**Textbook extract**

Motivation is a broad concept which includes preferences for particular outcomes, strength of effort (half-hearted or enthusiastic), and persistence (in the face of problems and barriers). These are the factors that we have to understand in order to explain your motivation and behaviour. These are the factors which a manager has to appreciate in order to motivate employees to behave in organizationally desirable ways.

Theories of motivation based on drives and needs are known as content theories. They have this label because drives and needs are seen as part of our common "mental luggage'. The most recent content theory of work motivation was developed by Nitin Nohria, Boris Groysberg and Linda-Eling Lee (2008). Their 'emotional needs' theory claims that we are driven by four basic and innate ('hardwired') drives:

the drive to *acquire*  obtain scarce goods, develop social status

the drive to *bond* form connections with other individuals and groups

the drive to *comprehend* satisfy our curiosity, master our environment

the drive to *defend* protect against threats, promote justice

From a survey of around 700 employees of large companies, they found that an organization's ability to meet the four drives contributes to employee motivation by influencing feelings of involvement, energy and initiative, satisfaction, commitment, and intention to quit (or stay). Fulfilling employees' drive to bond has the greatest impact on commitment, while meeting the drive to comprehend is closely linked to involvement, energy and initiative. However, the best way to improve motivation is to meet all four drives; 'a poor showing on one drive substantially diminishes the impact of high scores on the other three'. How can this frame-work be used in practice? There is a 'primary lever' linked to each of the drives. These are the organization's reward system, its culture, the way that jobs are designed, and performance management and resource allocation processes. Organizational policies and practices in each of those areas can enhance motivation, as shown in Table 9.3.

*Table 9.3: Emotional needs theory and implications for practice*

**Drive primary lever management actions**

**acquire reward system**  differentiate good, average and poor performers

tie rewards clearly to performance

pay as well as your competitors

**bond culture** foster mutual reliance among co-workers

value collaboration and teamwork encourage sharing of best practices

**comprehend job design** design jobs that have distinct and important roles in the organization

design jobs that are meaningful and foster a sense of contribution to the organization

**defend performance** increase the transparency of all processes

**management** emphasize their fairness

build trust by being just and transparent in granting rewards, assignments, and other forms of recognition

Buchanan, D. and Huczynski, A. (2010) Organizational Behaviour: An Introductory Text, 7th edition*.* Harlow: Pearson Education.