Skills Application 4-2: Job Diagnostic Survey

Hackman and Oldham developed a self-report instrument for managers to use in diagnosing their work environment. The first step in calculating the "motivating potential score" (MPS) of your job is to complete the following questionnaire.

1. Use the scales below to indicate whether each statement is an accurate or inadequate description of your present or most recent job. After completing the instrument, use the scoring key to compute a total score for each of the core job characteristics.

   5 = Very descriptive   2 = Mostly nondescriptive
   4 = Mostly descriptive   1 = Very nondescriptive
   3 = Somewhat descriptive

   _____   1. I have almost complete responsibility for deciding how and when the work is to be done.
   _____   2. I have a chance to do a number of different tasks, using a wide variety of different skills and talents.
   _____   3. I do a complete task from start to finish. The results of my efforts are clearly visible and identifiable.
   _____   4. What I do affects the well-being of other people in very important ways.
   _____   5. My manager provides me with constant feedback about how I am doing.
   _____   6. The work itself provides me with information about how well I am doing.
   _____   7. I make insignificant contributions to the final product or service.
   _____   8. I get to use a number of complex skills on this job.
   _____   9. I have very little freedom in deciding how the work is to be done.
   _____   10. Just doing the work provides me with opportunities to figure out how well I am doing.
   _____   11. The job is quite simple and repetitive.
   _____   12. My supervisors or coworkers rarely give me feedback on how well I am doing the job.
   _____   13. What I do is of little consequence to anyone else.
   _____   14. My job involves doing a number of different tasks.
   _____   15. Supervisors let us know how well they think we are doing.
   _____   16. My job is arranged so that I do not have a chance to do an entire piece of work from beginning to end.
   _____   17. My job does not allow me an opportunity to use discretion or participate in decision making.
   _____   18. The demands of my job are highly routine and predictable.
   _____   19. My job provides few clues about whether I'm performing adequately.
   _____   20. My job is not very important to the company's survival.
   _____   21. My job gives me considerable freedom in doing the work.
   _____   22. My job provides me with the chance to finish completely any work I start.
   _____   23. Many people are affected by the job I do.

2. Scoring Key:
   Skill variety (SV) (items #2, 8, 11*, 14, 18*) = ____ /5 = ____
   Task identity (TI) (items #3, 7*, 16*, 22) = ____ /4 = ____
   Task significance (TS) (items #4, 13*, 20*, 23) = ____ /4 = ____
   Autonomy (AU) (items #1, 9*, 17*, 21) = ____ /4 = ____
   Feedback (FB) (items #5, 6, 10, 12*, 15, 19*) = ____ /6 = ____

   Motivating Potential Score (MPS) =

(Note: For the items with asterisks, subtract your score from 6.)

Total the numbers for each characteristic and divide by the number of items to get an average score.

3. Now you are ready to calculate the MPS by using the following formula:

$$\text{Motivating Potential Score (MPS)} = \frac{\text{SV} + \text{TI} + \text{TS}}{3} \times \text{AU} \times \text{FB}$$

MPS scores range from 1 to 125.

4. You can compare your job characteristics with those of a fellow classmate or with norms that your instructor has. Is the MPS of your job high, average, or low?
5. What could be done to increase the motivating potential of your job?

Source: J. Richard Hackman and Greg R. Oldham, *Work Redesign* (adapted from pp. 80, 81, 90, and 303–306) © 1980 by Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Addison-Wesley Longman, Inc.

Skills Application 4-3: Motivating Different People

The 450-person workforce at Omni Computer Works, Inc., breaks out into several distinctive classifications. The following stereotypes describe the employees.

"*Whiners*"—a handful of employees whose behavior typifies that of Sandy Hall and Tony Aquirre (see this chapter's "You Make the Call").

"*GenXers*"—that group of employees often described in the media as the disenchanted, disenfranchised Americans now in their mid-20s to mid-30s. They comprise about 33 percent of Omni's workforce.

"*Generation Yers*"—the teens of today. This group, clustered in entry-level, routine jobs, represents about 5 percent of Omni's workforce.

"*Baby Boomers*"—the group born between 1946 and 1963 that makes up 30 percent of Omni's employee base.

"*Gray Hairs*"—employees 55+ years of age. They represent 10 percent of Omni's workforce.

"*Techies*" or "*Geeks*"—the group that cuts across a wide age range but is identified separately. This highly skilled group creates great software and the hardware to run it. They think logically and if you ask them a question, they will give you a precisely truthful answer. The demand for this group is very high. At least ten positions at Omni are currently vacant.

INTERNET ACTIVITY

1. Using the Internet or a search vehicle such as ABInform, review the contents of recent articles written about the groups identified above.
   a. Make a list of the adjectives that describe the typical person in each group.
   b. Identify and rank order the needs that drive the typical person. How would you explain the similarities and differences among the groups? Would you expect there to be differences within each group? Why or why not?
   c. Identify from this chapter or your outside reading sources a list of what you believe to be the most important motivational application concepts that a supervisor should apply in order to motivate the typical employee in each group to peak performance.
2. Your instructor will divide you into small groups that represent a cross-section of the class. Each small group will be assigned one of the employee classifications and is to discuss the following questions/statements as they relate to their assigned classification. The instructor may have each group present their analysis to the entire class.