
Goal Setting Theory For Freshers

In context of Freshers, Goal Setting Theory seems a good motivational theory at play. Locke and Latham, 1990 define that Goal Setting has two implications- it forms a basis for behaviour and directs behaviour, the theory works on an assumption that all humans are rational beings. The basic idea being that setting of goals channelizes people's attention to the goal and puts them in a position to gauge their abilities to establish those goals, prompting them to work hard for attainment of goal to prevent failure at goal achievement, since the goal also sets metrics of performance required to succeed, the acceptance of these goals as ones own is called goal commitment.

In context of Freshers whose initial aim w.r.t the society is succeeding as debaters and acquiring the skills exclusive to debating – the seniors often set goals for students – to 'break' i.e. reach a particular stage in a tournament either as a debater or as an adjudicator , these goals are though set for freshers at large but they also take into consideration individual differences of each member while assigning the goals – which is judged again on basis of 'inputs' of the fresher and generic discussions with them , the last and probably w.r.t Freshers is the idea of 'Feedback' – not only do freshers get quantitative feedback in terms of win-loss at a tournament but they also get abundant qualitative feedback internally by seniors during mock but also by other members of the circuit at tournaments- the beauty of these feedback lies in their objectivity, convincing ability of the adjudicator who is generally a senior and the personalised nature of the feedbacks that allows people to not only improve as a group but also as individual debaters; though peer feedback does play a role, the fact that senior gives a qualitative feedback adds additional legitimacy to it.

W.r.t Seniors and gradually with freshers as they shall spend a little time in the circuit, Reinforcement Theory of Motivation too becomes centric to behavior; though the theory is at odds with Goal Setting Theory, philosophically, since one takes a behavioristic approach while the other takes a cognitive approach and according to Robbins and Judge does not concern itself with initiation of behavior, and thereby it is not according to them, a theory of motivation. However, since it provides a powerful means of analyzing what controls behavior it ends up guiding discourse in the organization. That said reinforcement in context of English Debating Society, JMC includes internal appreciation of people with high mock attendance, recognition of individual efforts irrespective of win-loss, appreciation posts on official Facebook Page, peer reinforcement in terms of periodic, specific constructive feedbacks etc. In addition to this recognition in circuit and winning at tournaments along with the added incentive of cash prize is a fine reinforcement for a few members.

It is important for this clarification to exist that why goal-setting theory takes a back seat for 'seniors'- the reason lies in what an individual actively seeks – for freshers winning tournament equates success as debaters ,and thereby seniors utilise this need to win by setting it as a goal that on one hand engages the fresher but on the hand also ensure her moral and technical socialization to take place in the process. For 'seniors' the idea of winning tournaments takes a back seat, rather the needs for awareness, sensitive conscience and moral socialisation plays an active role and hence reinforcement becomes more centric in guiding behaviour. In addition to this flexitime- autonomy and choice about choosing time of mock, which is not an absolute

autonomy, since often reaching a conclusion of suitable time for all is difficult and more importantly the flexitime for a day in general represents a majoritarian view. Another important motivator arises in form of participative decision making and autonomy w.r.t choosing debate partners and tournaments to participate in all the discussion on what motivates people kept aside, this last paragraph attempts to conceptualize a demotivator for individuals – the presence of centres of power (in case of seniors) and the idea of seniors and freshers existing, for the new members. The idea on, one on one discussion of this supposed dislike to ‘power’ existing boils down to the dogmatic and intimidating nature of power, I feel a semester into the society by experience the freshers shall change the idea of seniors being ‘intimidating’ per se, an understanding I have from personal experience.

W.r.t dogmatic nature of ‘power’ and hence ‘power’ being problematic does not seem to me at an objective level a societal problem, but rather appears to be an institutional problem – the dogma that people associate with power may particularly arise from the vast ritual of investiture ceremony occurring on the day of PTSA and thereby giving postholders this ritualistic importance of being above and all – hence I feel nothing can probably be done by the postholders to debunk the idea of Dogma other than ensuring absolute transparency and accountability. To conclude , I understand that like all organizations, multiple ideas of motivation would be at play within English Debating Society, also individual motivation would definitely vary from the collective group data that I have collected – the limitations of the study are numerous, however the only purpose of it is to paint a picture that somewhat captures and characterizes motivational concepts in the organization discussed above – a little vague but not necessarily incomplete.