

Theories of Leadership
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There are many different theories of leadership. Through my daily employment life, even though I am not specifically categorized as a manager, I do present managerial qualities. There are many tasks that are required of me every day from my managers and executives. With that being said, the Motivation Theories of Motivation in Theory X and Theory Y presented to us by Douglas McGregor are used by me every day.

In my daily position, I work in the product engineering department of a manufacturing company. In this company, not only do I maintain the engineering documentation for all of the products we design, develop, and deliver for sale, I also develop and train all end-users on how to use the manufacturing technology systems information, developing the entire curriculum. During my two years within this department, there has been a shift between the individuals themselves. It is true that there are still employees who will continue to be Theory X individuals. These are the individuals who choose to not do their jobs until someone tells them to “Do Your Job,” however, more of the individuals have taken the initiative to ask questions about the software and what their roles are in the overall environment of the development workflow.

In a management aspect, I manage the workflows of each engineering change. I make sure every step in the workflow is completed. If the step takes longer than expected, I review the individual or individuals who have not completed their tasks. As a Theory X person, I might direct their efforts and control their actions by telling them exactly what their tasks are to be completed. For a Theory Y person, I might send them an email, remind them that work needs to be completed, allowing that individual the initiative that they are responsible enough to know what their tasks are and complete their work on their own. This process happens literally hundreds of times a day.

When I first started within this company, I could tell how passive the employees were. As the third proposition states from McGregor:

“Without this active intervention by management, people would be passive – even resistant – to organizational needs. They must therefore be persuaded, rewarded, punished, controlled – their activities must be directed” (p. 47).

In 2008, I was hired into the marketing department. At that time, and for three and a half years, I worked for the director within that department, she always told me that, adults are responsible for completing their own work, but we have to babysit their tasks or their work will never get done. Because they don't do their work, our products won't get launched or obsoleted on time, causing us to lose profits to which I agreed. If the workers did not complete their work and be responsible adults, revenues can be lost. Many of the employees were indeed lazy, being with the company for 20+ years in some cases. They had a way to complete their work that didn't require answering to anyone. Because new management was in place in this organization, and in agreement with McGregor, “it was the result not of human's inherent nature, but rather an unintended consequence of management philosophy, policies and practice” (p. 47), meaning that because management never in the past “scolded” the employees for not doing their work in the past, why were they all of a sudden being scolded now? The new management was requiring the employees to work.

Taking this into consideration now, with the Theories of Motivation, many of the Theory X employees have since left or retired based on the fact that newer and stricter management has been implemented across the company. This allows for the Theory Y employees who enjoy their work and are responsible for their tasks to be seen in a new light, allowing them to complete tasks that they might not have been able to complete while the Theory X employees were working. In contrast, the Theory Y individual has any or all of the following qualities:

- “Effort in work is as natural as work and play.

- People will apply self-control and self-direction in the pursuit of organisational objectives, without external control or the threat of punishment.
- Commitment to objectives is a function of rewards associated with their achievement.
- People usually accept and often seek responsibility.
- The capacity to use a high degree of imagination, ingenuity and creativity in solving organisational problems is widely, not narrowly, distributed in the population.
- In industry the intellectual potential of the average person is only partly utilised” (McGregor, Douglas).

I enjoy working for this company and am very motivated to make sure my time at this company is profitable not only to me but to every employee who is there with me. That also means that if the work is not finished correctly, it is my job given to me by my management, to lead those who are required to complete their tasks to make sure their tasks are done.

The employees within this company also have to work in teams. Teaming has become a very important aspect to complete new product development processes. Within the process, there are a number of people who make up the team. Each of these teams will have individuals from each of the various departments, up to 12 different departments across the company. For the process to work and the team to be a success, going back to the individuals being Theory Y employees is very important. The individuals need to be responsible for their own actions to complete all of the tasks required during the workflows so that products are designed, developed, and launched on time and on budget. By being able to launch a new product on time allows for no lost revenues.

As a manager, we depend on each of our team members to make the overall group a success. Without each person contributing to the overall process, the team is a success. At the same time, the team depends on the manager to lead the team correctly. “When the group is completely dependent on a leader who is invested with all the powers, just like a god, for providing answer to the anxieties of the group, hence providing security” (p. 121). The manager is responsible for making sure all of the tasks are completed, in this case, the steps required for

the new product development, design, develop, launch, along with all of the sub-steps under each of the main steps. Team members being through the process understand the process and know what their tasks are based on what departments they work under. Each department has specific tasks in the overall workflow. Part of my position has been within each of these teams to make sure all of the tasks are completed for the workflow and very similar to that of the Theories of Motivation. I am continually reviewing the process steps to make sure all of the steps have been completed. If they have not been completed, making sure they are, either by reminding them or outright telling them to do their jobs. More and more of the employees are completing their jobs without being told.

There are multiple teams that happen every day within my company. We develop existing and new products based on product families. Examples include Power Tools, Drain Cleaning, Diagnostics, etc. Within each of the families, there will be design changes to existing products and new product development. Multiple teams can have the same people who work on different products. Then, you may have an odd product team that has one different person involved or different department involved. Within ALL of the teams, I have been the central figure making sure all of the work gets completed.

My daily working environment can be the same every day and can be different every day. Depending on the processes that are required by me when I get to work in the morning when I turn the computer on will tell me the direction of where I need to go for work for the day. Am I working toward Theory X employees? Am I working toward Theory Y employees? More and more of the employees have approached me, asking me questions and requesting training programs or specific training to be developed. Based on this continued feedback allows us to understand the need is there within the teams for the training and for us to continue to manage

our employees. Even though I am not labeled a manager at my company, my coworkers consider me a manager in every way and are confident in my abilities to work with motivation and teaming.

References

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