

A New Look at Need Theory

An Extension of Maslow's Hierarchy

Arthur C. Eckerman

One of the most enduring theories of behavioral science is Dr. A. H. Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs." It is well stated, understandable and has considerable face validity.

Many present-day books and articles in the management field lean heavily on Maslow's theory. However, considerable liberty is taken by writers in the definition, naming the arrangement of man's basic needs as described by Maslow.

Briefly, Maslow's theory, garnered from the literature, is that five basic "needs," characteristic of human beings, are the prime movers of behavior. These are generally accepted as the basis of a general theory of motivation. They are:¹

Higher	{	Creative
		Ego
		Social
Lower	{	Physical
		Safety

If one reads Maslow's original exposition of his theory of Human Motivation,² he finds that the author hypothesized seven, not five basic needs:

Physiological Needs
 Safety Needs
 Belonginess and Love Needs
 Esteem Needs
 Need for Self Actualization
 Cognitive Needs
 Aesthetic Needs

In subsequent works Maslow seems to have preferred only the first five of these needs for his theory of human motivation.³

The Physiological needs of food, shelter, rest, and sex are clearly understood and readily accepted. The body's need to maintain homeostasis is vital.⁴

The Safety needs are easy to understand. This class of needs is often interpreted in the literature as "Security Needs."

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The Belonginess and Love needs, frequently are referred to as "Social" needs. They are the needs to love and be loved (not physical love), to belong, to receive and give affection, etc.

The Esteem needs are more often called "Ego" needs in the literature. The needs that maintain and reinforce one's self concept in the areas of self esteem, self respect and need for the esteem of others. These are the basis of feelings of self confidence, worth, strength, capability, usefulness, etc.

The need for Self Actualization is sometimes called the "Creative" need. These are the needs to express one's urges to sing, to paint, to write and to provide an outlet for other aptitudes and special abilities. In addition to artistic outlets, the need for self actualization involves doing one's best in addition to inventiveness, creativeness, and ingenuity.

The Cognitive need seems to be completely disregarded by writers. Yet this is one of the most predominant current expressions of our culture. It accounts in a large part for the so-called "knowledge explosion." This is the need to know, to understand, to discover, to satisfy curiosity, etc. Management development instructors would do well to read Maslow's treatise on this class of needs. Among other things he points out that when the cognitive needs are frustrated, boredom and other degenerative processes take place. This causes intelligent people on stupid jobs to lead stupid lives, something every personnel man knows. Maslow states ". . . The need gratification of this need as a prerequisite for the fullest development of human potentialities, the spontaneous appearance in the early history of the individual, all these point to a basic cognitive need."⁵

The tremendous demand today for information in all the fields and meth-

ods of knowledge and learning attest to the cognitive need of people in our society. Adult education is a major industry, carried out in every kind of organization as never before. Our very management development programs, whether self motivated or directed, are designed primarily to fill the cognitive needs of personnel.

The Aesthetic needs have also been ignored in management literature. These are the needs of normal people for order, symmetry, and beauty. They perhaps explain some of our status-symbol problems with executives.

Another Need

We presume on Maslow's good work to suggest still another human "need." One which is not only obvious, we believe, it is necessary to complete the need system as a model for teaching and understanding human behavior. We are referring to the "consistency" needs, recently defined by research on cognitive dissonance.

The principle desired result of management development and related training is change. Change in knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes toward more adequate self and group-related behavior. In short, changes in interpersonal behavior. The success of Human Relations training, from "sensitivity training" to in-residence university programs hinges on the ability and willingness of the participant to undergo some significant behavioral change.

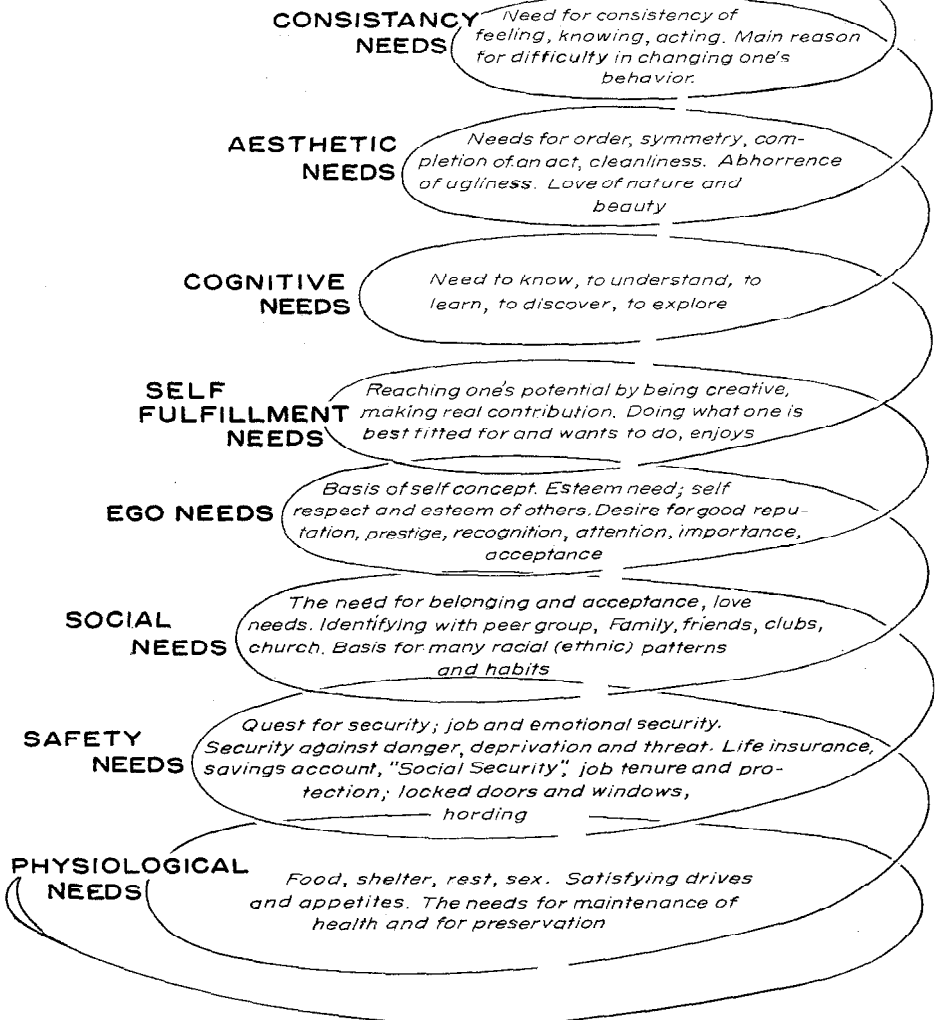
We know of the body's need for homeostasis, the need for physiological integration, balance, predictability and coordination in order for a person to function effectively. In short, consistency. Is there such a thing as a homeostasis of behavior, a corollary to that of the body? Considerable evidence indicates something of this sort in the nature of a series of interacting psychological processes. The cogna-

THE BASIC NEEDS WHICH MOTIVATE PEOPLE

Based on Dr. A.H. Maslow's
Theory of Motivation

A NEED ONCE FULFILLED
IS NO LONGER MOTIVATING

McGregor



tive consistency need is said to contain the "motivational antecedents" of behavior.

The current status of cognitive consistency theory is ably described in a recent book on the subject.⁶ In the first chapter of Feldman's book, Dr. William J. McGuire states ". . . the person tends to behave in ways that minimize the internal inconsistencies among his interpersonal relations, his interpersonal cognitions, or among his beliefs, feelings and actions."⁷

Everyone has had experience with persons whose behavior and personalities were out of phase with those of their peer groups. We have many names and descriptions for these problem employes. Indeed, each of us has certain characteristics which we recognize as troublesome or even undesirable. Whatever these "weaknesses" are, they can be depended on, they are consistent.

A Troika

Behavioral consistency can be explained with a model as three links in a strong chain. The links are how one feels, what he knows and how he acts. These constitute the very foundation of individual behavior, a troika as it were, of feelings, knowledge and actions.

No one is going to change his behavior by being told to do so. He will only change if he himself is convinced of a need to change. Training, as with experience, fails unless it can demonstrate an extenuating reason for the individual to alter his behavior in a given direction. This seems to occur best under conditions where the individual can no longer tolerate the discomfort of the results of his own actions.

This is the solar plexus of the cognitive dissonance theory as we under-

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stand it. Dissonance theory does not pretend to nor can it completely explain the wellsprings of human behavior. It does, however, provide a working model for the purpose of training. This has been demonstrated repeatedly in "sensitivity training" or T-Group Training. In such a situation the person is made very uncomfortable as his self concept is shaken by the feed-back he receives from others in the T-Group. This dissonance or disconfirmation of his ego may be so traumatic that he has to change his behavior to cope with the new situation, the new perception of himself.

At this point the individual can do one of three things: he can quit the T-Group, pack up his things and go home, as indeed some do. In real life he quits his job. Or he can become so emotionally disturbed that he needs treatment, he must be removed from the threatening situation. Or, as most often happens, he makes some sort of adaptation. He tries out new concept-

ualizations, he experiments with new forms of behavior and seeks different ways of effectively relating to others. When he finds a different and more satisfying, less dissonant behavioral pattern, and only then, can we say that change has actually taken place. When this takes place, the individual "refreezes" his behavior pattern and if this new equilibrium maintains, things go better all around.

New Input

Not only are the behavioral scientists providing a great deal of new input for management training, there is a badly needed thrust in the area of application. That is, along with new knowledge, research is also showing how to evaluate, apply and use it effectively.

It is our belief that a new look at need theory is indicated. The chart on page 20 is a handout used for this purpose in our management development programs.

References

1. R. K. Ready. *The Administrator's Job*, McGraw-Hill, 1967.
2. A. H. Maslow. *Motivation and Personality*, Harper & Brothers, 1954.
3. H. J. Leavitt and L. R. Pondy. *Readings in Managerial Psychology*, University of Chicago Press, 1964, A. H. Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation."
4. Webster's Dictionary defines homeostasis as "a tendency toward maintenance of a relatively stable internal environment in the bodies of higher animals through a series of interacting physiological processes . . ."
5. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
6. Shel Feldman. *Cognitive Consistency*, Academic Press, 1966.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

Technical Graduate Survey

The Greenville Technical Education Center, Greenville, S. C., conducted a survey to discover the employment status and financial position of their 1964, 1965, and 1966 graduating classes. Salaries before training were compared with salaries after gradu-

ation from GTC. The total salary increase of the three graduating classes is \$627,867.00 and the average salary increase for each student graduated is \$1,783.74 per year. (U. S. Office of Education.)

