

How To Increase Your Work and Life Satisfaction: Put Abraham Maslow Theory Into Practice

Using [Abraham Maslow](#) theory is a recognised way to help you understand your needs and how to meet them. In the time it takes you to drink your skinny latte, this article shows you how.

| Abraham Maslow Hierarchy of Needs | My Needs | Frederick Herzberg Theory |
|--|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Self Actualization Creative Using your potential Determiner of your own life | "Being" Needs | Motivator |
| Self Esteem Recognition Feeling worthwhile Respected | "Doing" Needs | Hygiene |
| Belonging Love Acceptance Part of a group | | |
| Safety Protection from threat and danger Security | "Having" Needs | |
| Physiological Food, water, shelter | | |

Abraham Maslow hierarchy of needs are shown in the diagram. At the base are Physiological and Safety needs, which can be grouped together as indicating things we HAVE to have before we can focus on anything else. Our Belonging and Self Esteem needs indicate what we need to DO before we feel free to begin to BE the kind of person we can be. We strive to reach our full potential and meet our Self Actualization needs, unencumbered by material and social needs.

If you are straight out of college with a large debt on your head, you may be more concerned with getting an income to keep you going, and less about whether you will achieve your full potential. As your career progresses and your debts decrease, the more freedom you have to explore career options that meet "higher" needs.

| Abraham Maslow Hierarchy of Needs | My Needs | Frederick Herzberg Theory |
|---|---|---|
| Self Actualization Creative Using your potential Determiner of your own life | "Being" Needs Learning Independence Creativity Challenge Help society Risk | Motivator Achievement Recognition Growth |
| Self Esteem Recognition Feeling worthwhile Respected | "Doing" Needs Work with others Community Friendship Contact with people Recognition Being Expert Promotion Status | Hygiene Salary Job security Supervisor behaviour Company policy |
| Belonging Love Acceptance Part of a group | | |
| Safety Protection from threat and danger Security | "Having" Needs Security Money Routine Peace | |
| Physiological Food, water, shelter | | |

The link to [Frederick Herzberg's two factor theory](#) are also shown in the diagram. Having and Doing needs are usually Hygiene Factors, that is, if they are not met they will cause dissatisfaction, and Being needs are Motivators, guaranteeing satisfaction.

Our values, simply, are an expression of our needs. Putting Maslow's theory into practice, gives you the opportunity to discover where you are on the level of needs diagram. One thing you will discover is that you are unlikely to find that you're living totally at one level of need.

Values change as we get older. What matters at 20 or 30 may be radically

different at 50 or 60. It also follows that at certain periods of your life, you may revert to a lower level of need, for example being made redundant or losing your spouse. Meeting lower levels of need must not be seen as a backward step, more like a re-adjustment and not a cause for concern.

Ask yourself the question

- "How far does my present job allow me to satisfy my needs?"

Other questions to ask are;

- "How much opportunity is there overall in my present job for me to find expression for those values?"
- "Do I find opportunities to satisfy my values in my life outside of my job?"
- "Can I think of any jobs other than my present one which would closely fit with my key values?"
- "Are my work values different now than at other times of my life"

Using Abraham Maslow theory, you can better understand your needs and values, enabling you to create an action plan to increase your work and life satisfaction.

Further resources - article on [Authentic Happiness and Signature Strengths](#).

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