance and motivational factors that is on the figure above, and it supports one of Maslow's hierarchy of needs Self-Actualization that is on the figure 1 as well. The highest factor rate was Agree by 36.0%.

*Fun environment 3.89/5 (77.8%):* That proves, having a fun environment at work is important and it supports one of Herzberg's hygiene maintenance factors that is on the figure above. The highest factor rate was Agree by 35.8%.

*Snack & cafe rooms 3.58/5 (71.6%):* That proves, having Snack & Cafe rooms at work are important for the people. The highest factor rate was Agree by 39.6%.

*8 hours per week to do my own project 3.38/5 (67.6%):* That proves it is good to have 8 hours per week to do my own project work at work, it supports one of Herzberg's hygiene maintenance and motivational factors that is on the figure above, and it supports one of Maslow's

hierarchy of needs Self-Actualization that is on the figure above as well. The highest factor rate was It Does not matter by 49.1%.

*Competition with others* 3.27/5 (65.4%): That proves it is good to have competition with others at work, and it supports one of Herzberg's hygiene maintenance and motivational factors that is on the figure above. The highest factor rate was It Does not matter by 38.5%.

*Barbershop*: The highest factor rate was It Does not matter by 45.3%.

*Workout rooms*: The highest factor rate was It Does not matter by 43.1%.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, after reading this final research paper, we be able to understand more about how important the motivation in project management. As we mentioned, motivation is to help and understand their social life in both off-work and on-work and how that will influence on their work. Therefore, it is important to know how to implement motivation in an organization and its significance to be introduced in today's business world in order to be more productive, organized and efficient.

In short, I believe my research was fully of knowledge that will help in plan any further studies in this subject, and what to consider or avoid. The person's social needs are very important for any organization to consider for their employees in order to meet their goal. Maslow and Herzberg theories concluded that our needs are divided into levels starting from the most basic survival needs to very self-actualization needs. They believed that we should start our most basic needs first, and then move up to the higher level of needs.

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