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Managing the Motivational Environment as Tool for Stimulating Rapid Career Growth of Employees

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Abstract: *The article examines the role of the motivational environment as a key factor in the professional and career development of employees. Modern theories of motivation and their impact on the formation of staff involvement are analyzed. Approaches to building a motivational climate in organizations of different sectors are summarized – private, public and IT. Particular attention is paid to the adaptive model of motivational policy, which takes into account external challenges (war, relocation, economic instability) and the specifics of the organizational environment. The structural elements of the motivational environment (material, intangible, socio-psychological, organizational-management, cultural-value) are systematized and a conceptual model of their impact on the career dynamics of employees is built. An empirical study was conducted using a questionnaire survey of 483 respondents in three sectors of the economy, which confirmed a statistically significant relationship between the level of the motivational environment and career satisfaction (r = 0.66). Based on the data obtained, an adaptive model of motivational policy was developed, which provides for a flexible combination of incentives depending on the sector, personnel structure, and external conditions, and can be used as a tool for strategic HR management.*

Keywords: *motivational environment; career growth; motivation theories; adaptive model; staff engagement; HR management.*

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Introduction

In today's conditions of instability, labor market transformation, and growing demands on personnel, the issue of effective human resource management is becoming particularly relevant. One of the key areas of strategic personnel management is the formation of a motivational environment that can support the labor activity of employees and stimulate their professional and career development. In conditions of competition for talents, changes in labor values, and the influence of external challenges (armed conflict, relocation, economic crisis), the need for adaptive approaches to building a motivational climate in organizations of various sectors is growing.

The purpose of the article is to investigate the influence of the motivational environment on the career growth of employees and to develop an adaptive model of motivational policy taking into account industry specifics and modern challenges.

Research objectives are: to generalize scientific approaches to the interpretation of the concept of "motivational environment" and its components; to analyze modern theories of motivation in the context of career development; to identify the structural components of the motivational environment and their impact on staff engagement; to conduct an empirical study of the relationship between the level of the motivational environment and employee career satisfaction; to develop an adaptive model of motivational policy for different sectors of the economy, taking into account external conditions.

Thus, the results obtained will contribute to the improvement of approaches to personnel management and the development of effective mechanisms for stimulating career growth in modern conditions.

Methodology

The methodological basis of the study is a systemic, comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach to the analysis of the motivational environment as a multi-component phenomenon, which is formed under the influence of organizational, economic, psychological and managerial factors.

In the theoretical part of the study, methods of analysis and synthesis were used to process scientific sources, comparative analysis was applied to study classical and modern theories of motivation (Maslow, 1943; Herzberg, 1959; Vroom, 1964; Adams, 1963; Locke, 1968), induction and deduction were used to form a conceptual vision of the structure of the motivational environment.

Within the framework of the empirical stage of the study, a quantitative method was used – a questionnaire survey, the purpose of which was to establish the relationship between the level of the motivational environment and employee satisfaction with career development. A sample of 483 respondents was formed, representing three sectors of the Ukrainian economy: private business (33.3%), state institutions (32.5%) and IT companies (34.2%). The questionnaire contained two blocks: the first block– assessment of the components of the motivational environment (material and non-material incentives, management style, corporate culture, transparency of evaluation); the second block – the level of satisfaction with career growth (feeling of fulfillment, availability of prospects, support for development, etc.). The assessment was carried out on a 5-point scale.

The reliability and validity of the questionnaire were checked through pilot testing on a group of 52 respondents. To assess the internal consistency of the scales, the Cronbach's coefficient ($\alpha = 0.87$) was calculated, which indicates a high reliability of the instrument.

The validity was confirmed through expert content assessment and factor analysis, which demonstrated a clear grouping of statements by two main factors – "motivational environment" and "career satisfaction".

The sample was formed using "snowball" elements and purposive sampling method. Respondents were recruited through professional communities, corporate HR services and electronic surveys.

The main method of selecting respondents in the study was the snowball method, and to ensure representation of three different areas of activity and to attract participants from each of them, the purposive sampling method was additionally applied. This made it possible to reach key groups, increase the diversity of data, and form a more holistic view of the motivational environment.

The collected data were processed using descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation analysis, which allowed to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables. The analysis results revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between the level of the motivational environment and career satisfaction ($r = 0.66$). The detected relationship has a moderate strength and indicates a statistically significant association, but does not confirm a cause-and-effect relationship.

Based on the results obtained, an adaptive model of motivational policy was developed that takes into account the industry specifics, the personnel structure of organizations and the impact of external challenges (war, relocation, instability).

Theoretical basis of the research

In modern conditions, the study of the motivational environment of personnel requires the analysis of various scientific approaches and points of view, since employee motivation is a multidimensional and dynamic phenomenon. A review of Ukrainian and foreign studies allows to identify key factors that affect management effectiveness, and also shows the relationship between motivation, professional development and personnel productivity. Such a comprehensive approach helps to form substantiated recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of personnel policy and stimulating career growth.

According to Bodenchuk et al. (2025), employee motivation is closely related to the effectiveness of entrepreneurial activity, and therefore requires a systematic approach to stimulating labor. The authors consider motivation as a multi-vector process that combines material, moral and organizational aspects.

Borysiuk & Kluka (2022) focus on the importance of motivation in wartime. They emphasize that in critical circumstances the management system must be adaptive to changes, providing psychological support and career prospects for employees.

The problems of motivation of young specialists are studied by Danilevych et al. (2022), who determine that early career support through motivational practices affects the long-term productivity and loyalty of employees. This is critically important for businesses focused on attracting young talent.

Dashko (2021) emphasizes that the economic efficiency of an enterprise directly depends on motivational approaches to labor resource management. The author proposes the introduction of flexible incentive models that meet the specifics of the labor market.

In turn, Kozak et al. (2022) analyze personnel motivation in the post-pandemic period and martial law. They argue that the transformation of motivation systems should take into account both crisis risks and the strategic goals of the organization.

Pustovit et al. (2023) focus on theoretical and methodological approaches to building a motivational system as a component of effective organizational management. Their analysis covers classical and modern theories of motivation.

Among foreign authors, Adi & Fithriana (2023) examine the relationship between motivation, career development, and job satisfaction. Their study demonstrates that motivational mechanisms should be integrated into organizations' HR strategies.

Ariati et al. (2023) emphasize the role of the intangible work environment in shaping motivation and career development. The authors emphasize the importance of mental comfort and organizational support.

A study by Mardianty & Sari (2024) indicates that the combination of a systemic approach to career development and effective employee motivation contributes to increased staff productivity.

Eggy Farizqy & Badawi Saluy (2024) consider the role of employee engagement as a mediator between motivation, career development and productivity. They argue that without intrinsic motivation, the effectiveness of extrinsic incentives decreases.

Fan (2025) in his literature review provides a comprehensive assessment of the role of motivation and job satisfaction as drivers of productivity, emphasizing the strategic importance of HR policies in career advancement.

Hafit et al. (2024) emphasize the complex impact of work-life balance, motivation and career growth on the effectiveness of non-governmental organizations.

Junejo et al. (2025) prove that only a comprehensive strategy, which combines motivation, job satisfaction and professional growth, gives a sustainable effect in improving work results.

Munir & Hameed (2024) emphasize the importance of organizational behavior as a mediator between motivation, job satisfaction and the level of staff turnover.

All these studies demonstrate that managing the motivational environment is of key importance for activating the career potential of employees. The formation of an effective motivation system requires taking into account individual, social and organizational factors.

Thus, based on the analysis of theoretical and practical approaches, it becomes obvious that one of the key areas of modern personnel management is the creation of an effective motivational environment that ensures high employee engagement, their professional activity, and career growth.

One of the key areas of modern personnel management is the creation of an effective motivational environment that ensures high employee engagement, professional activity and career growth.

In the scientific literature, the motivational environment is considered as a multidimensional concept that encompasses various aspects of labor activity: material and non-material incentives, socio-psychological climate, management style, organizational culture and other factors that influence employee behavior.

Given the complexity and multifaceted nature of this concept, the study carried out a comparative analysis of the interpretations of the term "motivational environment" proposed by domestic and foreign scientists. The definitions given below allow to form a generalized idea of the structure, functions and content of the motivational environment as an object of scientific and practical analysis (Table 1).

Table 1. Interpretation of the concept of "motivational environment"
(developed by the authors)

Authors	*Formulation of the concept of "motivational environment"*
Bodenchuk et al. (2025)	Motivational environment is a set of incentives (material, moral, social) aimed at ensuring the effectiveness of entrepreneurial activity through the activation of labor motivation of personnel
Borysiuk & Kliuka (2022)	Motivational environment is an adaptive system of conditions that provides psychological support, stimulates the loyalty and activity of employees in extreme conditions of war
Dashko (2021)	Motivational environment is a labor resource management system, where personnel motivation is an important component of the economic efficiency of the enterprise
Kozak et al. (2022)	Motivational environment is a management environment transformed as a result of the pandemic and martial law, which optimizes personnel development through new motivational strategies
Adi & Fithriana (2023)	Motivational environment is the nature of motivational roles and practices in combination with career development and job satisfaction as factors of productivity
Ariati et al. (2023)	Motivational environment is a dynamic system of conditions that is formed under the influence of managerial actions and is aimed at supporting the internal interest of employees in achieving results, including professional and career development
Mardianty & Sari (2025)	Motivational environment is a system that combines career development and motivation within an organization that seeks to increase employee performance
Firdaus et al. (2024)	Motivational environment is a combination of leadership, incentive systems and career opportunities that increase employee satisfaction and productivity

Analyzing the views of domestic and foreign scientists, several common characteristics of the motivational environment can be identified:

– the motivational environment is a complex system of interconnected factors;

– is formed under the influence of management decisions and organizational culture;

– includes both material and non-material incentives;

– directly affects employee engagement, work efficiency, and career dynamics.

At the same time, there is a discrepancy in the interpretation of the emphases: some authors emphasize socio-psychological factors, others – economic or managerial mechanisms.

Therefore, generalizing scientific approaches, it is appropriate to understand the motivational environment as a holistic system of internal and external incentives, management tools, socio-psychological conditions, and organizational practices that forms a positive attitude of employees towards professional activities, activates their engagement, and contributes to the achievement of personal, professional, and career goals.

Given the complexity and multicomponent nature of this concept, it is also important to analyze the theoretical foundations of labor motivation, on which effective management of the motivational environment of personnel is based.

Management of the motivational environment of personnel is based on the theoretical principles of labor motivation, which were developed within the framework of classical and modern scientific approaches. The variety of motivation theories makes it possible to comprehensively cover both internal and external factors stimulating labor activity and to determine the relationship between the level of employee motivation and his career dynamics (Litynska et al., 2025).

One of the fundamental concepts is the hierarchical theory of needs, proposed by the American psychologist A. Maslow (McLeod, 2007). The scientist identified five levels of needs: physiological, safety needs, social, recognition needs and self-actualization. According to this theory, employees activate their activities only when lower-level needs are satisfied. From the point of view of managing the motivational environment, the need for self-realization and recognition are those that directly stimulate the desire for career growth. Therefore, enterprises that create conditions for development, advanced training, and professional self-expression ensure the implementation of higher-order motivational incentives. A significant contribution to the development of the theory of motivation was made by

Frederick Herzberg, who proposed a motivational-hygiene model (Peramatzis & Galanakis, 2022). The scientist divided the factors that influence job satisfaction into two groups: hygiene (external) and motivational (internal). Hygiene factors include: pay, working conditions, company policy, interpersonal relationships; motivational factors include achievement, recognition, responsibility, and promotion. Motivational factors are key in the context of forming a positive motivational environment, since they ensure the employee's deep internal involvement in professional activities and form the basis for his career advancement.

Victor Vroom, within the framework of the process theory of motivation, developed the expectancy theory, in which the key categories are expectancy, instrumentality and valence (Suciu et al., 2013). According to this concept, the motivation of an employee depends on the expectations of achieving a certain result, the conviction in the connection between efforts and the result, as well as on the value of the reward that he will receive. In this context, career advancement acts as a desired result that should be achievable, predictable and associated with specific actions. Thus, effective management of the motivational environment involves a clear formulation of career prospects, transparency of assessment and reward.

Adams (1965) proposed the theory of justice, according to which employees evaluate their motivation by comparing "input-result" with the results of other employees. The feeling of injustice (the imbalance between personal efforts and reward compared to others) leads to a decrease in motivation, a decrease in involvement and, as a result, inhibition of career development. In this regard, enterprises should ensure transparency in matters of remuneration, promotion, and access to resources, which contributes to the formation of a positive motivational environment.

Edwin Locke emphasized the importance of clarity, specificity, and complexity of goals (Locke & Latham, 2002). According to his theory, the highest productivity is achieved by employees who are set clear, ambitious, but achievable goals. In the context of career growth, effective management consists of the formation of individual career goals, regular feedback, and support from management.

Summarizing theoretical approaches, we can conclude that the motivational environment plays a key role in the formation of sustainable professional motivation of employees. Different theories emphasize needs, expectations, justice, values, and goals, but they all have one thing in common: effective management of motivational factors can significantly enhance employees' desire for professional and career growth.

Modern theories of motivation reflect different but interconnected aspects of the motivational process. They are aimed at understanding what motivates employees to act, develop, and strive for career growth.

Despite the differences in approaches, common features can be traced between the theories, which allow to form a holistic picture of the mechanisms of labor motivation. At the same time, each concept has its own unique accents, which allows for a comprehensive analysis of motivational factors in personnel management (Table 2).

Table 2. Common and distinctive features of motivation theories
(developed by the authors)

Common features of motivation theories	*Distinctive features of motivation theories*
1. A person acts when he has a valuable goal (self-realization, recognition, career)	Motivation theories differ in focus: some explain motivation through internal needs, others – through external stimuli and expectations
2. Motivation depends on conditions and internal beliefs: fairness, clarity of goals, belief in the result, a sense of significance	Classical approaches are based on a hierarchy or division of needs, while modern models consider motivation as a decision-making process
3. External stimuli alone do not provide long-term motivation – internal factors such as development, responsibility, achievement are needed	In different theories, career growth is interpreted either as a need for self-realization or as a result of conscious purposeful behavior
4. Psychological comfort and fair treatment are fundamental elements of a motivational environment	The formation of an effective motivational environment depends either on satisfying basic working conditions, or on the presence of clear goals, fair rewards and transparent prospects

Motivation theories provide for the construction of an effective HR management strategy, with the main aspect being the psychological climate, development and recognition.

Career growth becomes possible when the organization creates conditions in which the employee feels valuable, understands his prospects and sees real ways to achieve goals.

The motivational environment at the enterprise is not a random set of individual incentives, but acts as a holistic system of influences that shape the behavioral activity of the employee, his readiness for professional development and career advancement. Successful management of the

motivational environment involves a deep understanding of its structure, constituent elements and internal relationships.

1. Material elements of the motivational environment. These are components that have a monetary or other economic equivalent:

– wages – basic salary and its competitiveness;

– bonuses and incentives – reward for achieving results;

– social packages – medical insurance, vacations, training at the employer's expense;

– working conditions – comfortable workplace, technical support, flexible schedule.

These incentives ensure the economic security of the employee and reduce the level of staff turnover.

2. Intangible elements. They form internal interest and satisfaction from work, in particular:

– recognition of achievements – gratitude, public recognition, awards;

– opportunities for self-realization – access to development, participation in projects;

– career growth – the prospect of promotion, rotation, vertical or horizontal promotion;

– development of competencies – training, coaching, participation in conferences.

These elements have a lasting, long-term impact on staff engagement.

3. Socio-psychological factors. They form the emotional background on which the employee's desire to stay in the organization depends:

– climate in the team – trust, respect, lack of toxicity;

– management style – authoritarian, democratic, liberal;

– relationships with management – openness to communication, support;

– level of conflict – presence or absence of tension in the team.

These factors affect the emotional comfort and loyalty of employees.

4. Organizational and management elements. These components are created or regulated by the management system:

– clarity of the organizational structure – definition of roles, job responsibilities;

– transparent evaluation system – KPI, certification, feedback;

– career planning – formation of a personnel reserve, individual development plans;

– communication policy – information, participation in decision-making.

These elements determine the structure of motivational interactions and form trust in the system.

5. Cultural and value component. The motivational environment is also formed at the level of corporate culture:

– values of the organization – justice, development, team spirit;

– mission and vision – employee's understanding of the significance of work;

– corporate identity – belonging to the team, pride in the brand;

– traditions and rituals – celebration of victories, team building, symbolism.

It is common values that unite the team and support long-term motivation.

Thus, the motivational environment is a multi-component system in which material incentives, non-material incentives, socio-psychological atmosphere, management mechanisms and cultural and value guidelines are closely intertwined. Understanding its structure is the key to effective personnel management and creating conditions for rapid career development of employees.

One of the key areas of modern personnel management is the creation of a motivational environment that stimulates effective work and opens up opportunities for professional and career growth for the employee. The motivational environment is not only a tool for increasing productivity, but also an important factor in long-term personnel stability, realizing potential and building individual career paths.

A motivational environment based on fairness, transparency, recognition of achievements and support for development creates a favorable space for professional self-affirmation of employees. The main mechanisms of such influence should include:

– creation of conditions for learning and development (courses, trainings, mentoring), which increase the qualifications and competitiveness of personnel;

– introduction of clear criteria for assessing work results, which allows objectively determining the achievements of the employee and making decisions about promotion;

– the possibility of horizontal and vertical career movement, when the employee sees for himself real ways of growth within the organization.

Thus, a well-formed motivational environment transforms an employee from a performer into an initiative subject focused on achieving

career goals. One of the key indicators of the effectiveness of such an environment is the level of staff involvement.

Employee engagement is the level of his emotional and professional commitment to the organization, his willingness to make efforts to achieve common goals. Studies show that a high level of engagement is directly correlated with:

– increased productivity;
– innovative activity;
– high level of initiative;
– readiness for professional self-improvement.

In the context of career development, this will indicate that an engaged employee more often demonstrates leadership qualities, participates in projects of increased complexity, actively communicates with management – all this becomes the basis for internal career advancement. On the contrary, employees with a low level of engagement are prone to stagnation, resistance to change and demonstrate a weak readiness for professional development.

The organization's management plays a central role in creating conditions conducive to the career growth of personnel. The management style, value orientations of leaders and personnel policy determine whether the enterprise will become a platform for development or will remain only a place of temporary employment.

The main modern management actions that form a career-oriented environment are:

– transparency in making personnel decisions – the employee must be aware of the patterns and sequence of career advancement;
– individual approach – creation of personal development plans;
– feedback – regular assessment of achievements and discussion of career prospects;
– support for initiatives – encouragement of participation in new projects, involvement in strategic tasks;
– role model – managers who themselves demonstrate professional evolution motivate subordinates to develop.

It is thanks to the active participation of management that the motivational environment acquires a dynamic character, becomes a space for the implementation of not only short-term tasks, but also long-term career goals of employees.

Motivational environment and career growth are interrelated categories that are in constant interaction. Without purposeful formation of a motivational climate, it is impossible to provide a systematic approach to

the development of the organization's human resources potential. Ensuring employee involvement, supporting their professional aspirations and an active position of management are key factors in an effective career growth model in modern conditions.

Effective management of the motivational environment involves the systematic use of management tools that contribute to increasing employee involvement, forming a positive work climate and creating conditions for the realization of career potential. The main role in this process is played by the HR function, which provides an instrumental basis for strategic personnel management.

To implement strategic tasks to strengthen the motivational environment and stimulate the career development of employees, organizations must implement specific management mechanisms. The tools used in the field of personnel management are of particular importance in this context, since they ensure the practical implementation of motivational policy in the daily activities of the enterprise.

1. HR tools for creating a motivational environment.

The motivational environment is largely formed through a set of management practices implemented by HR departments and the organization's management. Among them, it should be noted:

– motivational programs – systems of material and non-material incentives that take into account different levels of employee needs (bonuses, awards, certificates, recognition of achievements);

– the KPI (Key Performance Indicators) system – the introduction of key performance indicators allows to objectively measure work results and transparently link them to remuneration;

– personnel assessment – regular assessment allows to analyze achievements, identify reserves for development, and plan promotions;

– mentoring – a tool for transferring experience and adapting new employees, which at the same time strengthens the feeling of support and belonging to the team.

All of these tools create a structured feedback system where the employee understands what efforts will be noticed and rewarded, and therefore – his motivation and readiness for career growth increase.

2. Implementation of individual career plans.

One of the key mechanisms for managing employee motivation and career is personalized career planning. Individual development plans allow:

– to define career growth goals in accordance with the company's capabilities;

– to take into account the employee's professional interests and strengths;

– to gradually form a growth trajectory – from an executor to a manager or expert;

– to combine training, project activities and mentoring within the framework of one plan.

Thus, this approach enhances intrinsic motivation and demonstrates to the employee that the organization is interested in his long-term development.

3. Flexible working conditions, mentoring, leadership development.

A modern motivational environment is not possible without adapting to changes in the labor values of generations and global trends. Particular importance is attached to:

– flexible working conditions – the ability to work on a flexible schedule, remotely or in a hybrid format contributes to increased job satisfaction;

– mentoring – personal support from experienced colleagues, which allows to adapt faster, form a professional vision and a sense of belonging to the team;

– leadership development programs – focused on identifying internal talent pools, developing management competencies and motivating for vertical growth.

These mechanisms ensure individualization of approaches to stimulation, increase the level of trust between employees and management and create an environment conducive to internal mobility and career advancement.

Thus, effective management of the motivational environment requires the systematic use of HR management tools aimed at activating the potential of personnel and creating conditions for their professional and career development. Successful implementation of such mechanisms contributes to increasing labor productivity, strengthening organizational culture, reducing staff turnover, and increasing the competitiveness of the enterprise.

The motivational environment is formed under the influence of the type of organization, its functional profile, size, financial capabilities, as well as external conditions. At the same time, motivation priorities differ significantly in the public, private, non-profit and technological sectors. Understanding them allows to adapt motivational tools to the specifics of the personnel environment.

1. Private sector. In private business, the motivational environment is usually based on performance, flexibility and competition. The main characteristics:

– a high level of dependence of remuneration on work results (bonuses, KPI, participation in profit sharing);

– the possibility of career growth in a short period, depending on the employee's initiative;

– flexible working conditions, including hybrid formats, additional days off;

– an emphasis on innovation, the ability to make independent decisions.

In these companies, employees will appreciate dynamics, quick feedback and recognition more, and the motivational environment becomes a tool for retaining talented specialists.

2. Government institutions. In the field of public administration, the motivational environment is formed according to the principles of stability, hierarchy and formalization:

– a fixed remuneration system with limited bonus mechanisms prevails;

– career advancement – formalized, associated with seniority and the presence of ranks (categories);

– motivational incentives – intangible: social guarantees, prestige of the service, a sense of social mission;

– limited flexibility of working conditions, centralized management.

In this case, the motivational environment is less dynamic, but stable. The main source of motivation is often the social significance of work and guaranteed employment.

3. IT companies. This sector is characterized by high competition for personnel, so the motivational environment is built on maximum employee orientation:

– individualized approaches to motivation (flexible schedules, remote work, participation in project selection);

– intensive training and development system (paid courses, conferences, certifications);

– a culture of trust and openness, leadership without authoritarianism;

– motivation through career dynamics and internal mobility.

In IT companies, the motivational environment often becomes a competitive advantage of the employer brand, and employees expect not only material bonuses, but also value compliance and comfort.

4. Charitable organizations. This sector is dominated by intangible motivators focused on values, mission and social contribution:

– high importance of internal motivation, dedication;

– team support and solidarity as key elements of the environment;

– limited financial incentives, but often there is flexibility in schedules, the opportunity to implement own initiatives;

– motivation through impact on society, not through a career in the classical sense.

In charitable organizations, it is important to support the emotional burnout of employees and volunteers, and the motivational environment is based on support, trust, and shared values.

5. Ukrainian and foreign experience. In foreign practice, especially in Western Europe and North America:

– individual motivational packages are widely used;

– emphasis is placed on a long-term career within one company; corporate social responsibility (CSR) and care for the mental health of personnel are developed.

Accordingly, in Ukraine:

– the motivational environment is still often reduced to material incentives (Naumenko et al., 2024);

– widespread practices of "hidden" career barriers;

– the processes of formalizing motivational policy are still ongoing, although IT and creative industries demonstrate rapid progress.

6. The influence of external conditions (war, crisis, relocation). The modern motivational environment in Ukraine is formed in conditions of high instability. This significantly affects personnel motivation:

– relocation of business and employees requires rapid adaptation of motivational practices to new conditions (remote work, psychological support);

– military actions exacerbate the need for security, reduce the importance of career growth as the main motivator;

– crisis and economic instability increase the importance of basic incentives: stable pay, social protection, family support;

– maintaining the corporate spirit and moral stability of employees becomes a key challenge for HR services;

– in conditions of external shocks, it is important to shift the emphasis from formal motivational schemes to humane support, psychological safety and flexibility.

Results

The study involves the use of a correlation method, which allows analyzing the dynamics of changes in motivational practices and their impact on career outcomes within selected groups of respondents. Taking into account three areas of activity allows tracking the relationship between motivational mechanisms and the professional development of participants in different contexts, which brings the study closer to the application of a longitudinal or experimental approach in further work.

The formation of a motivational environment largely depends on the type of organization, its resources, goals and context of operation. There is no single universal model of motivation – instead, an adaptive approach that takes into account the specifics of the industry, personnel profile and external challenges is effective. In conditions of turbulence, intangible, humanistic components of the motivational environment, focused on trust, support and development of human capital, acquire special importance.

To empirically test the hypothesis of the presence of a statistically significant relationship between the level of the motivational environment and the degree of satisfaction of employees with their own career development, a survey was conducted.

Within the framework of the study, enterprises were selected that have significant weight in the Ukrainian economic environment:

– private sector (Rozetka, Nova Poshta, Epicenter) – these are companies with large-scale structures, where personnel interact with an intensive KPI system, monthly performance assessment, as well as opportunities for vertical and horizontal career growth. The mentioned enterprises actively implement non-material incentive programs (corporate training, competitions, awards for the best employees, etc.);

– state institutions (tax service, Ukrposhta, regional state administration) – represent a segment with a formalized structure and a defined order of promotion. A matter of particular interest is the influence of non-material incentives (recognition, social significance of work) on career satisfaction in conditions of limited remuneration opportunities;

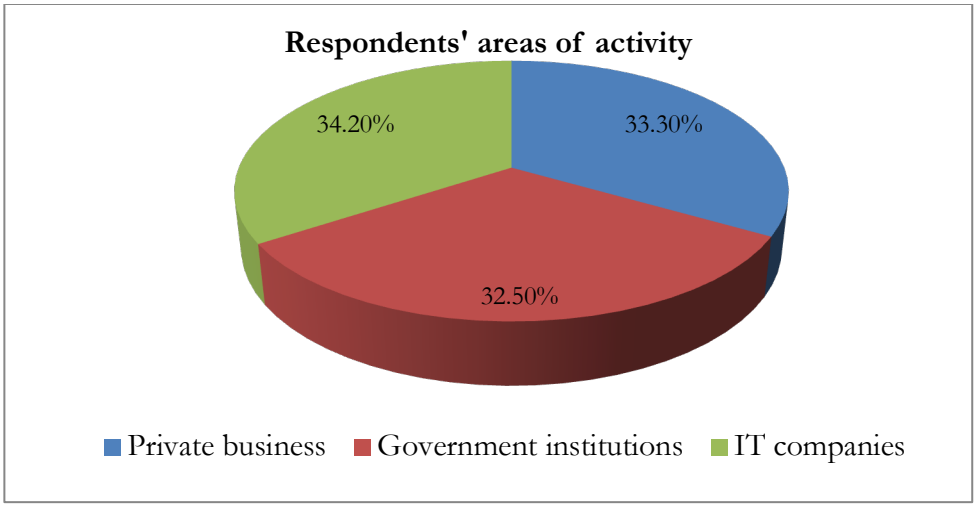
– IT sector (SoftServe, EPAM, Genesis) – the industry that most closely corresponds to global trends in terms of flexibility, creativity, non-hierarchical management. The mentioned companies clearly implement a system of "career ladders", mentoring, internal mobility. The high correlation between motivation and career satisfaction is expected, but at the same time indicative for other industries.

The study involved 483 employees working in three organizational and functional sectors:

– private business (n = 161; 33.3%);
– government institutions (n = 157; 32.5%);
– IT companies (n = 165; 34.2%).

The distribution of respondents is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Distribution of study participants by economic sectors (created by authors)



To ensure the representativeness of the sample, the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents were also analyzed, in particular by gender:

– 54.2% – women (n = 262);
– 45.8% – men (n = 221).

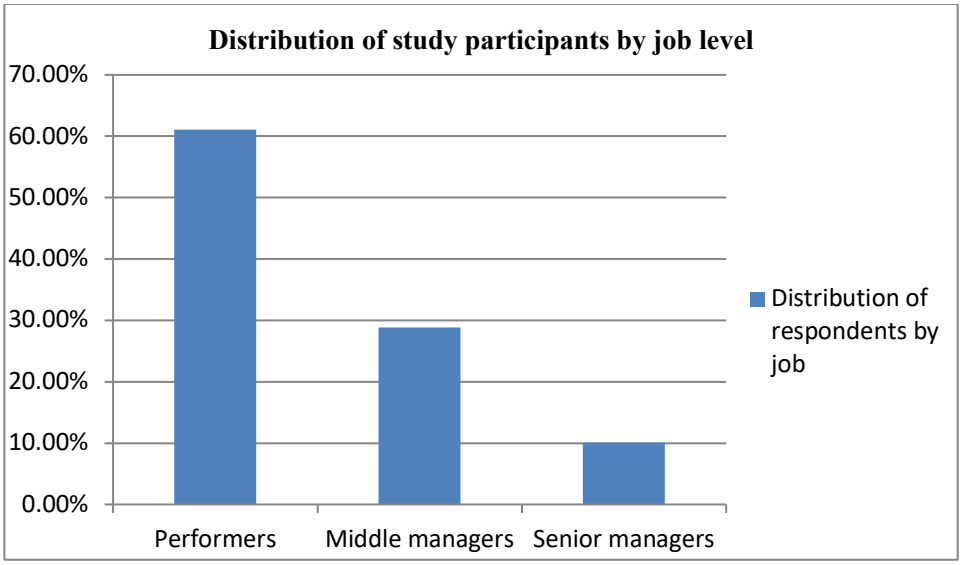
By age:

– 18–29 years – 27.5% (n = 133);
– 30–44 years – 49.3% (n = 238);
– 45–60 years – 23.2% (n = 112).

By job level (Figure 2):

– performers – 61.1% (n = 295);
– middle managers – 28.8% (n = 139);
– senior managers – 10.1% (n = 49).

Figure 2. Distribution of study participants by job level (created by the authors)



The assessment was carried out using a standardized questionnaire, which included two blocks of questions:

1. The level of motivational environment – was assessed on a 5-point scale according to the following components:

– material incentives (bonuses, salary, premiums);

– intangible incentives (recognition, development, career opportunities);

– management style and relationships with management;

– corporate culture and values;

– transparency of the evaluation and feedback system.

2. The level of career satisfaction – also on a 5-point scale:

– whether the employee considers himself to be fulfilled in his career plan;

– whether he sees prospects for career growth in the organization;

– whether he is satisfied with the pace of promotion and support from the company.

For each respondent, average scores were calculated on both scales, after which Pearson correlation analysis was applied to establish the level of connection.

A fragment of the questionnaire is presented below (Table 3).

Table 3. Fragment of the questionnaire (developed by the authors)

Statement	*Statement rating (1 – completely disagree; 2 – disagree; 3 – neutral; 4 – agree; 5 – completely agree)*
Block 1. Level of motivational environment	
The salary is commensurate with my efforts and qualifications	☐
The company offers bonuses, allowances or premiums	☐
I receive non-material recognition for my achievements	☐
I have the opportunity to improve my qualifications or participate in trainings	☐
There are real opportunities for career growth	☐
The management supports professional initiatives	☐
The team has a friendly atmosphere	☐
I share the values that the company espouses	☐
The processes for evaluating my work are transparent and fair	☐
I regularly receive constructive feedback	☐
The company adheres to the principles of equality and non-discrimination	☐
Block 2. Level of career satisfaction	
I consider myself professionally fulfilled	☐
My work matches my abilities and interests	☐
I see opportunities for advancement within this company	☐
The company supports my professional development	☐
I am satisfied with the pace of my career growth	☐
I receive appropriate support from colleagues and mentors	☐
I feel like a valuable employee in this organization	☐

The survey was accompanied by open-ended questions that allowed for qualitative generalizations:

– IT workers mentioned the importance of personal growth and recognition from colleagues;

– in government structures, motivation was dominated by stability, but at the same time – a high level of apathy regarding career prospects;

– in the private sector, respondents often pointed to competition within the team as a driver or barrier to promotion.

The summarized results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Summary of survey results (developed by the authors)

Organization type	*Number of respondents*	*Average level of motivation (M)*	*Average level of career satisfaction (M)*	*Pearson correlation coefficient (r)*
Private enterprise (e.g. Rozetka, Nova Poshta, Epicenter)	161	3,82	3,65	0,69
Government institution (e.g. Tax Service, Ukrposhta, regional state administration)	157	3,27	2,98	0,43
IT company (e.g. SoftServe, EPAM, Genesis)	165	4,21	4,05	0,78
Total sample	483	3,77	3,57	0,66

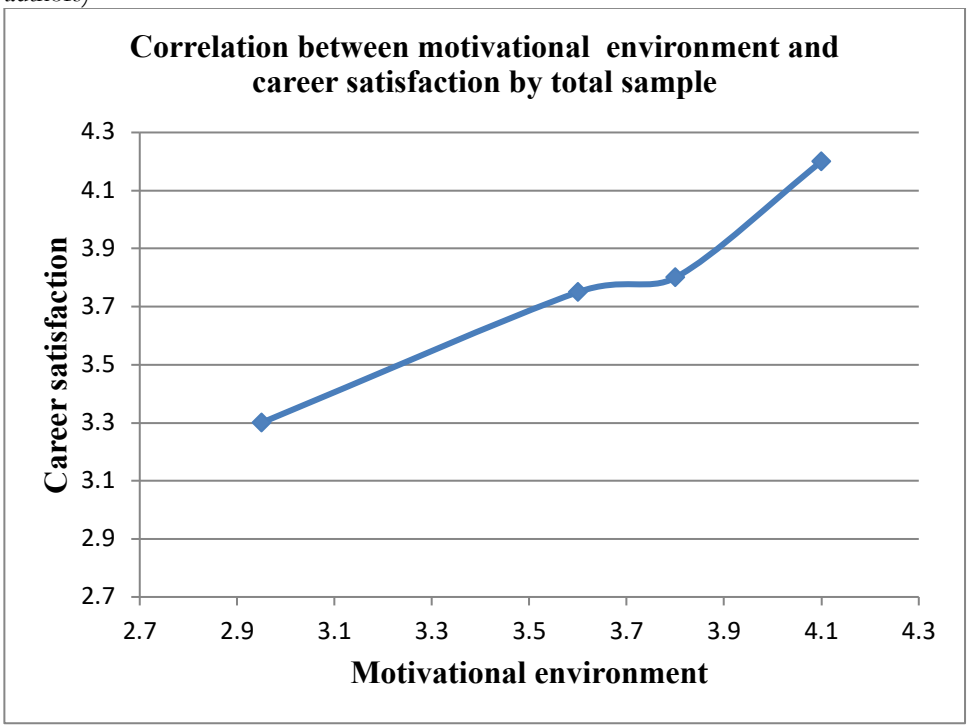
Thus, the private sector shows a stable medium-high level of motivation (3.82) and a fairly high level of career satisfaction (3.65). The correlation at the level of r = 0.69 indicates a strong dependence – the motivational environment here acts as an effective tool for stimulating internal mobility of personnel.

State institutions demonstrate the lowest indicators of the average level of motivation (3.27) and career satisfaction (2.98), which indicates relatively limited incentives for career growth. The correlation of r = 0.43 is moderate, but statistically significant. This is explained by the formalization of promotion and less flexibility of personnel policy.

IT companies have the highest scores on both indicators: motivational environment – 4.21, career satisfaction – 4.05, and the coefficient r = 0.78 demonstrates a very strong positive relationship. IT sector workers are the most sensitive to motivational factors and are also active in realizing their career potential.

Below is a graph of the correlation relationship for the total sample (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Correlation between level of motivation and career satisfaction (created by authors)



This graph illustrates the relationship between the level of motivational environment (X-axis) and career satisfaction (Y-axis) in the total sample of respondents.

The regression coefficient ($\beta = 0.71$) shows that with an increase in motivational environment by one unit, a corresponding increase in career satisfaction by 0.71 units is expected.

The explanatory variance ($R^2 = 0.44$) means that 44% of the variation in the level of career satisfaction can be explained by changes in the motivational environment. The remaining 56% of the variation is due to other factors that are not taken into account in this model.

Thus, the motivational environment is a significant factor influencing career satisfaction, but there are additional factors that also affect this indicator.

In modern conditions (after 2022), the motivational environment is being formed under the pressure of external challenges:

– the relocation of enterprises stimulated the emergence of flexible motivation formats (remote work, psychological support, rapid adaptation of newcomers);

– elements of "social heroism" appeared in the public sector, which became an intangible source of motivation (serving society in a difficult period);

– in the private sector and IT, the importance of trust, security, and transparency as key intangible incentives has significantly increased.

The correlation between the motivational environment and career satisfaction is a statistical phenomenon and a strategic indicator of the quality of personnel management. Accordingly, the results obtained should be used to build an adaptive model of motivational policy in various sectors of the Ukrainian economy.

The proposed adaptive model of motivational policy in different sectors of the Ukrainian economy is shown in Table 5.

Adaptive motivational policy involves flexible adjustment of the incentive system depending on the type of organization, personnel structure, financial capabilities and external environment. It is based on the following principles:

– individualization (taking into account the motivational priorities of employees);

– balance of material and non-material incentives;

– transparency and fairness of evaluation;

– support for career development;

– psychological safety and trust in the team;

– flexibility to change (crisis, relocation, war).

Table 5. Adaptive model of motivational policy in different sectors of the economy (Own development)

Sector	Characteristics	Categories	Tools
Private sector (commercial companies)	- dynamic environment - competitive struggle for personnel - high mobility of personnel	Material	Bonuses, KPI bonuses, profit sharing, performance bonuses
		Intangible	Development programs, internal training, competitions, "employee of the month"
		Career	Rapid promotion for achievements, horizontal transfers, personnel reserve
Government institutions	- high stability, limited resources - regulated promotion - weak differentiation of incentives	Material	Transparency of surcharges, system of allowances for complexity, experience, categories
		Intangible	Recognition of social significance, certificates, thanks, participation in projects
		Career	Formation of a personnel reserve, individual development plans
IT companies and creative industries	- high competition for talent - individualism and self-realization - value-based motivation	Material	Flexible bonuses, development fund, course payment
		Intangible	Independence, participation in project selection, psychological safety
		Career	Flexible trajectories (expert/leader/coach), internal internships

The adaptive model of motivational policy is not universal, but is based on a single logic of balancing incentives. In addition, it contributes to increasing productivity, reducing staff turnover and team stability and should

be periodically reviewed taking into account the dynamics of the labor market and social conditions.

Given external challenges such as war, relocation and economic crisis, companies are recommended to implement universal adaptation approaches to maintain the efficiency of personnel work. In particular, it is advisable to introduce flexible work schedules, which will allow employees to better adapt to changes in life circumstances. It is also important to provide psychological support, including access to consultations and opportunities for emotional relief. No less important is the formation of a corporate culture of care, which will contribute to team cohesion in stressful conditions. In addition, supporting internal mobility through the possibility of moving employees between branches or departments allows for a more flexible response to changes in the company structure.

Conclusions

As a result of the theoretical and empirical research, it was confirmed that the motivational environment is a key factor influencing professional activity, involvement and career development of employees. The motivational environment is considered as a holistic multi-component system that combines material and non-material incentives, socio-psychological climate, management practices and value orientations of the organization.

Modern theories of motivation (Maslow, Herzberg, Vroom, Adams, Locke) were analyzed, which demonstrate different approaches to understanding motivational processes, but a common feature is the importance of the need for recognition, development, justice and achievement. These needs are directly related to the desire of employees for career growth, which confirms the relevance of integrating theoretical provisions into the practice of HR management.

A questionnaire survey was conducted among 483 respondents from different sectors of the economy (private, public, IT). Motivational environment is a key factor related to professional activity, engagement, and career development of employees, as there is a statistically significant positive relationship between the level of motivational environment and career satisfaction ($r = 0.66$). The highest indicators were demonstrated by the IT sector, which indicates the effectiveness of adaptive and human-centric models of motivational policy.

Based on empirical data and industry specifics, an adaptive model of motivational policy has been developed, which allows organizations to flexibly form a system of incentives depending on external conditions

(martial law, economic crisis, relocation), internal personnel structure and development goals. This model will contribute to increasing staff involvement, reducing staff turnover, creating a favorable organizational climate and effective management of career dynamics.

In further research, it is advisable to deepen the study of non-material motivators in conditions of social instability, as well as assess the impact of flexible employment formats and mentoring on career growth in different generations of employees.

Statement on the Use of AI Tools | *We, the authors, confirm that AI tools (such as language models, text generators, or other automated content creation tools) were not used in the writing, editing, or any other aspect of our manuscript.*

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