

An Analysis of the Current Employee Motivation System at PETRA spol. s r.o.

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Bachelor's Thesis
2025



Tomas Bata University in Zlín
Faculty of Humanities

Univerzita Tomáše Bati ve Zlíně
Fakulta humanitních studií
Ústav moderních jazyků a literatur

Akademický rok: 2024/2025

ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

(projektu, uměleckého díla, uměleckého výkonu)

Jméno a příjmení: Vojtěch Bohunský
Osobní číslo: H210148
Studijní program: B0231P090005 Anglický jazyk pro manažerskou praxi
Forma studia: Prezenční
Téma práce: Analýza současného systému motivace zaměstnanců ve firmě PETRA spol. s r.o.

Zásady pro vypracování

Formulace cílů práce
Literární rešerše na téma motivace zaměstnanců
Analýza současného systému motivace zaměstnanců ve firmě PETRA spol. s r.o.
Zjištění předností a nedostatků v systému motivace
Doporučení ke zvýšení motivace zaměstnanců

Forma zpracování bakalářské práce: **tištěná/elektronická**
Jazyk zpracování: **Angličtina**

Seznam doporučené literatury:

Armstrong, Michael, and Stephen Taylor. 2014. *Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice*. 13th ed. London: Kogan Page.

Beardwell, Julie, and Tim Claydon. 2014. *Human Resource Management: A Contemporary Approach*. 7th ed. Harlow: Pearson.

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Torrington, Derek, Laura Hall, and Stephen Taylor. 2014. *Human Resource Management*. 18th ed. Harlow: Pearson.

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **Ing. Petra Benyahya, Ph.D.**
Ústav marketingových komunikací

Datum zadání bakalářské práce: **2. ledna 2025**
Termín odevzdání bakalářské práce: **6. května 2025**

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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zaměřuje na analýzu systému motivace zaměstnanců ve společnosti PETRA spol. s r.o., která působí v oblasti lesnictví, logistiky a zpracování dřeva. Cílem práce je posoudit, do jaké míry současný motivační systém odpovídá potřebám zaměstnanců.

Teoretická část představuje klíčové přístupy k motivaci, včetně rozdílu mezi vnitřní a vnější motivací, a dále shrnuje nejvýznamnější teorie motivace – například Herzbergovu dvoufaktorovou teorii, Maslowovu hierarchii potřeb, teorii očekávání, cílovou teorii a teorii spravedlnosti.

Praktická část je postavena na analýze vycházející především z výsledků dotazníkového šetření mezi zaměstnanci a konzultace s personálním oddělením. Na základě těchto zjištění byla navržena konkrétní doporučení ke zlepšení systému motivace ve zkoumané firmě.

Klíčová slova: motivace, motivační faktory, teorie motivace, odměny a bonusy.

ABSTRACT

This bachelor thesis focuses on the analysis of the employee motivation system in the company PETRA spol. s r.o., which operates in the forestry, logistics, and timber processing sectors. The aim of the thesis is to evaluate to what extent the current motivation system meets the needs of employees. The theoretical part introduces key concepts of motivation, including the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and presents the most important motivation theories, such as Herzberg's two-factor theory, Maslow's hierarchy of needs, expectancy theory, goal-setting theory, and equity theory. The practical part is based mainly on an analysis of data collected through an employee questionnaire and a consultation with the HR department. Based on the findings, several practical recommendations were proposed to improve the motivation system within the company.

Keywords: motivation, motivational factors, theories of motivation, rewards and bonuses

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Ing. Petra Benyahya Ph.D., for her time, expert guidance, and valuable support throughout the writing of this bachelor's thesis. Her feedback, encouragement, and willingness to provide advice at every stage of the process were essential to the completion of this work.

I would also like to thank my family, friends, and my girlfriend for their support and understanding during my studies.

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INTRODUCTION

Employee motivation plays a key role in the success and long-term stability of any company. Motivated employees tend to be more productive, more committed to their work, and more willing to contribute to the overall goals of the organization. In a competitive and changing business environment, it is no longer enough to rely only on financial incentives. Factors such as recognition, opportunities for personal growth, fairness, and a positive workplace atmosphere are becoming increasingly important in sustaining employee motivation and engagement.

This bachelor thesis focuses on the analysis of the current employee motivation system at PETRA spol. s r.o., a company operating in the forestry, logistics, and timber processing sectors. The main objective is to evaluate how well the company's current practices meet the needs and expectations of employees. At the same time, the research aims to identify areas where the motivation system could be improved and to suggest practical recommendations that could help increase employee motivation and strengthen the overall working environment.

The theoretical part of the thesis presents key concepts and theories related to motivation. It explains the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and introduces major theoretical models such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's two-factor theory, Vroom's expectancy theory, goal-setting theory, and equity theory. These theories help explain how employee motivation works and are used as a background for the practical part of the thesis.

The practical part is based primarily on data collected through an online questionnaire distributed to employees and a consultation with the company's HR representative. The analysis focuses on identifying which motivational factors are important to employees and how well they are currently fulfilled within the company. Based on the findings, several realistic and cost-conscious recommendations are proposed to strengthen the company's motivation system and better support its workforce.

I THEORY

1 MOTIVATION

Motivation can be understood as the drive or energy that moves a person to act. It exists on a spectrum, ranging from minimal to significant levels of activation that influence behaviour. A person who feels energized and directed toward a goal is considered motivated, whereas someone lacking inspiration or desire to act is unmotivated. This spectrum of motivation is a concern not only for individuals but also for teams and organizations that strive to foster higher levels of motivation in themselves and others. (Armstrong 2014, 167-168)

Motivation also plays a crucial role in organizations as it directly impacts employees' performance and behaviour at work. Motivated employees tend to perform better, exceed their basic job responsibilities, and demonstrate loyalty and cooperation with their managers and colleagues. They often display discretionary behaviours, willingly contributing extra effort, creativity, and productivity without being required to do so. Managers and team leaders are primarily responsible for fostering motivation through effective leadership, but human resource (HR) specialists also play a vital role. HR specialists can develop policies and practices that create a positive work environment, enhance performance, and enable employees to meet and even exceed expectations. Furthermore, understanding personal traits such as personality, attitudes, emotions, and intelligence is essential for improving motivation, as these factors significantly influence how employees perform and interact with their work. Focusing on motivation can help organizations build a committed, productive, and loyal workforce, which is essential for long-term success (Armstrong 2014, 167-168).

1.1 Motive, motivation, stimulus and Stimulation and their difference

Motive

is the driving force behind an action. It arises from an individual's internal desire or expectation that pursuing a specific behaviour will help fulfil a personal need or reach a desired goal. Motives are usually deep-rooted and linked to personal values, emotions, and long-term aspirations. (Armstrong, 2007, 120)

Types of motives:

- **Biological motives** – Innate and necessary for survival, including hunger, thirst, sleep, etc. (Coon, Mitterer 2008, 321)
- **Stimulus motives** – Drive the need for stimulation and exploration, such as curiosity, physical contact, and manipulation, but are not essential for survival. (Coon, Mitterer 2008, 321)
- **Learned motives** - Developed through experience, influencing behaviours like seeking power, approval, achievement, and social connection. (Coon, Mitterer 2008, 321)

Motivation

Motivation on the other hand, is the process that turns these motives into actual behaviour. It refers to the internal mechanisms that activate, direct, and sustain effort toward a goal. While a motive explains why someone wants something, motivation explains how strongly they are willing to work for it, and how long they will keep trying. (Coon & Mitterer, 2008, 321)

Stimulus

A stimulus is something that causes a reaction — it's usually one specific thing. In the workplace, this could be a bonus, praise from a manager, or even a new challenge. (Pavlov, 1927, 15).

Stimulation

On the other hand, stimulation is about keeping people engaged and committed over time. It's less about one-time rewards and more about creating the right conditions at work. For example, giving employees more variety in their tasks, some control over how they work, and chances to grow can make their jobs more meaningful and motivating. (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, 250-279).

The Difference

Motive and motivation come from inside a person. They are based on inner desires, personal goals, or the need to feel fulfilled. These inner forces push people to act in a certain way (Ryan & Deci, 2000). On the other hand, stimulus and stimulation come from the outside. They include things like bonuses, praise, or rewards from the boss. (Armstrong, 2014, 170).

1.2 Aspects of motivation

According to Arnold et al. motivation consists of three main components that help explain how individuals direct their behaviour and maintain effort over time: (Armstrong, 2014, 170)

1. Direction – refers to what a person aims to achieve.
2. Effort – amount of energy they invest in pursuing their goal.
3. Persistence – relates to how long they are willing to continue trying to reach their objectives

These components are essential for understanding how motivated individuals behave. When people are motivated, they often direct their energy toward achieving specific goals and sustain their efforts over time. This consistent focus and determination enable them to perform effectively and make meaningful progress in their tasks (Armstrong, 2014, 170)

1.3 Types of motivation

Motivation is not a simple, universal concept. People differ not only in the amount of motivation they experience but also in the kind of motivation that drives them. (Ryan, Deci 2000, 54)

Motivation can be divided into different types based on its orientation, with intrinsic and extrinsic motivation being the two main categories. These types provide insight into the various reasons and goals that drive individuals to act. (Ryan, Deci, 2000, 54)

1.3.1 Intrinsic motivation

Intrinsic motivation occurs when individuals find their work meaningful, interesting, and challenging. It arises from within, driven by the work itself rather than external rewards or incentives. People feel intrinsically motivated when their roles provide them with a sense of autonomy, opportunities for achievement, and the ability to develop their skills and abilities.

Deci and Ryan (1985) suggested that intrinsic motivation stems from the need to feel competent and to have control over one's actions.

Intrinsic motivation can be strengthened by designing jobs in a way that keeps employees interested and engaged. Katz (1964) suggested that jobs should include enough

variety, challenge, and complexity to make them more enjoyable and meaningful for employees. (Armstrong, 2014, 170)

An example of intrinsic motivation is when someone puts a lot of effort into a work project simply because they find it interesting or enjoyable. The employee may feel a strong sense of satisfaction, but this feeling is not directly caused by any action taken by management. (Torrington, Hall, Taylor, Atkinson, 2016, 527)

1.3.2 Extrinsic motivation

Extrinsic motivation happens when people are encouraged to do something through external rewards or actions. These rewards can include bonuses, pay raises, praise, or promotions, while punishments might involve criticism, withholding pay, or disciplinary actions. Extrinsic motivators can work quickly and have a strong impact, but their effects often don't last for a long time. (Armstrong 2014, 170)

Extrinsic motivators can have a strong and immediate impact, but their effects often don't last very long. On the other hand, intrinsic motivators, which focus on improving the quality of work life, usually have a deeper and longer-lasting effect because they come from within the person and are not forced from the outside. (Armstrong 2006, 254)

2 MOTIVATION THEORIES

There are several motivation theories that are generally complementary to one another. (Armstrong 2009, 346)

The most significant theories of motivation can be summarised as follows:

- Instrumentality theory
- Content theory (needs theory)
- Process theories
- McGregor's Theory X and Y
- Herzberg's two-factor model

2.1 INSTRUMENTALITY THEORY

Instrumentality theory is based on the belief that doing one thing will result in a specific outcome. In its simplest form, the theory suggests that people are motivated to work primarily for financial rewards. Emerging in the late 19th century, the theory focused on rationalizing work and emphasizing economic results. It assumes that individuals are motivated when rewards or penalties are directly linked to their performance, meaning that the rewards are dependent on how well they perform. (Armstrong 2006, 254)

Instrumentality theory is based entirely on external controls and overlooks other important human needs. It also fails to account for the influence of informal relationships among workers. (Armstrong 2014, page 171).

This approach to motivation has been, and continues to be, widely used and can be effective in certain situations. However, it relies entirely on external controls.

Managerial implications:

For managers, Instrumentality Theory suggests that rewards should be clearly linked to performance. Employees need to understand how their work leads to bonuses, promotions, or other benefits (Vroom 1964, 15). Being fair and transparent is important—if employees feel the system is unfair, their motivation can drop (Armstrong 2014, 171).

However, focusing only on money has downsides. Research shows that when people are only motivated by pay, their interest in the work itself can fade over time (Deci, Koestner,

Ryan, 1999, 640). To avoid this, managers should also use non-financial motivators, like appreciation, career growth, and meaningful tasks (Herzberg, 1968, 55).

2.2 Content theory

This theory is based on the idea that motivation stems from an individual's needs. When a need is unmet, it creates tension and a sense of imbalance. To resolve this, the individual identifies a goal that will fulfil the need and chooses a course of action to achieve it. As a result, all behaviour is driven by unmet needs. (Armstrong 2006, 255)

However, not all needs carry the same importance at any given moment. Some needs may drive a person toward a goal more strongly than others, depending on their background and current situation. Adding to the complexity, there is no straightforward connection between needs and goals. A single need can be fulfilled by multiple goals, and the stronger or longer lasting the need, the wider the range of possible goals. Similarly, one goal can satisfy several needs at once - for example, buying a new car may provide transportation while also serving as a way to impress others. (Armstrong 2006, 255)

The most well-known classification of needs was introduced in 1954 by Maslow. He proposed that there are five main categories of needs that apply to everyone, starting with basic needs and progressing through psychological needs, ultimately leading to the highest level: self-fulfilment. According to Maslow, once a lower-level need is met, the next higher need becomes the focus, and the individual works toward satisfying it. However, the need for self-fulfilment can never be completely satisfied, as only unmet needs can drive behaviour, with the most pressing need serving as the strongest motivator. (Armstrong 2006, 255)

Maslow also suggested that psychological growth occurs as people progress through these levels of needs. However, this progression is not always straightforward. Lower-level needs remain present, even if they are temporarily not driving behaviour, and individuals may often return to previously satisfied needs (Armstrong 2006, 255)

Managerial implications

Managers need to understand that employees are motivated by different needs. Basic needs like fair pay and job security must be met first before focusing on things like recognition or career growth (Maslow, 1954, 236; Armstrong, 2006, 255).

Not all employees are driven by the same things—some want teamwork and recognition, while others prefer independence and challenges (Herzberg 1968, 56). Managers should offer a mix of motivators, such as promotions, training, or flexible work options (McClelland 1987, 145).

Since needs change over time, good managers check in regularly and adjust motivation strategies to keep employees engaged (Armstrong 2014, 173).

2.3 Process theories

Process theory focuses on the psychological factors and forces that influence motivation, as well as basic needs. It is often called cognitive theory because it examines how people perceive, interpret, and understand their work environment. (Armstrong 2006, 258) Process or cognitive theory can certainly be more useful to managers than needs theory because it provides more realistic guidance on motivation techniques. (Armstrong 2006, 259)

The processes are: (Armstrong 2006, 259)

- expectations (Expectancy theory)
- goal achievement (Goal theory)
- feelings about equity (Equity theory)

2.3.1 Expectancy theory

Expectancy theory suggests that motivation will be strong when individuals understand what they need to do to earn a reward, believe they are capable of achieving it, and see the reward as valuable. (Armstrong 2014, 174)

The concept of expectancy theory originates from the valency-instrumentality-expectancy (VIE) model developed by Vroom in 1964. In this model, valency refers to the value of an outcome, instrumentality represents the belief that one action will lead to another, and expectancy relates to the likelihood that effort or action will result in a specific outcome. (Armstrong 2006, 258)

Vroom elaborated on this by stating:

“Where an individual chooses between alternatives which involve uncertain outcomes, it seems clear that his behaviour is affected not only by his preferences among these outcomes but also by the degree to which he believes these outcomes to be possible. An expectancy is defined as a momentary belief concerning the likelihood that a particular act will be followed by a particular outcome. Expectancies may be described in terms of their strength. Maximal strength is indicated by subjective certainty that the act will be followed by the outcome, while minimal (or zero) strength is indicated by subjective certainty that the act will not be followed by the outcome.”

(Vroom, 1964, 16)

While effort is important for achieving desired performance, Porter and Lawler (1968) emphasized that effort alone is not enough. Effective performance also depends on two additional factors: abilities and role perceptions. Abilities refer to a person's characteristics, such as intelligence, skills, and knowledge, which determine how well they can perform a task. Role perceptions involve an individual's understanding of what they are expected to do and what the organization requires from them. If these perceptions align with the organization's expectations, performance is more likely to improve. However, if there is a mismatch, the individual may struggle to meet the desired outcomes. These two factors work alongside effort to influence task achievement and overall performance. (Armstrong 2006, 260)

Managerial Implications:

Expectancy Theory shows that employees are more motivated when they believe their effort will lead to good performance, and that this performance will lead to a valuable reward (Vroom, 1964, 15, Armstrong, 2014, 174). So, managers should make sure employees clearly understand what is expected, what rewards are offered, and how to achieve them.

Rewards should also match what employees actually value—for some it's money, for others it may be time off or learning opportunities (Armstrong, 2006, 258).

Also, effort alone isn't enough. Managers need to make sure employees have the right skills and understand their roles clearly (Armstrong, 2006, 260). For example, giving clear instructions, proper training, and helpful feedback can make a big difference in performance and motivation.

2.3.2 Goal Theory

Goal theory, developed by Latham and Locke in 1979, explains that people are more motivated and perform better when they are given clear goals, especially if the goals are challenging but agreed upon. Feedback on progress is important to keep motivation high. Involving people in setting goals helps them commit to reaching higher targets. Difficult goals should be agreed upon, and support or guidance should be provided to help achieve them. Regular feedback is key to maintaining motivation, especially when working toward bigger goals. (Armstrong 2009, 327)

Feedback provides value in two main ways. First, it allows individuals to assess how well they are performing. For instance, sports teams need to know the game score, a sharpshooter needs to see their target, and a golfer needs to track their score. Similarly, work teams, departments, and organizations benefit from understanding their performance. Receiving feedback often motivates individuals to improve and perform better. (Lunenburg, 2011, 3)

Managerial implications:

Managers should set clear and challenging goals together with employees to boost motivation and performance (Armstrong, 2009, 327).

Regular feedback is also essential—it helps employees track progress and stay focused, just like athletes checking their score (Lunenburg, 2011, 3).

2.3.3 Equity theory

J. Stacey Adams's equity theory highlights a crucial factor in employee motivation. The theory examines the connection between the effort an employee puts into their work and the reward they receive in return. Essentially, it suggests that employees may feel a sense of unfairness if the reward they get does not match the effort they believe they have invested (Adams, 1965). Similarly, inequity can arise if employees think that another person has received the same reward without putting in an equal amount of effort. (Waters 2021, 6)

According to Adams (1965), equity can be divided into two forms: distributive equity and procedural equity.

- Distributive equity focuses on how fairly employees feel they are rewarded based on their contributions and in comparison, to others. (Armstrong 2009, 262)

- Procedural equity deals with employees' perceptions of fairness in the processes used for decisions like performance appraisals, promotions, and disciplinary actions. (Armstrong 2009, 262)

Both forms play an important role in shaping employees' sense of fairness and motivation in the workplace. (Armstrong 2009, 262)

Managerial implications:

Equity Theory shows that employees care not just about what they get, but how fair it feels (Adams, 1965). Managers should make sure rewards match effort and are fair compared to others doing similar work (Waters, 2021, 6).

It's also important that processes like promotions and evaluations are clear and fair, so employees trust the system (Armstrong, 2009, 262).

2.4 McGregor's Theory X and Y

Theory X and Theory Y reflect the views managers have about their employees' behaviour specifically in the workplace. These theories focus on how employees act and perform their roles within the organization, rather than how they behave outside the workplace. (Hattangadi 2015, 20)

Theory X assumes that employees naturally dislike work and will try to avoid it if they can. Because of this, managers think that workers need to be closely supervised, and strict control systems must be in place to ensure they do their jobs. This approach relies on a hierarchical structure with tight control at every level. It also assumes that employees have little ambition unless they are given strong incentives and that they will avoid responsibility whenever possible. Theory X managers adopt an authoritarian approach that prioritizes productivity and output. (Hattangadi 2015, 20)

Theory Y is a management style that emphasizes participation and assumes that employees are capable of self-direction and self-control when working toward organizational goals. It suggests that employees are dedicated to achieving the organization's objectives. In this approach, the primary role of management is to shape employees' behavior and strengthen their commitment to these goals. Leaders who follow Theory Y are often called participative or democratic leaders, as they involve employees in decision-making and encourage collaboration. This leadership style is seen as one of the most effective approaches in today's business world. (Hattangadi 2015, 21)

Managerial implications

McGregor's theory suggests that managers' assumptions about people influence their leadership style. A Theory X approach may work in strict or routine environments, but too much control can lower morale and trust (Hattangadi, 2015, 20).

In contrast, Theory Y encourages participation and self-direction, which is more effective in modern workplaces. Managers should trust employees more, involve them in decisions, and support their growth—this boosts motivation and performance (Hattangadi, 2015, 21).

2.5 Herzberg's two – factor model

The Two-Factor Theory, developed by Frederick Herzberg (1959), identifies two main categories of factors that influence motivation: motivators (or satisfiers) and hygiene factors (or dissatisfiers). These two categories are distinct and operate independently.

- - Motivators are intrinsic and relate to job content, such as recognition, achievement, and opportunities for growth. These factors contribute to motivation by enhancing the meaning and fulfilment employees derive from their work. (Armstrong 2006, 262–263)
- - Hygiene factors on the other hand, are extrinsic and connected to the work environment, including salaries, interpersonal relationships, and job security. While hygiene factors do not necessarily increase satisfaction, their absence can lead to dissatisfaction. (Armstrong 2006, 262–263)

Herzberg's two-factor theory has been criticized, especially because the research didn't clearly show a connection between job satisfaction and performance. Still, the theory is widely used. It's popular because it's easy to understand and based on real work experiences. It also fits well with other well-known ideas, like Maslow's hierarchy of needs and McGregor's focus on motivation. Herzberg's theory has also helped create ideas like job enrichment, which sees work as something meaningful. (Armstrong 2007, 124)

Managerial implications

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory shows that managers need to address both hygiene factors and motivators. In practice, this means ensuring that basic conditions—such as fair pay, clear policies, and good working relationships—are in place to avoid dissatisfaction. However, to truly motivate employees, managers should also focus on intrinsic factors like recognition,

responsibility, and opportunities for growth. This can involve assigning meaningful tasks, encouraging participation in decision-making, and supporting professional development. Herzberg also introduced the concept of job enrichment, which aims to make work more engaging and fulfilling (Armstrong, 2006, 262–263; Armstrong, 2007, 124).

Apart from theoretical models, various authors also highlight the practical aspects of managing motivation in real organizational settings. Beardwell and Claydon point out that motivation should not be viewed as a fixed personal trait but as a dynamic state influenced by management style, communication, and the clarity of performance expectations (Beardwell, Claydon, 2014, 504). Foot, Hook, and Jenkins underline the importance of consistent HR policies, noting that inconsistencies in how managers apply rules or reward performance can create confusion and reduce motivation across teams (Foot, Hook, Jenkins, 2016, 294). Robbins and Judge stress the role of perceived fairness in daily decision-making, stating that even small actions—such as giving credit for a task or explaining a decision—can shape how motivated employees feel in their roles (Robbins, Judge, 2023, 224). These perspectives show that employee motivation is not just about formal systems, but also about day-to-day interactions and how employees interpret management behaviour.

3 JOB SATISFACTION

Job satisfaction is about how people feel about their jobs and different parts of their work. It shows whether they like (are satisfied with) or dislike (are dissatisfied with) their jobs. It is usually seen as an attitudinal factor. (Spector 1997, 2)

There are key reasons why job satisfaction matters. From a humanitarian standpoint, employees deserve to be treated fairly and with respect, and job satisfaction reflects this fair treatment. It can also indicate emotional well-being and mental health. From a practical perspective, job satisfaction influences employee behaviour, which can have a direct impact on how well the organization functions. (Spector 1997, 2)

3.1 Factors affecting job satisfaction

According to Armstrong levels of job satisfaction or dissatisfaction are influenced by these factors:

- **Intrinsic motivating factors:** These factors are related to the content of the job and include the five dimensions identified by Hackman and Oldham (1974) in the job characteristics model, which are: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. (Armstrong 2014, 177)
- **Quality of supervision:** According to the Hawthorne studies created by Roethlisberger and Dixon in 1939, supervision plays a critical role in shaping employee attitudes. Moreover, the Australian psychologist and sociologist Elton Mayo (1933) emphasized that the desire to work alongside colleagues is one of the strongest human traits. (Armstrong 2014, 177)
- **Success or failure:** Achieving success can create a strong sense of satisfaction, as it allows individuals to demonstrate their abilities fully. Conversely, failure can lead to dissatisfaction. (Armstrong 2014, 177)

3.2 Job satisfaction and motivation

It's clear that being satisfied at work doesn't always mean an employee is highly motivated, and the same goes the other way around. Still, there is a connection between how satisfied people feel and how willing they are to put effort into their work. This connection often depends on things like how interesting and meaningful the job is, how much control and support employees have, whether they get chances to grow, and if their efforts are

recognised. Because of this, organisations that want to succeed should pay close attention to both job satisfaction and motivation. These two areas are closely linked and together play a big role in how well people perform. To support their employees properly, companies should have ways to regularly check what their staff need and how they feel about their work. This helps them create better development programmes and improve working conditions. In the long run, this can lead to stronger employee commitment and better results for the organisation. In short, management should try to match what employees want with what the organisation needs—finding a balance that benefits both sides. (Kwasi Dartey-Baah, 2010)

4 MONEY AND MOTIVATION

Money, often in the form of pay or other financial rewards, is one of the most obvious extrinsic motivators. While it is a powerful force that fulfils many needs, its ability to sustain long-term satisfaction is debated. Herzberg et al. (1957) argued that while the absence of money can lead to dissatisfaction, its presence does not guarantee lasting satisfaction. This is especially evident for employees on fixed salaries or those who do not benefit from performance-based incentives. Although receiving a pay increase can provide a sense of recognition and value, this feeling is often short-lived. Additionally, other workplace dissatisfactions, such as poor working conditions or ineffective management, can overshadow the impact of financial rewards. (Armstrong 2009, 329-330)

It is important to recognize that money does not motivate everyone equally or in the same way. People have different needs, and while some are highly motivated by financial incentives, others may not respond as strongly, especially if they lack confidence in achieving the rewards. Extrinsic rewards can also diminish intrinsic motivation, making tasks feel less enjoyable and reducing overall performance (Deci, Koestner, Ryan, 1999). However, when managed well, money can serve as a tangible form of recognition and motivation. Jaques (1961) stressed the importance of fair pay systems, where rewards reflect the effort and responsibility of the employee. He believed that workers should feel their pay is fair compared to their peers, which he called the "felt-fair" principle. Ultimately, while money can positively influence motivation in the right circumstances, it is only one of many factors contributing to performance and satisfaction. (Armstrong 2009, 329-330)

5 FINANCIAL INCENTIVES AND MOTIVATION IN THE TIMBER INDUSTRY

In the timber and wood processing industry, financial incentives are often perceived as key motivators, particularly due to the physically demanding nature of the work and the emphasis on measurable performance outcomes. A study focused on employees in Turkey's forest products sector showed that transparent and fair performance appraisal systems significantly increase employee motivation and productivity. The findings suggest that employees respond positively when financial rewards are directly linked to clearly defined performance metrics. (Yıldırım, Han, 2023)

Similarly, research conducted in a Croatian wood processing company revealed that the importance of financial incentives fluctuates depending on the economic situation. During times of economic uncertainty and restructuring, employees primarily focused on stable income and basic job security. In contrast, once the company regained stability, motivational factors such as social climate, recognition, and professional development began to play a stronger role (Faletar et al., 2015, 217-220). This suggests that financial rewards are essential in ensuring short-term satisfaction and security but may not sustain long-term engagement unless supported by non-financial motivators.

The specific nature of work in the timber industry — including tasks related to harvesting, machinery operation, logistics, and outdoor conditions — makes fair and predictable compensation especially important. Employees often value not only the amount of financial reward but also the way it is distributed, the consistency, and whether it reflects their effort and results. If financial rewards are perceived as unfair or arbitrary, they may lose their motivational effect and lead to dissatisfaction. (Yıldırım, Han, 2023,).

Therefore, in this sector, financial motivation is not only about the salary level, but also about clarity, fairness, and the link between performance and reward. To ensure long-term motivation, companies should combine well-structured financial incentives with non-financial elements such as career opportunities, a positive team atmosphere, and appreciation of individual contributions. (Faletar et al., 2015, 223)

6 MEASURING MOTIVATION

Motivation is a complex psychological construct that cannot be directly observed. As a result, researchers and practitioners must rely on indirect methods to assess how motivated individuals are in specific contexts, including the workplace.

One of the earliest overviews of motivational measurement was presented by West and Uhlenberg, who identified five primary methods: (West, Uhlenberg, 1970, 185)

- production measures
- self-report inventories
- observer ratings
- projective techniques
- objective tests

Production measures attempt to assess motivation through performance outcomes—such as output levels, error rates, or efficiency. Although these are objective indicators, they are influenced by external conditions (e.g. tools, working environment) and cannot be used as the sole measure of motivation (West & Uhlenberg 1970, 186).

Self-report questionnaires are the most common tool in organizational settings today. These instruments, such as the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (**WEIMS**), ask employees to rate their own attitudes, intentions, and feelings about their work (Tremblay et al. 2009). They allow organizations to distinguish between different types of motivation—such as intrinsic, extrinsic, or amotivation—and to identify specific motivational drivers like autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci 2000, 56). While these tools are easy to administer and interpret, they can be subject to social desirability bias, where respondents give answers, they believe are expected rather than true reflections.

Observer ratings, often provided by supervisors or colleagues, can be used to complement self-reports by capturing behavioural indicators of motivation, such as enthusiasm, initiative, or persistence. However, this method may be influenced by personal bias or limited visibility into an employee's internal state (West & Uhlenberg 1970, 187).

Projective tests, such as the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), attempt to reveal hidden motives and feelings by interpreting responses to ambiguous images or scenarios.

These tools are used mainly in clinical or research contexts and are less common in modern workplaces due to time intensity and subjective interpretation (West & Uhlenberg 1970, 188).

Objective tests, including reaction time or physiological responses (e.g. heart rate, skin conductance), aim to measure unconscious aspects of motivation. Although they offer interesting insights into emotional and attentional engagement, they are not practical for large-scale employee assessments (West & Uhlenberg 1970, 188).

In modern practice, organizations increasingly use a combination of quantitative surveys and qualitative methods, such as focus groups or structured interviews, to gain a comprehensive view of employee motivation. Engagement surveys, pulse surveys, and tools like Gallup's Q12 or Motivational Maps® are examples of accessible, data-driven solutions used by HR professionals to track motivation trends over time (Meyer et al. 2022, 3).

7 SUMMARY OF THE THEORETICAL PART

The theoretical part of this bachelor's thesis focuses on understanding motivation in the workplace, its various forms, and the key theories that help explain how and why employees are motivated. Motivation is described as an internal energy or drive that initiates and maintains human behaviour. It influences how much effort individuals invest in their work and how committed they remain over time. The theory also differentiates between terms such as motive (the internal reason for action), stimulus (an external factor that triggers behaviour), and stimulation (the process of keeping someone engaged in the long term).

A distinction is made between two primary types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation comes from within the individual and includes personal satisfaction, a sense of achievement, or enjoyment derived from the task itself. In contrast, extrinsic motivation arises from external rewards such as pay, bonuses, or praise. While extrinsic motivation can be effective in the short term, intrinsic motivation is generally more sustainable and leads to better long-term performance.

Several important motivation theories are presented in the theoretical part, not only to describe how motivation works in general, but more importantly to identify what managers can actively do to support it in practice. These theories provide a foundation for understanding how people behave at work and what influences their level of engagement, commitment, and performance. However, their real value lies in their practical applications in day-to-day management.

For example, Instrumentality theory shows that employees are more motivated when they clearly understand the connection between their performance and the rewards they receive. Managers can support this by setting clear expectations, providing regular feedback, and ensuring that good performance is consistently recognised and rewarded. Similarly, content theories such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs highlight the importance of understanding what individual employees value – whether it is financial security, social belonging, or personal growth – and adjusting leadership style and support accordingly.

Process theories such as Expectancy theory and Equity theory point out that employees constantly assess whether their effort will lead to meaningful outcomes, and whether they are being treated fairly in comparison to others. This means that managers need to be transparent, communicate clearly about goals and expectations, and respond fairly to differences in performance. The implication here is that motivational management is not

only about offering rewards, but about creating a fair and supportive environment where employees feel valued and trusted.

McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y emphasise the mindset managers bring into their leadership. Managers who operate from a Theory Y perspective – seeing employees as responsible and self-motivated – are more likely to build high-trust relationships and delegate meaningfully, which increases intrinsic motivation. This is particularly relevant in modern workplaces, where employees seek not only tasks to complete, but roles that give them purpose and autonomy.

Herzberg's two-factor theory reinforces the idea that motivation does not come only from eliminating dissatisfaction (e.g., poor pay or bad working conditions), but from actively supporting factors such as achievement, recognition, and professional development. From a managerial point of view, this means going beyond basic working conditions and focusing on what actually drives performance and satisfaction.

In short, while the theoretical part introduces key motivation theories, its main purpose is to extract concrete guidance for managers. The message is clear: managers play a key role in creating motivational conditions by communicating transparently, rewarding fairly, developing people, showing trust, and offering purpose—not just by managing tasks, but by supporting people.

II PRACTICAL PART

8 INFORMATION ABOUT THE COMPANY

PETRA spol. s r.o. is a limited liability company based in Hodonín, South Moravian Region, Czech Republic, specializing in forestry and timber processing. Founded in 1992, the company has steadily expanded its operations and established itself as a prominent player in the forestry sector. PETRA spol. s r.o. provides a comprehensive portfolio of services, including logging, silvicultural activities, timber trade, and biomass production.

Organizational Structure and Divisions

The company operates through several divisions, each focusing on specific aspects of the forestry and timber industry:

- **PETRA spol. s r.o.:** Core forestry and timber trading operations.
- **T.E.P. HOLZ, s.r.o.:** Specialized forestry services.
- **T.E.P.Z., s.r.o.:** Additional forestry-related activities.
- **ELITER, s.r.o.:** Transportation, logistics, and freight forwarding.
- **PETRA BIO s.r.o.:** Biomass processing and production.
- **PETRA SW a.s.:** Software development and information services.
- **PETRA SK, s.r.o.:** Representation and operations in Slovakia.

PETRA spol. s.r.o. currently employs approximately 100 individuals across its various divisions. The company places a strong emphasis on environmentally responsible practices and makes use of modern technologies to ensure that its operations are efficient while minimizing ecological impact. This focus on sustainability is not just a slogan—it is reflected in concrete actions and results, such as large-scale afforestation efforts and the use of advanced machinery that meets current environmental standards.

The company offers a wide array of services related to the forestry and wood processing industry. These include timber harvesting using advanced harvester technologies, transportation of timber using the company's own fleet, and the purchase and sale of various timber assortments and species. PETRA is also active in silvicultural services, such as afforestation, forest protection, and the cultivation of young forest stands. In addition to these, it is involved in biomass production and distribution and supplies firewood to both businesses and private households. This broad portfolio allows the company to serve a wide range of customers and to respond flexibly to changing market demands.

In terms of market presence, PETRA has established itself not only in the domestic market but also in several international ones. The company exports its services and products to countries such as Poland, Slovakia, Austria, Germany, and China. This international reach reflects its capacity to meet diverse client requirements and underscores its reputation as a reliable partner in the forestry sector.

Financially, PETRA has achieved notable success. Financially, PETRA has achieved notable success. In 2020, the group harvested approximately 2.07 million cubic meters of timber, which generated a turnover of around 3.4 billion CZK. This shows how strong the company's position is in the Czech forestry industry. PETRA's results come from a consistent focus on growing step by step, offering a variety of services, and regularly investing in better technology and ways to work more effectively.

Naturally, PETRA operates in a competitive environment. Among its main competitors in the Czech Republic are Lesy České republiky, a state-owned enterprise managing national forests, UNILES a.s., which is also active in forestry and timber processing. These companies vary in size and specialization, but all compete for similar contracts and customers within the sector.

As for customers, PETRA caters to a broad and diverse client base. Its services are used by forest owners, timber processors, biomass consumers, and private individuals looking to buy firewood. The company's ability to serve both large industrial clients and smaller-scale customers is a result of its flexible internal structure and wide-ranging service offer. This versatility and customer-focused approach contribute significantly to PETRA's long-term business stability.

9 ANALYSIS OF EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION SYSTEM AT PETRA SPOL. S R.O.

9.1 Aim of the analysis

The aim of the analysis is to identify the current level of the employee motivation system within the selected company and to evaluate how effectively the existing motivational tools support employee engagement and satisfaction. This analysis was initiated in cooperation with the company's management, which expressed interest in better understanding the key factors that influence employee motivation. As the company does not currently have a structured HR department responsible for monitoring motivation, the results of this analysis are expected to serve as a valuable basis for management's future decisions.

The focus on employee motivation was selected due to a noticeable problem the company has recently been experiencing with employee turnover. Although the volume of work has decreased significantly—only about 25% of the amount harvested in 2020—the HR department believes that this drop is not the main reason for employees leaving. Wages and working hours have remained mostly unchanged. This may be partly explained by the fact that the company employs a significant number of local workers who operate as independent contractors (self-employed under a trade license) depending on where timber is currently being harvested. As a result, the company has reduced the number of directly employed staff, which has allowed it to maintain stable wage and working time structures for its core employees.

This difference between how management sees the situation and the rising employee turnover shows why it's important to take a closer look at employee motivation.

The findings will help show how employees really feel about the current motivation system and which areas might need some work. The company's management has already said they're open to the results and plan to take them into account when thinking about how to improve their motivation strategy in the future.

Research question:

The main research question of this thesis is: *"How well does the current motivation system at PETRA spol. s r.o. meet the needs and expectations of its employees?"*

This question reflects the aim of the study, which is to assess both how important different motivational factors are to employees and how satisfied they are with each of them in their current work environment.

9.2 Methods of data collection

To understand the current state of employee motivation at PETRA spol. s r.o., several methods were used. Combining various sources of information made it possible to examine the issue from different points of view – not only from management’s perspective, but also from the employees’. This approach enabled a comparison of different types of data and helped build a more complete and reliable picture.

9.2.1 Questionnaire

A central part of the research in this thesis was a questionnaire survey, which focused on understanding how motivated employees at PETRA spol. s r.o. feel in their work, and what factors play the biggest role in shaping that motivation. The aim of the questionnaire was to find out which specific motivational factors are considered important by employees, and to what extent these factors are currently present or fulfilled in their everyday work. The idea was to identify possible gaps between what people value and what they actually experience in their everyday work. This was important because it could help explain why some employees may feel less motivated or satisfied, and what areas the company might focus on if it wants to improve motivation in the future.

The questionnaire was created in cooperation with the company’s HR representative. Since the goal was to encourage as many employees as possible to participate, we agreed that the questions should be kept simple and clearly worded. The survey was distributed electronically — the HR representative sent a link to the questionnaire to employee email addresses, and they were able to complete it either on their work computers or on their mobile phones. This made the questionnaire easily accessible, regardless of whether employees worked in the office, in the field, or in other locations. The survey was voluntary and anonymous, which was intended to make respondents feel more comfortable sharing their honest opinions.

In total, 35 employees completed the questionnaire. This number represents a useful sample, especially for a medium-sized company. The responses came from employees in different roles and departments, which made it possible to get a general view of how

motivation is experienced throughout the company. A table summarizing the structure of the respondents will be included in the appendix.

The questionnaire consisted of 14 questions. Twelve of these were based on theories of motivation that were explained in the theoretical part of the thesis. Each motivational factor was covered by a pair of questions. The first question always asked how important a particular factor is to the employee. The second question asked to what extent the employee feels this factor is currently fulfilled in their job. This format was used to explore the difference between importance and reality for each motivational area. The factors included in the survey were:

- **Purpose** – whether employees feel that their work has meaning and contributes to something valuable.
- **Recognition from management** – the extent to which employees feel seen, appreciated, and acknowledged by their supervisors.
- **Opportunities for learning and development** – availability of chances to grow professionally, gain new skills, and improve knowledge
- **Fairness and equity** – how fairly employees feel they are treated in comparison to others in terms of rewards.
- **Autonomy** – the degree of independence employees have in making decisions and managing their own tasks.
- **Financial rewards and bonuses** – amount of satisfaction with salary levels, bonuses, and other forms of financial compensation.
- **General atmosphere in the workplace** – overall work environment, including relationships with colleagues and daily communication.

All twelve of the rating questions used the same 7-point Likert scale. A score of 1 meant that the factor was “not important at all” or “not fulfilled at all”, while a score of 7 meant that the factor was “very important” or “fully fulfilled”. This allowed respondents to give more detailed answers, not just simple yes or no responses. In addition to these structured questions, the questionnaire also included two open-ended questions at the end. These asked what motivates employees the most in their work, and what has the opposite effect — what demotivates them. Not everyone answered these optional questions, but several employees did, and their answers helped to provide more context and detail behind the numbers.

After the data was collected, the responses were analysed using basic quantitative methods. For each question, the arithmetic average was calculated. These averages were then used to compare how important each factor is to employees with how well they feel the company fulfils it. This made it possible to see where expectations and reality match, and where there are differences. For example, if a factor is very important to employees but scores low in fulfilment, it suggests an area that might be causing dissatisfaction or lower motivation.

A blank version of the questionnaire is available here: [QUESTIONNAIRE](#)

9.2.2 Consultation with the HR and employees

To support the results, I also had a very helpful meeting with the company's HR representative. She shared a lot of information about employees, working conditions, and how motivation is handled in the company. She also gave me a practical explanation of how things work at PETRA on a daily basis. What made the meeting especially useful is that she is also the wife of the company's managing director, which means she knows the company very well and was willing to talk openly about many details.

In addition to this meeting, I also spoke informally with a few employees from different departments. These conversations gave me further insight into their daily work experience, motivation, and the general atmosphere within the company. Their comments helped me understand how the motivation system is perceived directly by the people it is intended to affect.

9.2.3 Study of internal company materials

In addition, I used online sources to gather more background information. I reviewed the company's official website to better understand its structure, services, and communication style. To explore the company's financial performance, I used publicly available documents from the Commercial Register, where I found key reports such as the income statement. These materials helped me gain a clearer view of the company's financial history and current situation. They also allowed me to compare PETRA's performance with that of its competitors.

10 THE CURRENT SYSTEM OF MOTIVATION

The current motivation system at PETRA spol. s r.o. is built on a combination of financial and non-financial elements that aim to support employee satisfaction, productivity, and loyalty. The company operates across several sectors – including forestry, logistics, software development, and biomass processing – and therefore employs a wide variety of workers, from machine operators in the field to specialists in administration and finance. Even though the company does not have a dedicated HR department solely focused on employee motivation, several tools and practices are in place that show a clear effort to keep people engaged and motivated

10.1 Bonuses

Employees receive fixed monthly salaries based on the nature of their work and responsibilities. Most positions are paid using a time-based wage system, although the amount may vary depending on how demanding or specialised the job is. In addition to the base wage, every employee receives a variable wage component of 2,500 CZK. This part is conditional and can be reduced in cases of poor discipline, tardiness, or non-compliance with safety rules. I believe it's a smart way to motivate employees to follow safety rules, such as wearing protective equipment. This not only encourages responsibility but also contributes directly to reducing injuries and protecting health. In this way, motivation and personal safety go hand in hand, which I believe is a very practical

What stands out is the company's performance-based reward system. Employees receive bonuses linked to the company's overall results, particularly in connection to the volume of timber harvested. When the company performs well, employees directly benefit from its success. This creates a sense of shared responsibility and strengthens the connection between individual effort and team outcomes. In my opinion, this is a strong element of the system and gives employees a concrete reason to care about the company's performance as a whole.

In addition to fixed and performance-based pay, the company offers a number of long-term financial benefits. Every month, PETRA contributes 1,000 CZK to employees' supplementary pension insurance. On top of that, employees receive a 5,000 CZK bonus every time they reach a milestone birthday ending in 0 or 5, and an annual allowance of 2,000 CZK that can be used for clothing or work-related equipment. Another noteworthy bonus is one based on individual performance, which is awarded in the amount of either

1,000 or 1,500 CZK depending on the quality of the employee's work as assessed by the HR representative and the company owner. These financial benefits show that PETRA values long-term commitment and rewards both loyalty and individual effort.

From my point of view, the system of financial bonuses is not only fair but also quite rich. The fact that there are several different types of financial rewards – from fixed supplements to variable, performance-based and even share-from-turnover bonuses – indicates that the company takes motivation seriously. Employees are rewarded not only for being reliable and showing up but also for making a real impact on the company's results. What I find especially unique and pleasant is the company's use of small, more personal rewards such as a bottle of wine given out every three months. Although this might seem symbolic, it contributes to a friendly and appreciative work atmosphere that goes beyond formal incentives.

When it comes to personal development, I found that the opportunities are quite limited. The only available option at the moment is participation in language courses, where employees can choose to study English, German, or Spanish once a week at the company's expense. While this is a valuable benefit, there are currently no other development tools such as IT skills training, time management workshops, or professional courses related to employees' roles.

Career growth is also supported through internal promotions and access to interesting projects. Employees who show strong work ethic and reliability have the opportunity to move up within the company. In both office-based and field positions, long-term commitment and performance are recognised. Employees may be involved in tasks such as logistics planning, communication with banks regarding letters of credit, or dealing with export documentation. This adds meaningful variety to their daily work.

In terms of workplace atmosphere, the company is widely perceived as supportive and respectful. The owner's personal involvement in day-to-day operations helps maintain close relationships across departments. He is present, approachable, and regularly visits different teams, showing genuine interest in what is happening across the company. However, based on my findings, his constant presence and tendency to want oversight in nearly every part of the business is not always viewed positively by everyone. Some employees mentioned that they sometimes feel overcontrolled or not fully trusted in their roles, which can create a slight feeling of pressure. Despite this, most employees still describe the working

environment as friendly and cooperative. The overall culture remains open and fair, with good relationships among colleagues and a generally positive team spirit.

10.2 Survey results

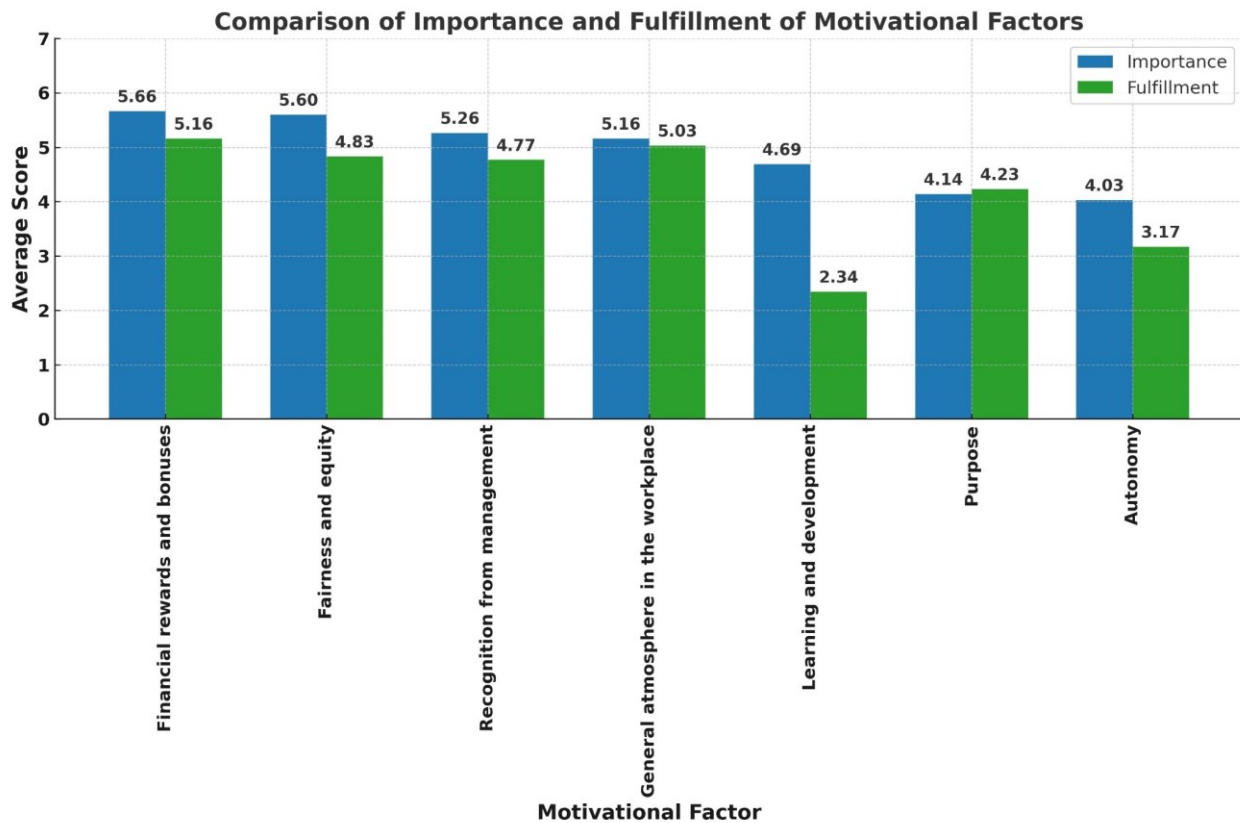


Figure 1- Comparison of Importance and Fulfillment of Motivational Factors

(Source: author's creation)

The graph shows the average scores for each motivational factor, comparing their importance and current fulfilment. Factors are sorted by importance to provide a clearer overview, which differs slightly from the original questionnaire order. In the following section, each factor will be analysed and discussed in more detail.

The first section of the questionnaire focused on **purpose** – the feeling that one's work is meaningful, useful, and contributes to a larger goal. This factor represents a core aspect of intrinsic motivation and is closely tied to personal fulfilment and long-term satisfaction at work.

When asked how important this sense of purpose is to them, respondents gave an average rating of 4.14 out of 7. This result places purpose in the middle of the scale, indicating that

while it is not the most dominant motivational factor for employees at PETRA spol. s r.o., it still plays a relevant role. Employees value having a clear understanding of why their work matters, but it is not their top priority when it comes to workplace motivation.

Interestingly, the follow-up question – asking to what extent employees currently feel a sense of purpose in their job – received a slightly higher average of 4.23. This suggests that the company is, to a large extent, meeting employee expectations in this area. The narrow gap between importance and fulfilment shows that most respondents feel that the level of purpose they experience at work corresponds well with how much they value it.

This outcome reflects a work environment where employees generally know what their roles are and see the practical value of their daily activities. In a company like PETRA, which operates in forestry, logistics, and production, work tends to be clearly structured, and outcome driven. Employees usually see their work as practical and focused on clear results, which gives them a steady sense of purpose based on real tasks.

The second motivational factor examined in the questionnaire was **recognition by management**, referring to the extent to which employees feel appreciated, noticed, and valued by their supervisors.

The question asking how important this factor is received an average score of 5.26 out of 7, placing it above the midpoint and indicating that recognition is considered fairly important by the majority of employees. Staff members clearly value being acknowledged for their work and efforts, whether through verbal praise, constructive feedback, or visible appreciation from their superiors. Recognition signals to employees that their work is meaningful, and that it is seen and respected by the people in charge.

The follow-up question, which asked to what extent employees currently feel recognized by management, received an average score of 4.77. This result is slightly lower than the importance score, showing a noticeable but not critical gap between expectations and reality. While many employees do feel that they are appreciated, the lower fulfilment score suggests that recognition does not always meet the level employees would like.

The results indicate that while recognition is not the top motivational factor in the company, it plays a significant role in how employees feel about their work and their relationship with management. A lack of consistent recognition can affect not only morale but also long-term commitment and engagement. Employees want to know that their efforts

matter—not only through formal rewards but also through regular, sincere acknowledgment from those in leadership positions.

The third motivational factor measured in the questionnaire was **learning and development**. This refers to employees' opportunities to improve their skills, grow professionally, and gain new knowledge that may benefit both their current role and future career.

The question asking how important learning and development is received an average score of 4.69 out of 7, placing it close to the midpoint. This indicates that while it is not the top priority for all employees, a significant number of them still view the ability to grow professionally as an important aspect of their job. In today's fast-changing work environment, the possibility to learn and advance is often closely tied to job satisfaction and long-term engagement.

However, the second question—measuring to what extent employees feel that learning and development opportunities are actually present—received a strikingly low average of 2.34. This is the lowest fulfilment score across the entire survey and points to a serious gap between what employees value and what they currently experience. Such a large difference clearly shows that employees perceive a major weakness in this area. The number itself suggests that the majority of employees feel that development options are either limited, insufficient, or entirely missing.

From my own observation during the research, I can confirm this impression. Apart from the option to take part in weekly language courses, there are currently no structured training programs, workshops, or skill development opportunities available within the company. There is a lack of support for technical skills, management competencies, or even basic training in areas like communication or time management. For employees who want to grow professionally or gain new qualifications, the system offers very little.

In my opinion, this is a clear weakness in the current system. Employees are expected to perform well, adapt to new tasks, and show initiative—but they are given almost no tools to actually grow in these directions. While not everyone actively seeks development, those who do are likely to feel overlooked or held back by the lack of opportunities.

The fourth motivational factor in the questionnaire was **financial rewards and satisfaction with compensation**. This area focuses on whether employees feel that their salary and bonuses fairly reflect their performance and meet their expectations. Adequate

and motivating financial rewards are essential for employee satisfaction and have a direct impact on engagement, retention, and workplace morale. Feeling appropriately compensated is often just as important as other motivational factors, especially in practical and manual work sectors.

The question about how important fair and motivating financial rewards are received a high average score of 5.60 out of 7. This shows that employees at PETRA spol. s r.o. care strongly about being fairly rewarded for their efforts and want their work performance to be properly recognized in terms of pay and bonuses. Financial compensation remains a key area influencing how valued employees feel in their roles.

The second question asked how satisfied employees are with their current salary and bonuses. It received an average of 4.83, which is still a positive result but lower than the importance score. The difference of about 0.8 points suggests that while many employees are generally satisfied, there is some space for improvement. Some employees may feel that their financial compensation does not fully match their level of effort. To address this perception, the company could consider gradual increases in salaries or performance-based bonuses. In my opinion, even though not all employees are fully satisfied, the overall level of financial rewards currently offered by the company appears to be adequate and fair considering the nature of the work.

The fifth motivational factor examined in the survey was **autonomy and independence** – that is, the degree to which employees feel they have control over their own work, make decisions, and organize their tasks in a way that suits their own style or preferences. Autonomy is often considered a key part of intrinsic motivation, especially in roles that benefit from creativity, initiative, or flexibility.

The average score for the importance of autonomy was 4.03 out of 7. This shows that, overall, employees at PETRA spol. s r.o. find independence moderately important, but not essential. For many, having clear instructions and a stable routine may be more valuable than having full control over how they work.

The second question, which asked to what extent employees feel they currently have autonomy at work, scored lower – 3.17 on average. This suggests that most employees do not feel very independent in their daily tasks. However, this result should be understood in the context of how the company operates. According to the HR representative, the company has a long-standing system where employees are given specific tasks in advance, and they

usually know exactly what is expected of them. This structure is tried and tested and works well for the nature of the business, especially in roles that involve routine or field operations where efficiency and clarity are essential.

For many positions in the company – such as machinery operators, logistics workers, or support staff – it is normal and expected to follow set procedures and schedules. In such environments, too much autonomy might even create confusion rather than motivation. That said, the lower score still reflects that some employees may prefer having at least a bit more space for decision-making or flexibility in how they carry out their responsibilities.

The sixth motivational factor examined in the survey was **financial rewards and bonuses**. This includes all forms of monetary compensation that go beyond the basic salary, such as performance-based bonuses, long-term financial benefits, or small regular rewards. In almost all motivation models, money plays a central role as an extrinsic motivator, especially when it comes to short-term performance and retention.

The results of the questionnaire show that financial rewards are highly valued by employees at PETRA spol. s r.o. The question asking how important this factor is received an average score of 5.66 out of 7, placing it among the most important factors in the entire survey. This indicates that financial motivation remains a key driver of employee satisfaction and engagement. Employees clearly expect their performance to be reflected not only in appreciation but also in tangible financial outcomes.

The follow-up question, which asked how satisfied employees are with the financial rewards they currently receive, scored 5.16, which is also relatively high. The difference of 0.5 points between importance and fulfilment is moderate, suggesting that while financial expectations are not fully met, the company is largely successful in providing motivating compensation. Most employees feel they are fairly rewarded, even though there is still space for improvement in aligning compensation with individual expectations or contributions.

This result is consistent with the overall structure of the company's motivation system, which includes several layers of financial bonuses. These range from performance-related rewards to long-term benefits such as pension contributions and symbolic gifts. During the research, I also learned about a performance-based bonus of 1,000 to 1,500 CZK that is awarded depending on work quality, as assessed by the HR department and the company owner. This bonus serves as a clear incentive to maintain performance standards and provides a level of individual recognition within the reward system.

In my opinion, the variety of financial bonuses offered by the company is one of the strongest elements of the current motivation system. It includes both structured, measurable rewards and more personal touches such as regular wine gifts. This creates a compensation culture that is both practical and human. The relatively high fulfilment score confirms that employees recognize and value this effort, and that financial motivation is one of the areas where the company performs quite well.

The seventh and final motivational factor explored in the questionnaire was **work atmosphere**. This refers to the general environment in which employees carry out their tasks, including interpersonal relationships, team dynamics, communication, and the overall emotional climate at the workplace. A positive work atmosphere is widely recognised as a strong driver of motivation, and it often contributes to employee well-being, collaboration, and long-term retention.

The importance of this factor was rated with an average score of 5.16 out of 7, showing that employees at PETRA spol. s r.o. care quite strongly about the kind of environment they work in. Although it is not the highest-rated factor in the survey, it is clearly seen as a key part of what makes a job enjoyable and sustainable in the long term. Employees value feeling respected, comfortable, and supported in their daily interactions at work.

The following question, which measured to what extent employees currently experience a positive work atmosphere, received an average score of 5.03. This result is very close to the importance score, with only a minimal gap of 0.13 points. Such a narrow difference suggests that employees' expectations in this area are being largely met. The data shows that the company provides a relatively stable and supportive working environment.

This finding is consistent with what I observed during the research. Feedback from the HR representative and my own impression both confirmed that the company culture is based on openness, mutual respect, and daily contact with leadership. Employees often describe their colleagues as cooperative and the work setting as friendly and approachable. One factor that seems to play an important role here is the personal involvement of the owner, who regularly visits different teams and maintains direct contact with employees.

At the same time, it is important to mention that while this personal involvement is mostly appreciated, it can sometimes be perceived as too controlling. The owner's desire to have oversight over all departments may create slight discomfort for some employees, who

may feel they are under constant supervision. Still, the overall numbers show that this aspect does not heavily disrupt the general atmosphere in the workplace.

In addition to the scaled questions, the survey also included two open-ended items. These allowed employees to express in their own words what they find most motivating and what, if anything, they find demotivating in their current work environment. While answering these questions was optional, the responses provide valuable qualitative insights that add depth to the quantitative data.

A total of 10 respondents answered the question “*What motivates you the most at work?*”. A strong recurring theme in the responses was fairness, mentioned explicitly in several different forms such as “fair treatment”, “fair approach”, and “clear and fair communication”. This directly supports the earlier finding that fairness and equity are among the most important motivational factors in the workplace.

Another prominent topic was financial motivation, with mentions of “salary”, “financial compensation”, and “good financial rewards”. This is consistent with the high average scores from the financial rewards section of the survey. Employees clearly see fair pay and bonuses as essential components of motivation.

One interesting response referred to non-financial appreciation, specifically mentioning “*small gestures from the company*”. This reflects the value employees place on personal and human touches that make them feel seen and valued on an individual level.

Other motivating factors included job stability, clear expectations, and the approachability of the owner, which aligns with the generally positive results in the work atmosphere section of the questionnaire. Overall, the responses show that employees appreciate both tangible rewards and interpersonal aspects of their workplace experience.

The second open-ended question asked, “*Is there anything at work that demotivates you?*” and received 5 responses. A key theme that emerged here was the issue of frequent or excessive control by the owner. This concern was mentioned in several ways – “frequent checks”, “too much supervision”, and “feeling watched”. While the owner’s personal involvement was seen as positive in earlier responses, this contrast shows that not all employees experience it the same way. For some, it crosses the line into discomfort or a lack of trust.

Another issue mentioned was complicated communication with management, particularly when it comes to last-minute changes. These remarks suggest that some

employees find the workflow unpredictable or hard to follow, which can contribute to feelings of uncertainty and stress.

One respondent also noted technical issues, pointing to potential obstacles in day-to-day operations that may affect performance or morale. Even though this theme appeared only once, it highlights the variety of factors that can affect motivation beyond interpersonal or financial considerations.

10.3 Summary of analytical findings

The practical part of this thesis focused on analysing the current system of employee motivation at PETRA spol. s r.o. The analysis was based on a combination of research methods, including a structured questionnaire, a consultation with the company's HR representative, informal conversations with employees, and publicly available company documents. The goal was to identify which motivational factors are considered most important by employees and how well these factors are currently being fulfilled.

The questionnaire results revealed several key patterns. Among the most important motivational factors were financial rewards, fairness and equity, and a positive work atmosphere. These factors received high importance scores, and in most cases, the company's performance in fulfilling them was rated positively. For example, financial rewards were not only valued by employees (average importance score of 5.66), but also relatively well fulfilled (5.16). Similarly, fairness and equity received a high importance rating of 5.60, while fulfilment reached 4.83—still positive, although indicating room for improvement.

Another strong area was the work atmosphere, with nearly matching scores of 5.16 (importance) and 5.03 (fulfilment), suggesting that employees feel generally comfortable and respected in their working environment. This observation was supported by direct feedback from employees, who often mentioned friendliness, stability, and approachability as positive aspects of the company culture.

However, the analysis also revealed several weaker points. The most notable gap was observed in the area of learning and development, which had an importance score of 4.69 but a very low fulfilment score of only 2.34. This indicates a clear mismatch between what employees expect in terms of professional growth and what the company currently offers.

With the exception of language courses, there are no structured training or development programs available, which was also confirmed by the HR representative.

Another factor with a visible discrepancy was recognition by management, which scored 5.26 for importance and 4.77 for fulfilment. While not alarming, this result shows that recognition is valued and expected, but not always delivered consistently. Employees appreciate being acknowledged for their work, and small gaps in this area may affect their engagement and long-term satisfaction.

In terms of autonomy, results showed that this factor is moderately important (4.03) but relatively under-fulfilled (3.17). This can be linked to the structured nature of work at PETRA, where tasks are clearly defined, and roles are often operational. Employees appear to accept this model, but some may still desire more flexibility or decision-making power in their roles.

Open-ended responses in the questionnaire further confirmed these patterns. Employees mentioned fairness, clear expectations, and financial rewards as their top sources of motivation. On the other hand, issues such as frequent oversight by the owner, communication difficulties, and last-minute changes were cited as demotivating factors.

In conclusion, the current motivation system at PETRA spol. s r.o. shows several strengths, particularly in terms of financial incentives and workplace atmosphere. Employees feel fairly rewarded and describe the work environment as friendly and respectful. At the same time, the analysis highlights clear gaps in development opportunities and, to a lesser extent, in recognition and autonomy. These findings form the basis for the following section, which presents specific suggestions for improvement based on both quantitative and qualitative insights.

Overall, while the motivation system addresses employees' basic financial and social needs, more attention to professional development and consistent recognition could significantly strengthen employee satisfaction and engagement. In the future, improving these areas could also help the company reduce the high employee turnover it is currently experiencing.

11 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Based on the results of the analysis, several areas within the current motivation system at PETRA spol. s r.o. show potential for improvement. These recommendations are designed to be realistic, cost-conscious, and directly linked to the motivational factors explored in the research. They aim to strengthen employee satisfaction, reduce turnover, and increase long-term engagement.

The largest gap identified in the research concerns learning and development. Currently, the only structured opportunity for employee growth is participation in language courses. To address this issue, the company could introduce internal micro-trainings led by experienced employees or managers. These short training sessions could take place during working hours and focus on practical topics directly relevant to employees' daily responsibilities. Suggested areas include workplace safety, effective communication, and basic IT skills.

Workplace safety is a critical topic in forestry and field operations, and regular refreshers could help employees stay up to date with current procedures and safety standards. Improving communication, especially between employees and supervisors, could lead to more efficient task execution and fewer misunderstandings. The HR representative also pointed out that some employees struggle with digital tools. A basic IT training focused on company-specific equipment and software would make it easier for them to use new technologies and digital systems at work.

The overall cost of such internal training would be minimal, as it would rely on in-house staff and existing knowledge. The only expense would be time taken during working hours, which could be scheduled during lower workload periods to avoid disruption. Alternatively, the company could provide access to selected online courses via platforms such as Udemy or Seduo, which offer practical content relevant to different roles. These courses are affordable—often under 1,000 CZK per person—and could be offered selectively based on interest or performance.

Regular, targeted training sessions would benefit both the company and its employees. They would contribute to a safer work environment, more confident use of work tools and technologies, and clearer, faster communication—ultimately improving everyday operations and employee satisfaction.

Recognition is a relatively strong factor at PETRA, but the analysis shows that it is not always consistent or visible. One possible way to improve this area is by introducing a simple “Employee Appreciation Board”, where noteworthy contributions could be acknowledged—either physically or digitally. However, when implementing such a system, it is important to take into account the potential risks. Recognition must be handled carefully to avoid negative effects such as competition, jealousy, or mistrust among employees. Therefore, it is recommended that the board focus on collective achievements or specific values (e.g. safety awareness, helpfulness, reliability), rather than singling out individuals too frequently or based solely on performance.

To avoid placing extra pressure on managers or team leaders, recognition could be integrated into existing team meetings or internal communication. A quick mention during a meeting or a short-written message requires minimal time but still has a positive impact on employee morale. Involving HR in the coordination process could also help relieve managers from having to organise everything themselves. Overall, when recognition is done in a fair and transparent way, it can strengthen trust and relationships rather than harm them.

Although autonomy was not the most important factor, it was still under-fulfilled. Given the nature of PETRA’s operational work, full flexibility is not always realistic. However, the company could explore small degrees of autonomy, such as allowing employees to choose the order of certain daily tasks, propose improvements in workflows, or rotate between similar roles when appropriate. These changes cost nothing but can increase engagement by making employees feel more involved and trusted.

One of the recurring demotivating factors mentioned by employees was communication – especially around last-minute changes and top-down control. To address this, the company could introduce a basic monthly internal newsletter or use an existing platform (e.g., WhatsApp or a printed bulletin) to regularly inform employees about upcoming changes, results, or plans. Additionally, creating a feedback box (physical or digital) where employees can share anonymous suggestions or concerns would show that the company is open to listening and adapting.

Financial rewards are one of the strongest aspects of the current motivation system. However, some employees may not fully understand how certain bonuses—especially the 1,000–1,500 CZK performance bonus—are determined. To increase transparency, the company could publish simple guidelines explaining what criteria are considered (e.g.,

discipline or team contribution) and how bonuses are calculated. This does not require any financial cost and could reinforce the perception of fairness.

Employees also appreciate symbolic gestures, such as the quarterly wine gift. While this is seen as a thoughtful and valued tradition, it may not be suitable for everyone—some employees may have personal or health-related reasons for avoiding alcohol. There is also a risk that alcohol could be consumed inappropriately, especially if it is received at the workplace. As a more inclusive and neutral alternative, the company could consider offering other small symbolic rewards, such as coffee packages, gift cards, or vouchers for local products or services. These items would still feel personal and appreciated, while being more appropriate across a wider group of employees. The cost of these alternatives would vary slightly depending on the option selected, but it would likely remain modest and comparable to the current cost of wine.

All these recommendations were created with the company's current situation in mind. As mentioned earlier in the thesis, PETRA spol. s r.o. no longer generates the same level of turnover as in previous years and, overall, is not performing as strongly as it did in the past. For this reason, the proposed suggestions are designed to be low-cost, cost-free, or financially modest. Rather than introducing entirely new systems, they focus on improving and making better use of existing tools, communication channels, and internal processes. Even a few small changes could make a visible difference in how employees feel at work, how motivated they are, and how effectively they perform their daily tasks.

CONCLUSION

This bachelor thesis focused on the topic of employee motivation, specifically within the company PETRA spol. s r.o., which operates in the forestry, timber, logistics, and biomass industries. The main aim was to analyse the existing motivation system used in the company and assess how well it aligns with employee expectations and key motivational theories.

In the process of writing this thesis, I first conducted a detailed literature review, which formed the basis of the theoretical part. I examined various concepts of motivation, including intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and analysed major theoretical models such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's two-factor theory, Vroom's expectancy theory, goal-setting theory, and Adams' equity theory. This provided the necessary framework for evaluating motivation in the practical part of the thesis.

In the practical part, I used a combination of research methods. First, I created and distributed a structured questionnaire focused on seven motivational factors, which respondents evaluated in terms of importance and current fulfilment. I also conducted a personal consultation with the company's HR representative and engaged in informal conversations with several employees. Additionally, I used information from the company's website and publicly available financial documents to better understand the overall context.

Through this analysis, I found that PETRA's motivation system includes several strong elements. Employees highly value the fairness of reward distribution, the overall work atmosphere, and the structure of financial bonuses. Financial incentives, in particular, are perceived positively and contribute significantly to motivation. The work environment was also rated favourably, with employees appreciating the respectful culture and the owner's visible engagement in daily operations.

However, the results also revealed certain areas where the company falls short. The most significant gap was found in the area of learning and development, which employees considered moderately important but severely under fulfilled. Recognition from management and autonomy also showed lower-than-expected fulfilment relative to their perceived importance. Moreover, open-ended responses revealed demotivating factors such as unclear communication, last-minute changes, and a sense of excessive supervision by the company's owner.

Based on these findings, I proposed several recommendations tailored to the company's size, structure, and operational reality. These included suggestions such as introducing low-cost internal training, improving feedback practices, offering small degrees of task-related autonomy, and clarifying how performance-based bonuses are determined. The company expressed interest in the results of this research and is expected to take the recommendations into consideration when planning future improvements in its employee motivation system.

In conclusion, I believe that the original goal of this thesis—to evaluate the employee motivation system at PETRA spol. s r.o. and identify possible areas for improvement—was successfully achieved. The research combined theoretical understanding with practical insight and provided a clear view of what currently works well and what could be developed further. I consider the results meaningful not only for the company but also for understanding how motivation can be managed effectively in similar business environments.

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