

A Read this essay on the Euro, then reorder the conclusion.

Analyse problems with the Euro

In 2011, in the middle of the debt crisis, the German president, Angela Merkel stated, "The Euro is our common fate, and Europe is our common future". If this is the case, then problems with the Euro reflect problems with Europe itself, and so have huge significance for the future of the continent. Hence now is a good time to examine possible weaknesses in terms of the impact on both individuals and governments, and judge their seriousness.

The actual introduction of the Euro was an undoubted success. It was a massive operation to switch from various currencies to a single one, and most commentators, and also the public, believe that the operation went smoothly. Various surveys back this point up, with public support in the Netherlands for example put at 72% in the early months of the year (Peterson, 2005). In terms of logistics, therefore, the Euro has to be judged a success.

However, this early optimism has not been maintained. For many people across Europe, the introduction of the Euro has led to price rises in many everyday goods. Taking Germany, restaurant prices have risen by as much as 33%, and supermarket goods by 21% (Peterson, 2005). This has been repeated across Europe, and in the Netherlands for example, consumers feel so strongly on the issue that now, 98% of the population would prefer to return to the Guilder (Eads, 2005). Even though inflation, a much more reliable indicator of price rises, has actually remained stable, people, rightly or wrongly, feel the Euro has failed them, at least when it comes to their daily shopping.

Finally, there is the impact of the Euro on governments. To harmonise the various economies, the 'Stability Pact' was introduced, largely at the insistence of Germany. Under this pact, no country can have a deficit of more than 3% of its GDP. However, this particular rule has caused problems for many countries, ironically for Germany especially. For a variety of reasons, Germany wants to commit to large scale spending, but the terms of the pact prevent it from doing so. Similarly, Portugal, France and Italy are also having problems abiding by the agreement. All of this suggests that perhaps the Euro and all that it entails, is fundamentally flawed as presently established, and needs radical reform to be successful.

Conclusion

- a) price rises in common goods have alienated the man in the street
- b) To sum up, even though it is arguably too early to pass judgment, the Euro does seem to have serious problems
- c) but on the basis of its performance so far, there is still much work to be done
- d) it seems clear that the early goodwill that greeted the Euro has been dissipated
- e) the Euro may indeed be the basis of future European prosperity, and the above mere teething problems
- f) and inflexible rules have hamstrung governments who find themselves in difficult circumstances

B Read this essay on motivation, then choose the best conclusion on next page.

How can organisations motivate staff? Analyse various theories and refer to case studies.

In America in the 1920s, an American academic, Elton Mayo, conducted what came to be known as the Hawthorne Studies in an electric factory, and found that by modifying the physical environment of the workplace, for example changing the lighting, workers became more productive. Motivational theory, meaning how organisations motivate staff, was born, and will be the subject of this essay. I will look at a range of theories, from Maslow's original theory of need, through to modern ideas on work design, and finish with two case studies to see if such theories are actually put into practice in business.

Maslow can perhaps be called the founding father of motivational theory, and much work since has built on and developed from his ideas. His theory of a 'hierarchy of needs' suggests that humans have five different levels of needs starting with basic ones such as food and shelter, and ending with 'self actualisation' in which an individual has the need to realise their full potential. Herzberg's theory of 'maintenance-motivation' factors shared this idea of types of needs, lower and higher, and both men seem to have a common view of all individuals having this range, which an employer should meet in order to motivate.

McGregor on the other hand did not believe in a common set of motivational factors. Instead with his 'X' and 'Y' theory, he believed that motivation depended on the type of person involved, type X needing close supervision and control because of an innate dislike of work, and type Y needing responsibility and autonomy because of a view of work almost as a form of play.

All three share an assumption that the key factor in motivation is the individual, either in terms of his level of need, or his type of character. Ouchi departed from this assumption slightly with his theory 'Z' in which the group is the key factor. It is this that needs motivating more than the individual, and to do this, the company takes an almost parental role.

Finally, coming to contemporary ideas, a key one seems to be that of job or work design. In this, the nature of the job itself is the key motivational factor. By strategies such as 'job enlargement' and 'job enrichment', jobs can be expanded and enhanced to make them more interesting and fulfilling for the employee. This would seem to suggest that in many modern jobs, at least in the developed world, the lower needs of Maslow and Herzberg have been met, and that the organisation should address the higher needs of greater fulfillment in order to motivate staff.

Such then, are the theories. The question is, whether these ideas can be seen in practice. Looking at two case studies, in the first, a family-owned printing company, Johnson and Son, made a concerted effort to motivate its staff by involving them in social activities in particular, such as weekend picnics, and productivity rose by 6% (Jareau, 2011). This reflects both Maslow and Herzberg belief in a need to belong and perhaps Ouchi too, with his idea of group behaviour. Reflexite, a retail firm, took a different approach. In 2008, the employees bought the failing company themselves, and took full responsibility for its performance. The result was a loss of £1.2 million turned into a profit of £900 000 in 2010 (Garcia, 2011). This approach arguably illustrates the higher needs of Maslow and Herzberg, those of self actualisation and autonomy, but also the lower need for security as well. Both examples demonstrate different aspects of ideas on motivation as discussed above, and suggest that there is indeed a relationship between theory and practice.

Conclusion A

In conclusion, motivation, what it is and how it can be achieved, is an important issue for all organisations. Theorists such as Maslow, Herzberg, McGregor, Ouchi and many others have contributed to the debate with their ideas on needs and human nature, and such ideas have undoubtedly influenced the modern workplace. Certain companies have put these theories into practice to increase their productivity, so they are obviously highly relevant. Therefore this combination of theory and practice could be a model for many other businesses to follow.

Conclusion B

To sum up, companies motivate their staff in a range of ways, and draw on the ideas of theorists such as Maslow and McGregor with their ideas on human nature. By analysing examples of actual companies, we find that these theories can have a measurable benefit in terms of profit. However, perhaps the role of external factors has been overlooked. Hence for many people, the simple issues of pay and conditions of work are the main motivating factors, meaning working for more money by doing fewer hours is the ideal job, yet this is something that few theorists look at in detail. If companies grasped this basic truth, they would probably be a great deal more successful.

C Read this essay on women, then write your own conclusion of 100-150 words.

**Discuss the position of women in contemporary society
in relation to employment.**

Women have traditionally been seen as mothers and home makers, and it is only in recent years that they have been making significant inroads into the job market. The rate of change has been slow, however, and for women who want to work, there is still a long way to go before they achieve complete equality with men. This essay will firstly give some historical context, then look at the types of employment women take, followed by their status within this employment, and confine itself to Britain in the last forty years.

To start, it is useful to give an overview of the progress in this matter. The Treaty of Rome of 1973 guaranteed a women's right to work Europe wide, and national legislation has added to their rights ever since. In Britain, as in most other European countries, it is illegal to recruit on the basis of gender, sexual harassment is unacceptable, maternity rights have been extended, higher education is open to women, and educationally women often outperform men. Therefore the old obstacles to female employment would seem to have been overcome, but as we shall see, this is not in fact the case.

Though women now make up 46% of the workforce (Johnson, 2004), they are not equally represented in all job types. There is a tendency for women to work in particular areas, a process often known as 'horizontal differentiation'. This term was used by the eminent sociologists, LaPaglia and Sanchez, to describe the fact that women often confine themselves to specific professions in the service sector, namely teaching, retail and nursing. (LaPaglia and Sanchez, 2001). The latest figures from the Department of Employment would seem to bear this out. In 2011, 72% of teachers, 67% of retail assistants and a huge 93% of nurses were women (DOE, 2011). Women, then, dominate in jobs that have some sort of service element.

Outside the service sector, this difference continues. If we look at heavy industry, taking the example of shipbuilding, it is not surprising that women only account for 2% of the workforce as it is a very physical field. In manufacturing, women account for 72%, and in the financial sector, it is a mere 11% (DOE, 2011), and in neither of these would physical strength be an issue. The only sector where there are equal numbers of women and men is the IT industry, and this might be because it is relatively new. The reasons for the differentiation are controversial; some believe it is the inevitable consequence of biological differences while others believe it is simply prejudice. Whatever the truth, we can say that the position of women in employment very much depends on the nature of that employment.

The next question is whether women have power and status in the jobs they choose, whatever the sector. The answer is overwhelmingly no. Women on average earn 15% less than men in equivalent jobs, and only one out of twelve managerial positions, whatever the industry, are held by women (Johnson, 2010). Hence, for example, in a hospital, most of the nurses will be women, but the doctors and managers will be men. Marsh and Noble (2009) have termed this phenomenon 'vertical differentiation', when gender inequalities exist even within the same economic sector. Furthermore, women are more likely to be in part time work, and on short contracts of less than a year, both of which means they have fewer rights than permanent, full time employees. In brief, women are under-represented in management, and are on vulnerable contracts, putting them in a weak position overall.

Answers

A

- b) To sum up, even though it is arguably too early to pass judgment, the Euro does seem to have serious problems.
- d) It seems clear that the early goodwill that greeted the Euro has been dissipated.
- a) Price rises in common goods have alienated the man in the street,
- f) and inflexible rules have hamstrung governments who find themselves in difficult circumstances.
- e) The Euro may indeed be the basis of future European prosperity, and the above mere teething problems,
- c) but on the basis of its performance so far, there is still much work to be done.

B

Conclusion A – better. Summarises main sections.

Conclusion B – poor. Underlined part was not section of essay, and most of conclusion should be a summary of the body i.e. don't put in new information.

To sum up, companies motivate their staff in a range of ways, and draw on the ideas of theorists such as Maslow and McGregor with their ideas on human nature. By analysing examples of actual companies, we find that these theories can have a measurable benefit in terms of profit. However, perhaps the role of external factors has been overlooked. Hence for many people, the simple issues of pay and conditions of work are the main motivating factors, meaning working for more money by doing fewer hours is the ideal job, yet this is something that few theorists look at in detail. If companies grasped this basic truth, they would probably be a great deal more successful.

C Possible answer

Questions undoubtedly remain about women's position in terms of employment. However one thing seems clear; women match men in numbers only. They might represent nearly half of the workforce, but they are usually confined to the service sector, though the emergence of new technologies seems to be changing this. Also, despite legal protection, women are still significantly inferior to men in terms of pay and status; they earn less and hold far fewer positions of power and have less job security. It is not all negative, however. The situation has genuinely improved and is improving still, but there is still a long way to go before women's position in employment reflects that of men, and more importantly, their own abilities. (120 words)