MODULE OVERVIEW

What really motivates people at work: Maslow's five needs

Adaptive module | ~20 min

Understanding what really motivates people has never been more strategic: AI raises fears of becoming obsolete, hybrid work loosens team ties, and purpose weighs heavily when people choose an employer. Maslow's pyramid is not a ladder to climb once and for all: this module turns it into a diagnostic lens to revisit at every turning point, and translates the five needs into concrete actions for team members and managers alike.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

01 Identify the five needs behind motivation according to Maslow, and how each one shows up at work today.

02 Assess which level you are at yourself, and spot the signs of a poorly met need in your colleagues.

03 Act on your own needs where you can: protect time to disconnect, reach out to others, and dare to ask for feedback.

04 Respond to your team's needs in practical ways: a clear structure, belonging rituals, recognition, and autonomy.

WHO IT'S FOR

Team members who want to keep their motivation going day to day, and managers who want to sustain their team's engagement.

- **Prerequisite:** none

HOW THE MODULE WORKS

Self-paced, with practice tailored to each learner.

1 **Self-assessment**: on 9 dimensions, to gauge current habits and guide the practice.

2 **Expert video**: 10 minutes, with 3 pauses for reflection.

3 **Practice scenarios**: the first 2 chosen from the self-assessment, then 16 optional ones. Every answer gets feedback: what it leads to, and one way to improve.

4 **Dated commitment**: one action to try, written by the learner or picked from the suggestions.

5 **Memo to download**: key takeaways, questions, commitment, personal notes and checklists.

ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETION

Pass mark: 80%

The score takes into account your answers to the practice scenarios, your commitment and, where relevant, any additional learning activities. Passing requires a commitment and a score of at least 80%.

METHODS & MODELS

- Maslow's pyramid (5 needs) – Abraham Maslow (1943)
- Autonomy – a recognized driver of motivation
- The need to disconnect – Afthonios method

SOURCES & REFERENCES

- World Economic Forum – Future of Jobs Report 2025: 39% of key skills will change by 2030
- McKinsey – survey on purpose at work: about 70% of employees say their sense of purpose comes from their work itself
- Abraham Maslow – "A Theory of Human Motivation" (1943), the pyramid of five needs
- Deci & Ryan (2000) – autonomy, competence, and relatedness in motivation

Module created by Afthonios.com.

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