

Job Satisfaction
(Motivation / Work / Employee / Satisfaction)

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Satisfaction is a multifaceted emotional state of being that is derived from the fulfillment of expectations, wants, and needs. Reaching a level of satisfactory creates contentment, pleasure and even pride, but in order to achieve this state of well-being the task must be reasonably challenging, purposeful and appreciated. Today, job satisfaction is a topic that interests many. Satisfaction surveys are completed yearly, if not quarterly, to assure employees are feeling heard and understood. Some businesses such as Facebook and American Express have employee satisfaction ratings that top the charts, other places of work, suffer from high turnover rates and lack of motivation. What keeps an employee coming back to work each day may differ from person to person, but researchers have identified several satisfying trends.

Inevitably, the majority of people in the United States must work to make a living, and although satisfaction ratings are generally increasing, compared to studies in the past, many people still feel underwhelmed, unmotivated, and most notably, just stressed. In the field of nursing for example, research has found that the recurring turnover rates are due to a lack of advancement opportunity, depreciation, lack of trust, decreased collaboration with coworkers, and poor role clarification. In addition, inadequate communication between management and employees may be the leading cause of dissatisfaction for nurses. Hospitals are an ever-evolving work environment with constant change occurring in patients, equipment, standards, and

facilities. Turnover rates have a huge impact on the hospital, not only from a job perspective but also when considering patient satisfaction. As an indicator of the quality of care, if patient satisfaction ratings are down, a look towards the nurse's job satisfaction surveys are in most cases correlated.

The Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey takes record of government employee satisfaction. Past surveys have illustrated that employees are not as willing to recommend their place of employment for others and that satisfaction regarding the organizations as a whole is down. However, over sixty percent of federal employees do find their work to be engaging. They also noted their understanding of the "big picture" type of work they complete each day. With that, effective leadership, strategic management, appropriate pay, and increased teamwork have begun to improve the agencies atmosphere.

Another profession that is greatly impacted by employee satisfaction is teaching. The culture of a classroom is largely structured by the teacher. If the teacher enjoys their job and is satisfied, then undoubtedly that teacher will be more effective and successful with the students. Studies from schools have found, that if a teacher continues to enhance their knowledge throughout their career, with this learning curve comes increased job satisfaction. In addition, recognition of a teacher, not just when their students are performing well, but when that teacher is expanding the curriculum or trying new ideas, engages the teacher even more and gives added purpose to what they are looking to achieve. Embracing the importance of a teacher creates a better workplace and equally important, greater teacher satisfaction contributes to higher levels of success for the students.

There are several personality/interest inventories available for people who are looking to make a guided career choice. The Self Directed Search is useful tool created by John Holland.

This assessment is available to anyone who is looking for a career or is transitioning between careers. Personality traits and work preferences are examined to give the individual an idea as to what jobs may be a good fit. From the assessment, individuals answer “Like”, “Dislike”, “Yes”, or “No”, which will ultimately provide them with a code based on the highest three letters from Holland’s six personality types: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional (RIASEC). This helps construct a conversation with the individual about compatible careers based on their interests, which arguably is the first step in creating a more satisfying work experience.

Another example, is the Strong’s Interest Survey created by Edward Strong. This assessment is widely used in helping an individual find an occupation that aligns with their personal interests, which hopefully leads to greater job satisfaction. General Occupational Themes (GOTs) are interpreted as interest areas. These areas are based on Dr. John Holland’s previously mentioned six different personality types (RIASEC). This assessment considers both individual personality and areas of personal preference, which in turn, then correlates compatible occupations and related fields of study. The assessment is psychometrically sound and individuals within the helping profession continue to deem it as a top choice interest inventory.

Satisfaction ratings include many tiers. There are both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that inspire employees. An individual must be fulfilled internally by factors such as, achievement, pleasure and recognition, as well as by the material rewards of working: benefits, salary, job security and working conditions. In order to obtain a high satisfaction rating, a positive response in all three cognitive, emotional and behavioral components is required. Nonetheless, each individual may assess their level of happiness on the job differently. When considering the satisfiers like benefits, wages, hours and flexibility, it is important to also look at

the employee's level of responsibility, dedication, accountability and output to see if there is comparable equality. The benefits of employee satisfaction are innumerable. Working in an environment that satisfies intrinsic and extrinsic employee motivations better the product and the individual.

Further reading:

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