

Research on Apple's Motivational Behavior for Knowledge Workers

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Abstract: With the progress of society, the factors that affect the development and management of enterprises are also more diversified. Among them, the incentive mechanism for employees is a necessary factor to promote the development of enterprises; and knowledge-based employees, as products of the information age, are an important force to promote enterprises. This paper takes Apple as a case study to study the incentive mechanism of knowledge workers. Based on the definitions of motivational behavior and knowledge workers, the article looks for the application of motivational theories in organizational behavior such as Maslow's Hierarchical Theory of Needs in Apple. By analyzing the research on the incentive mechanism of knowledge workers, it is found that Apple is more controversial in the two aspects of internal incentives and salary fairness for knowledge workers. Therefore, this article concludes based on the research results: Two-factor theory and fairness theory are what Apple needs to pay special attention to and use when conducting incentive behaviors. The significance of this research is to analyze the motivational behavior of the enterprise, improve it with the theory of organizational behavior, and practice it in the future enterprise management, so that the strengths of knowledge workers can promote the growth of the enterprise.

Keywords: Motivation, Knowledge workers, Apple, Two Factor Theory

1. Introduction

As a specific mode of enterprise management, motivational behavior is one of the motivational sources of employees. As a product of the information age, knowledge worker's ability and productivity are important to enterprise development and have research value in the field of Organizational Behavior. Many papers believe that the factors that affect knowledge worker teams can promote teamwork, so focus on knowledge worker team effectiveness. From the perspective of managers, positive incentives for knowledge workers can not only reduce the cost of human resource management, but also enhance cohesion. Therefore, this paper absorbs the above viewpoints, and uses Apple as a case study, using the motivation theory in organizational behavior to study the motivation mechanism of knowledge workers.

The following will introduce the industry background and corporate background of Apple respectively. High-tech industries refer to industrial groups that use contemporary cutting-edge technologies to produce high-tech products. It is an industry with high investment in research and development and a large proportion of research and development personnel. High-tech industries are

developing rapidly and have strong penetration capabilities to other industries[1]. The employees in this industry have a high level of culture and technology, and have a strong sense of innovation. It is a gathering area for knowledge workers[2].

Apple Inc. is an American high-tech company with \$365.8 billion in revenue, led by Steve Jobs, Steve Gary Wozniak, and Ronald Gerald Wayne, among others. The company was named Apple Computer Inc. when it founded on April-1-1976, and it was renamed Apple Inc. on January-9-2007, headquartered in California. Apple has been the world's largest company by market capitalization for three consecutive years. In 2014, the Apple brand surpassed Google to become the world's most valuable brand.

In the work, I search for effective incentive methods and strategies for knowledge workers through the case study of Apple, use organizational behavior to study the factors that motivate knowledge workers, and provide improvement suggestions for the application of motivational behavior in Apple's corporate management[3]. The paper organization of the article is an overview of motivational behavior, the concept of knowledge workers and related feature points, the application of motivational theory in Apple, the problems existing in Apple's incentive mechanism, and suggestions for improvement with the help of Organizational Behavior theory.

2. Apple's Incentive Behavior for Knowledge Workers

2.1. Overview of Motivate Behavior

2.1.1. Need and Motivation

Organizational management include motivate employee take need and motivation as a major factor. Need is the source of an organism. As an unbalanced internal state of an organism, it is reflected in the organism's stable needs for the internal environment and external conditions to survival. Motivation is the inner mental activity process or inner power that guides, stimulates and maintains individual activities by a goal or object.

Need is the basis of motivation, there are two conditions need to be met while need transforming to motivation: certain strength and stimulate of incentive. Incentive's function is to inspire the goal-directed behavior, motivation occurs when the drive that needs to be elicited is directed toward a specific goal or incentive[2].

2.1.2. The Significant, Features and Role of Motivate Mode

The word motivation is derived from the Latin word "moveve", which means "push". motivation mainly refers to stimulating people's incentive, so that people have an inner motivation and move forward to the goal. Therefore, motivation can be regarded as a mobilization of positivity.

The main feature of incentive are separate in four contributor. The first is purpose of incentives, which is to meet various external needs of employees through a scientific salary management system, so as to achieve corporate goals and personal goals of employees. Next is the realization method of incentive is to give consideration to both reward and punishment.

Reward employees for behavior that aligns with company expectations, and punish employees for behavior that doesn't align with company expectations. Not only should employees be rewarded for behavior that aligns with company expectations, but employees should be punished for behavior that does not align with company expectations. Scientific motivational work is the third factor. It is a very systematic work, which runs through employees' work from beginning to end, including understand the individual needs of employees, personality discovery and the evaluation of behavioral outcome. It can be seen from this that the whole process of enterprise work must take into account the incentive effect, and incentive work requires patience. The last contributor is the communication of information

throughout the motivational work. From the promotion of the motivate system and the understanding of the employees of the enterprise, to the control of the employee's behavior process and the evaluation results of the employee's behavior, etc., all depend on certain information exchanges. Efficient, comprehensive and convenient information communication can make the incentive mechanism achieve twice the result with half the effort.

The major roles of incentive mode are to attract personnel, motivate personnel and keep personnel. These even related to organization planning and deployment[2].

2.1.3. Practice of Motivate Behavior

Principle

(1) Principle of Material Benefit: this related to individual economy, life security, emotion, etc. Therefore, when the material interests of employees have not been fully satisfied, the motivation of employees should focus on the principle of material interests; even after the material interests of individuals have been considered fully satisfied, the incentive effect of material interests should not be ignored.

(2) Principle of equity: people gain equity by contrast. Not only the absolute amount, but also the relative amount are which they concentrate on. The principle of “distribution according to work” is to reflect fairness. However, compared with “distribution according to work”, fairness in the theory of fairness considers the subjective feelings of individuals and the relationship between people and others, so it is more practical.

(3) Principle of differentiation and diversification: The essence of motivation is to meet the needs of individuals, and people's needs are diverse and constantly evolving, so the incentive methods must be varied. Facts have proved that the effectiveness of incentives can only be guaranteed if the principles of differentiation and diversification are adhered to in incentive work.

Requirement

Incentive behavior is more demanding, and it is necessary to ensure the distribution according to work and the utilization of differences while rewarding behaviors that the organization needs. At the same time, it is also necessary to ensure that the specific timing and intensity of motivation are grasped in the incentive, and it is also necessary to pay attention to the differences in the individual needs of employees to establish a systematic incentive strategy system.

2.2. The Concept and Features About Knowledge Worker

2.2.1. Concept

Definition

As the carrier of knowledge, knowledge workers are the media of many links in the enterprise. For the creation, utilization and development of their knowledge achievements, the rational allocation of resources cannot be separated from knowledge workers. Their pursuit of autonomy, creativity, personalization, and diversification makes their work motivation mostly derived from the intrinsic rewards of work. Enterprises need to adjust their motivational behavior, so as to maximize the role of knowledge workers in corporate competition[2].

The Six Elements

(1) Professional ethics

The quality of professional ethics is the most important quality in all quality. Because knowledge workers hold important technical and other information of the enterprise, if the professional ethics quality is low, it will cause great harm to the company.

(2) interpersonal communication quality

Knowledge workers need good communication skills in teams, which is good for exchange of ideas and productivity. As an open organization, the team is largely influenced by the expressiveness and creativity of knowledge workers.

(3) Professional and technical quality

Professional skills are the application of theory at the practical level. This quality can be seen in knowledge workers' ability to understand and apply academic knowledge.

(4) Basic management quality

Knowledge workers should master general management principles and management methods. Due to the introduction of the management model of self-management and equal cooperation, each employee may become a temporary manager to be responsible for coordinating the work of team members.

(5) Physical fitness

The mental and physical health of employees is the basis for better work in the future, and it is the capital for knowledge workers to demonstrate their abilities.

(6) Thinking quality

Knowledge workers need to develop logical thinking to analyze and judge tasks. In addition, independent thinking system is also a reflection of thinking quality.

2.2.2. Features

Knowledge workers always have corresponding professional expertise and high personal quality. On one hand, they are very much in pursuit of the realization of self-worth. People with high technical and literacy levels tend to value great importance to achievement, motivation and spirit, their quality covers high creativity, autonomy, strong personality and contempt for power. On the other hand, these characteristics make companies generally feel difficult to supervise and control the work process. Their work results are not easy to be directly measured and evaluated, which also reflect high mobility of work choices[4].

2.2.3. How To Motivate Knowledge Workers

Achievement incentive

(1) Organizational Incentive: The organizer's proper division of responsibilities and independent decision-making power can help stimulate the autonomy of knowledge workers.

(2) Role Model: Setting a work model can inspire others to follow suit and even improve work ethic.

(3) Honor Incentive: The award of the honorary title represents the company's recognition of employees and can stimulate their enthusiasm for work.

(4) Performance Incentive: The evaluation of employees helps employees to self-cognition, thereby promoting the improvement of their abilities.

(5) Target Incentive: suitable for challenging work, which can stimulate the enthusiasm of employees to work. Its combination with material incentives can further enhance the incentive effect.

(6) Ideal incentive: Managers give corresponding opportunities to promote employees' enthusiasm for work by understanding the ideals of employees.

Ability incentive

(1) Training incentive: Training incentives are particularly effective for young people. Through training, employees can improve their commitment and create conditions for more important positions.

(2) Work content incentive: Motivating employees with the work itself is the most interesting way of motivating. Managers should understand the interests of employees and let them develop their talents in their areas of expertise to improve efficiency.

Environmental incentive:

(1) Policy environment incentive: Good rules and regulations of enterprises can motivate employees and ensure job fairness.

(2) Objective environmental incentives: The objective environment of the enterprise can affect the employees' work mood, thereby changing their work quality.

Material incentive

(1) Material rewards, including salary bonuses and various public benefits, are the most basic of incentives. Because it is the common desire of most employees to obtain more material benefits, it determines the response and satisfaction of employees to the motivate mechanism.

2.3. The Application of Motivation Theory In Apple

2.3.1. Maslow's Hierarchical Theory of Needs

Maslow's Hierarchical Theory Of Needs is a psychological motivational theory that divide and translate human needs into a five-level model (now developed into an eighth order, but this paper will study the fifth order), usually depicted as different levels within a pyramid. Maslow believed that the realization of some needs requires motivation as a premise, while some needs have priority. His point of view is that the power and potential of demand is greater when the level of demand is low, and as the level of demand increases, the power and potential of demand will continue to decrease. Satisfying lower-level needs is fundamental before higher-level needs arise. In other words, low-level needs are directly related to whether an individual can survive, also known as deficient needs or lack of needs. When this need cannot be satisfied, it is directly life-threatening. Although high-level needs are not absolutely necessary to maintain individual survival, the fact is that satisfying such needs can make people continue to live, the so-called growth needs. High-level needs are more complex and diverse than low-level needs. Therefore, in order to meet high-level needs, good external environmental conditions must be met first, including social conditions, economic conditions, and political conditions. Maslow also added that low-level needs. Hierarchical needs can only be partially satisfied until higher-level needs appear.

The physiological needs at the bottom are reflected in Apple's executive compensation, which is divided into three parts: salary, bonus, and other. Salary is a fixed annual salary, which is based on the position of executives (which can be understood as knowledge workers). The salary of CEO Cook is \$3 million/year, and the other executives are \$1 million/year. The annual salary generally does not fluctuate greatly, and it has not been adjusted in the last three years from 2018 to 2020[5]. Bonus is a variable compensation for executives, mainly including Stock Awards, Non-Equity Incentive Plan Compensation, etc. These awards are set based on the financial performance and preset goals of executives in the previous year. For example, in 2020, Apple executives have preset three performance goals: sales revenue of \$247.5 billion and profit of \$5.27 billion belong to the threshold goal, sales revenue of \$265.4 billion and profit of \$6.10 billion belong to the target goal, while sales revenue of \$279.1 billion and profit of \$6.68 billion are maximum goal. According to the financial report, Apple's net sales in 2020 will actually be \$274.5 billion, and its revenue will be \$66.3 billion, up 6% and 4% year-on-year respectively. The performance has basically reached the maximum goal, so the bonus of Apple's executive team will be 179% of the original base.

Other include enterprise annuity, life insurance premiums, vacation expenses, and security expenses; this is a guarantee for employees, and it also reflects the second-level safety needs of incentive theory. Safety needs represent the needs of employees for a sense of security and stability. The insurance included in other is protecting the rights and interests of employees and dispelling their anxiety to a certain extent.

The third level is belongingness and love need, which means employees' needs for interpersonal communication. Apple headquarters has a complete locker room, shower, fitness bar and yoga room, people can use their free time to relax, relieve stress and meet friends. These employee benefits can greatly enhance their sense of belonging.

Esteem needs are on the fourth floor. From this, it can be seen that the maintenance of employee self-esteem and the recognition of value are also part of the incentive. Apple Fellows Program was engineered to inspire the company's employees to be bold and innovative and to give certain recognition to outstanding talents (knowledge workers). "Apple Researcher" is Apple's highest honor for electronic scientists, awarded to those employees who work hard and contribute greatly at Apple, and inspire everyone who works for Apple.

The self-actualization need at the top of the pyramid model corresponds to people's exploration of their own potential and the realization of self-transcendence. Jobs once talked about his management model in an interview, he said: we are organized like a start-up, and we all meet for three hours once a week, and we are good at figuring out how to divide things up into These great teams that we have. From this passage, I can feel the space he has left for his subordinates and his understanding of the strengths of the members.

2.3.2. Process Theory

Process theory refers to the study of the psychological processes that drive people from motivation to action. Its first task is to find out some key factors that play a decisive role in behavior, and to better predict and control human behavior after understanding the connection of different factors. The theory holds that in order for employees to exhibit the behavior expected by the enterprise, it is inevitable to establish the necessary connection between the employee's behavior and the satisfaction of the employee's needs.

American psychologist Adams put forward the equity theory in 1965. The theory holds that employees' satisfaction with income will have an effect on their work attitude and motivation, and employees' satisfaction with income comes from the process of comparing their own society. From this, it can be seen that in addition to personal absolute income, what employees care about also includes his relative income.

Apple came up with the concept of "TEAM-BASED APPROACH"[5], emphasizing the importance of fairness to teamwork and individual performance. Executives must take collective responsibility for the company's overall performance and design simple and effective executive compensation packages that focus on shareholders' interests and long-term performance. Apple takes "team-based" and "internal pay equity" as its primary considerations.

On the one hand, this helps to strengthening the team's collaboration and solidarity, enabling employees to play the team's efficiency and negotiation advantages on a larger scale. Thereby bringing better development to the enterprise; and stipulates that executives need to be responsible for the overall performance of the company through cooperation. On the other hand, the organic combination of explicit incentives based on common performance evaluation and implicit incentives such as "peer supervision" among team members can ensure fairness, and strive to make employees feel a subjective sense of fairness, thereby mobilizing their enthusiasm and have a positive impact on the work of employees. It is worth noting that fairness is relative, not absolute. In terms of distribution, we must adhere to the principle of "efficiency first and fairness" in order to maximize fairness, especially pay equity.

2.3.3. Behavior Modification Incentive Theory

Behavior modification incentive theory refers to the research on how to transform and transform people's behavior, how to change people's psychology and behavior from negative to positive, so as to benefit the operation and development of organizations. behavior modification incentive theory mainly includes force theory, Frustration Theory and Attribution Theory. Force theory is the most representative theory in behavior modification incentive theory. The application of basic ideas in management. According to the nature of reinforcement, it can be divided into positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement.

According to my research, Apple's equity incentive is a positive reinforcement. Equity incentive is a long-term incentive, and it is the highest level of incentive in the corporate incentive hierarchy. Because it involves the company's core assets, it is generally awarded to core executive members and talents (which can be understood as knowledge-based employees). The purpose of Apple's equity incentives is very obvious, because it sets up two unlocking paths on the basis of the implementation of RSU, namely performance-based RSU and tenure-based RSU included in Apple's restricted stock unit granted to executives.

The tenure-based RSU is an automatic unlocking of the equity of Apple's executives after they have served a certain number of years in the position. In 2021, Apple granted Cook's tenure to the RSU conditional on remaining in office until 2025. Performance-based RSU is that Apple's executives can unlock the equity granted to them after reaching certain performance conditions in their positions. Apple's performance conditions for executives are very simple and straightforward, that is, the company's stock price growth and operating income.

In terms of incentives for executives, whether it is the choice of tools or the choice of indicators, Apple has an obvious feature, that is, simplicity and positive reinforcement, the road is simple. The purpose of the company is to retain high-performance executives and keep them doing it. Another point worth learning from Apple is that its grant model for equity incentives is "small amount" and "high frequency". It doesn't need a lot of grants each time, but it is granted a lot of times, which will make employees feel in a "constantly constrained" Motivation, never stop" state, which is a continuous reinforcement. Continuously updated performance goals can keep employees motivated in the long term and keep their job fresh.

2.4. Problems With Apple's Motivate System

2.4.1. Intrinsic Motivation

In 1959, the famous psychologist White first proposed intrinsic motivation in the field of psychology. Intrinsic motivation means that individuals set goals for themselves to stimulate a sense of achievement and career, thereby motivating themselves to work hard to achieve, but this intrinsic motivation has a strong externality. Intrinsic motivation refers to the motivation that people have through the work itself, including the sense of interest in the work itself, the sense of responsibility and achievement for people. Intrinsic motivation is characterized by stability and persistence. The so-called intrinsic motivation refers to a kind of motivation that people generate and originate from their hearts, characterized by social history, individual differences and subjective initiative. Intrinsic motivation generally has several aspects such as sense of responsibility, sense of honor, and sense of conscience[6].

The sense of responsibility of Apple's knowledge workers comes from "TEAM-BASED APPROACH", and executives need to be responsible for the company's overall performance through cooperation. This kind of working attitude of the executives motivated and mobilized by the organizational development strategy makes the executives pay attention to personal interests while

taking into account the interests of the company, and guides the management to devote more energy to the development of the company. This long-term incentive not only values the interests of executives, but also enhances their sense of responsibility. As a very well-known technology company, it has a certain influence and appeal in the world. The employees who work here become an intrinsic motivator by recognizing that the reputation of the company can generate a sense of honor[7]. But according to the survey, Apple has ignored the importance of intrinsic motivation to a certain extent. Starting from paying attention to other incentive methods such as salary incentives, we use people's profit-seeking psychology to retain and cultivate talents. I think Apple should focus on intrinsic motivation, give employees a sense of achievement, and realize its importance to the work ability of knowledge workers who love challenges and innovation[8-10].

2.4.2. Extrinsic Incentive

Apple has a very mature external incentive system, including job benefits, salary incentives and even equity incentive, but based on the following issues, Apple still needs to improve. According to software engineer Cher Scarlett, an earlier analysis of Apple's informal pay equity survey showed a 6 percent pay gap between men and women, and for a company that claims "employees who do similar jobs with the same experience and performance, gender pay For the same" companies, Apple has not achieved complete pay equality, but has also tried to solve it by reducing transparency. This is obviously a defect in the external incentives of Apple's salary.

2.5. Improvement Suggestions with The Help of Organization Behavior Theory

Combining the above research results with the motivation theory in organizational behavior, it can be seen that Two Factor Theory and Equity Theory should be strengthened.

Two Factor Theory was proposed by a psychologist who named Herzberg (America) in 1959. He separated the relevant factors in the enterprise into two types, namely satisfaction factors and dissatisfaction factors. hygiene factors (dissatisfaction factors) are factors outside of work, including company policies and management, income and working conditions. If these factors and conditions are met, the inner dissatisfaction of employees can be resolved and the basic work efficiency can be maintained, but these factors do not have the ability to motivate people to adopt more positive behaviors. motivating factors (satisfaction factors) are related to the work itself or the content of the work, including achievement, appreciation and challenge, responsibility, development, etc. These factors will be very motivating if they can be satisfied; but if they cannot be satisfied, they will not be as dissatisfying as the hygiene factors. The intrinsic motivation is the motivating factor (satisfaction factor). Therefore, Apple should pay attention to job performance opportunities and the pleasure brought by work and the sense of achievement at work, and give appropriate rewards to employees with high work efficiency, so that employees feel satisfied expectations for future development.

Process Theory aims to emphasize the study of people's psychological process from motivation to action. In Equity Theory, it is mentioned that the cognitive dissonance of perception and comparison of one's own reward will lead to the psychological imbalance of the client, that is, a sense of unfairness and inner tension. Therefore, using Equity Theory to adjust salary incentives can help stabilize employees' emotions and improve work enthusiasm.

3. Conclusions

Through the research of this paper, it is found that Apple lacks attention to both motivating factors and equity motivate for knowledge workers. This kind of problem exists not only in Apple, but also many other enterprises need to pay attention to. Most companies such as Apple can meet the basic

material needs of knowledge workers, but to a certain extent, they have been neglected to provide employees with the value and meaning of the work itself[9]. There are limitations in this paper, and there is no in-depth research on the positive influence of external incentives. However, for knowledge workers, their group characteristics are the embodiment of work value and independent thinking.

In the theory of organizational behavior, the exposure of the above problems to the Two Factor Theory is less consistent with the actual incentive system of Apple; and the exposure of these problems reflects the problems existing in enterprise management, which proves the importance of studying the incentive mechanism for knowledge workers. The research is helpful to excavate reasonable employee motivation methods, thereby promoting the improvement of enterprise management.

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