



INTERNATIONAL
HELLENIC
UNIVERSITY

**Strategic management
based on employee
motivation:
the case of a car spare parts
family business**

Marina Protogerou

SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION & LEGAL STUDIES

A thesis submitted for the degree of

MBA

February 2019

Thessaloniki – Greece

Student Name: Marina Protogerou
SID: 1101170017
Supervisor: Prof. Costas Andriopoulos

I hereby declare that the work submitted is mine and that where I have made use of another's work, I have attributed the source(s) according to the Regulations set in the Student's Handbook.

February 2019
Thessaloniki - Greece

Abstract

In the following dissertation, I will examine the real case of a car spare parts family business located in North-Western Greece that has been operating since 1923 and is currently facing the problem of constantly growing competition in the industry. At the same time, the motivation of the employees appears to be at low levels, which is something that strikes at the company's ability to operate at its fullest potential.

This thesis is a hopeful project that aims at exploring these two tasks and eventually discovering the best possible practices that could be adopted firstly in order to lessen the impact of the external factors that threaten its future and secondly enhance the internal strengths through applicable processes.

The primary research for the employee motivation has been conducted through interviewing the employees personally about their thoughts upon motivation and it results in the fact that by trying to meet their needs and their values, making the motives intrinsic to them and empowering them, we manage their engagement and commitment to the organization and its goals.

Moreover, as far as the Strategic Management is concerned, I will focus at the competitor analysis by using the CPM matrix, conduct an industry analysis through the IFE and EFE matrices, followed by the matching stage and the SWOT analysis and finally with the evaluation of two projects with the QSPM matrix. The result that is derived is that the rating of the company is overall satisfactory. The strategies that were carefully generated create opportunities for further improvement and should be definitely exploited.

Keywords: motivation, engagement, strategic plan, industry environment, interview

Marina Protogerou
14/02/2019

Preface

This dissertation was written as part of the MBA at the International Hellenic University.

First and foremost, I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my family, who supported me in every aspect throughout the entire program and made it possible for me to successfully draw this MBA postgraduate cycle to an end.

I would also like to thank my friends who traveled this two-year journey with me and the new friends I made in this postgraduate program, as their support, encouragement, solidarity, and companionship made the last two years the most meaningful ones of my entire life. Special thanks to Georgios Ch., Valia R., Thomais G., Georgios P., Vasiliki N., and Konstantinos P., as they deserve it.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my supervisor, Prof. C. Andriopoulos, who helped me with his comments, remarks and insights –not only about the dissertation but for my company in general- throughout the whole process of carrying out the following thesis.

Contents

ABSTRACT	III
PREFACE.....	I
CONTENTS.....	III
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	5
2.1. KEY CONCEPTS	5
2.2. MOTIVATION THEORIES	7
2.2.1. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (1943).....	7
2.2.2. Alderfer’s Theory (1969)	8
2.2.3. Herzberg’s Theory	9
2.2.4. McClelland’s Acquired Needs Theory (1961)	10
2.2.5. Peter Drucker’s Management by Objectives (1960s)	11
2.2.6. Edward Lawler on Job Enrichment (1969)	13
2.2.7. Michael Maccoby’s “New Generation” (1988)	14
3. RESEARCH	17
3.1. INDUSTRY ANALYSIS	18
3.1.1. Competitor Analysis: the CPM Matrix.....	18
3.1.2. External Factor Evaluation (EFE) Matrix.....	22
3.1.3. Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) Matrix.....	26
3.1.4. SWOT Matrix.....	28
3.1.5. QSPM Matrix.....	31
3.2. PRIMARY RESEARCH	36
4. DATA ANALYSIS	38
5. DISCUSSION	44
6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	46
7. BIBLIOGRAPHY	47

APPENDIX1

1. Introduction

1.1. The company

The following dissertation is written as part of the MBA program of the International Hellenic University. It is based upon a real company, Protogeros SA, a company located in Ioannina, in North Western Greece that trades car spare parts since 1923, when a young man with a vision started a small business in the automobile market. Since then, enthusiasm, determination, and commitment to our customers caused that small family business to grow continuously and rapidly. Three generations later, Protogeros SA, claims the leadership in the auto parts market in North-Western Greece.

Protogeros SA imports a full line of OEM and brand name products from worldwide famous foreign and local car parts manufacturers and also collaborates with the largest national distributors of auto parts in Greece. Since 1985, we are active in the production of special types of filters in order to be able to address the customers' particular needs even better. Since 1994, in order to cover our growth requirements, we moved to our new self-owned facilities totaling 2.000 sqm, located in a 4.500 sqm area. From 2004 onwards we are actively committed in the recycling process of used motor oils, batteries and engine parts, taking into advantage the social responsibility of enterprises. It is our mission to offer quality products at very competitive prices in the market, along with a dominant distribution system of our product, mainly in North-Western Greece. Fulfilling an order on time, offering help and information and addressing our customers' individual needs with a smile, are our priorities.

1.2. The purpose of the thesis

As I belong in the fourth generation that is occupied in that car spare parts family business, as a manager and president-to-be, I am facing strategic challenges in the constantly changing market of today's automobile. It is a sector where competition is getting more intense every day that passes. Apart from that, radical technological changes are taking place, that we should be, not only aware of but also well-prepared for.

Thinking about the subject of the dissertation, the choice of a strategic business plan for my own company seemed self-explanatory, as I want it to remain robust in the local market and also evolve, in order to include the technological, social, cultural, economic, demographic, political and finally global changes that the society is facing. Strategic management is a self-reflecting learning process that familiarizes managers and employees with key strategic issues and feasible alternatives for resolving the issues that occur, if they are open-minded enough to benefit from this tool¹. In the beginning, the analysis of the competition, the possible moves of the other similar-to-ours companies and the forecast of the way that the industry was about to move, were appearing as the right thing for a dissertation and for the analysis of a real case, such as a business like mine.

Although, after taking a closer look, I realized that you cannot analyze something that is not in your hands. By this I mean that analyzing the competition instead of what can be done internally of the company in order to improve the sections that need to be improved, would be wrong not only for this dissertation but as an approach by an entrepreneur in general.

At the same time, I found out that there was a motivation issue among the employees, as a few of them looked unhappy and most of the times in a bad mood. They were trying to avoid their responsibilities and their relations with their colleagues had become non-operating, as they had bad communication or even lack of communication in total; they were avoiding their colleagues, if possible. In other words, the employees seemed disengaged, something that was hurting them psychologically in the first place as well as the company secondarily, as they could not serve the customers properly. I could not let the fact that they looked miserable accumulate.

As a result, I concluded to the fact that there are two aspects that need to be corrected in order to move forward in a stronger way as a company and therefore I decided to work on both of them. Given the opportunity of this dissertation, I decided to analyze what can motivate employees and eventually lead from their empowerment to their engagement, which is something that every company would dream about its

¹ C. Andriopoulos, class notes from the course “Business Strategy” at IHU, 2018

employees: the emotional commitment of the employee to the organization and its goals². I decided to do this by giving them the opportunity to talk to me openly about their thoughts upon motivation and what could help them become happier in their working environment and eventually more productive through an interview. Moreover, I decided to analyze a major part of a Strategic Plan, which is the analysis of the industry environment. By taking a closer look at the competitor analysis, the internal and the external factors that affect us and could be exploited by us at the same time, and combining them in order to invent new possible moves that could take the company forward, we can position ourselves better in an environment of intensifying competition.

The ultimate goal for each firm should be the achievement of a sustained competitive advantage that will allow not only the survival but also the dominance in such an environment of stiff competition. By exploiting core competencies, continually adapting to changes and effectively formulating, implementing and evaluating strategies that capitalize upon these factors³, we will have made another big step towards the continuation of the history of our company. As John Smith said, "At the end of the day, success is measured by what we have done to prepare for competition."

1.3. The structure of the thesis

In chapter 2, I will refer to the most important theories and studies about employee motivation and engagement that could help me evaluate the way that they could be used in my case, in order to help my company have a better interaction with the employees.

In chapter 3, which is divided into two parts, I will analyze the research methodology. In the first section, I will conduct a competitor analysis, an external and internal factor analysis, a SWOT matrix and last but not least, a QSPM matrix, in which I will evaluate the feasibility of two alternative and mutually exclusive plans for the company. The second section is dedicated to the primary research I conducted by interviewing the

² C. Andriopoulos, class notes from the course "Business Strategy" at IHU, 2018

³ C. Andriopoulos, class notes from the course "Business Strategy" at IHU, 2018

employees of the company, in order to understand how all the stakeholders think and what can be done in order to improve this situation.

In chapter 4, I will analyze the data that were derived from the interviews in order to see what the employees are looking for in their workplace.

In chapter 5, I will discuss the results of the survey and the ways the managers could exploit them in order to help the employees feel better in the place they spend 1/3 of their day at, in collaboration with the results derived from the part of the strategic business plan.

In chapter 6, you can see the general conclusions of the dissertation and several recommendations about future moves and opportunities for further research.

In the Appendix, I have enclosed the questions I used at the interviews with the employees.

2. Literature Review

In the following chapter, I will refer to and try to analyze the basic elements of the literature on motivation. It will eventually help me understand what motivates people in order to be able to plan a route of motivation for my employees that will hopefully lead to their empowerment and finally to engagement with the company, its purposes, and its future.

2.1. Key Concepts

In this section, I will refer to the key concepts of the literature and their meaning, as they are the basis of the theories that will be explained in the following part of the dissertation.

Drives can be defined as innate, biological determinants of human behavior that can be activated by deprivation (Buchanan and Huczynski, 1997).

Motives can be defined as learned needs, which influence our behavior by leading us to pursue particular goals because they are socially valued (Buchanan and Huczynski, 1997). Some examples of motives in the working environment could be involvement in decision-making, self-expression, money, personal success, job expectations (and not work itself), contribution to the attainment of corporate goals, autonomy and freedom in organizing own work, challenges seen as opportunities for personal development, increased accountability and responsibility and lastly recognition.

From the above, we can clearly see that drives are far different from motives.

Motivation appears to be a concept that is difficult to be defined if we judge by the large number of existing theories that try to explain the term. Buchanan and Huczynski (1997) argue that "motivation is the internal psychological process of initiating, energizing, directing and maintaining goal-directed behavior" or, to put it differently, "the cognitive, decision-making process through which the individual chooses desired outcomes and sets in motion the appropriate actions to their achievement". Rajput (2011) notes that the word motivation is originated from the Latin word "movere"

which means "to move"⁴. Vroom (1964) defines motivation as "a process of choice made by persons or lower organisms among alternative forms of voluntary action". The Industrial Society (1990) describes it as "the difference between one individual putting in greater effort and energy into one activity than another". In other words, motivation has also been defined as; why people do things (Gross, 1992) and also as; the incentive for action (Collins, 1995). Motivation is a term referring to the factors that activate, direct and sustain goal-directed behavior. Though motivation cannot be observed, it can be inferred that it exists based on behavior we can observe (Nevid, 2013). To be motivated is to be moved to do something (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Therefore, motivation can be understood as a measure of commitment to achieve the goals we have set.

Another key aspect that can be derived from the aforementioned is the *motivation cycle*. The motivation cycle begins from the goals we set, that need to be as clear as possible, in order to satisfy our individual needs which create behaviors that ultimately help us to attain our goals.

Motivation can be divided into two types, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. According to Deci⁵, the term *extrinsic motivation* refers to the performance of an activity in order to attain some separable outcome and, thus, contrasts with *intrinsic motivation*, which refers to doing an activity for the inherent satisfaction of the activity itself. As a result, motivation can be derived either by intrinsic or by extrinsic motivators. Intrinsic motivators result from the performance of an activity and can be the most important influencers for a full personal and work life. The intrinsic rewards are the valued outcomes that lie within the control of the individual. Satisfaction, accomplishment, achievement, contribution, self-actualization, and responsibility are a few examples of intrinsic rewards. Contrastingly, extrinsic motivators result from environmental factors. In other words, the outcomes are controlled by others. Some examples of extrinsic rewards are working conditions, recognition, promotion, performance evaluations, and salary increase.

⁴ Sara Ghaffari, Dr. Ishak Mad Shah, Dr. John Burgoyne, Dr. Mohammad Nazri, Jalal Rezk Salleh., The Influence of Motivation on Job Performance: A Case Study at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia. Aust. J. Basic & Appl. Sci., 11(4): 92-99, 2017

⁵ Ryan M., Deci E., (January 2000) "Self determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development and well-being", American Psychologist

2.2. Motivation theories

In this section, I will present the main theories of motivation that will give us an insight into what motivates employees.

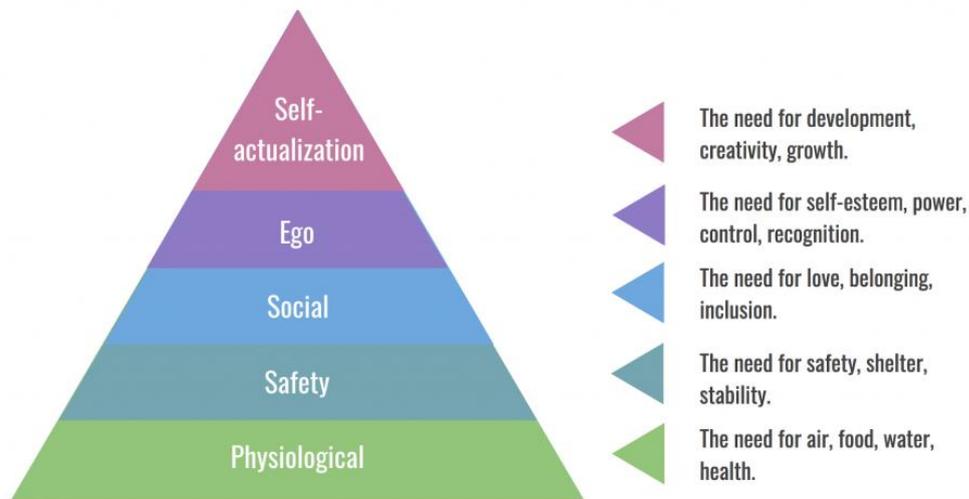
2.2.1. Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943)

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a motivational theory in psychology, comprising a five-tier model of human needs, often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid (picture 1). From the bottom of the hierarchy upwards, the needs are physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem and self-actualization. ⁶

Maslow (1943, 1954) stated that people are motivated to meet these five categories of needs, starting from the base of the pyramid. When each level is reached, the next level motivates us and so on. Our basic needs are the physiological needs, and this is the first motivation for our behavior, as they are the basic biological requirements for our survival. They are the most important needs that have to be met before the safety needs and any other, by definition. After the safety needs, we can find the need for love and belongingness, which are crucial for interpersonal relationships. The last two needs are esteem needs and self-actualization needs. These are the only needs that will never be completely satisfied, as there is no ceiling for them. Maslow supported that only unsatisfied needs motivate us, apart from the two last ones, where we can keep outperforming ourselves, on our effort to become the best possible version of ourselves.

⁶ McLeod, S.A. (2018, May 21), *Maslow's hierarchy of needs*, Retrieved from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html> (extracted from the Internet on December 2018)

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Picture 1: Maslow's Hierarchy of needs⁷

2.2.2. Alderfer's Theory (1969)

Clayton P. Alderfer's ERG theory condenses Maslow's five human needs into three categories: existence (E), relatedness (R) and growth (G). However, the two theories could be said to be analogous; existence relates to survival and safety; relatedness to belonging and self-esteem; and growth to the development of human potential as in self-actualization (Buchanan and Huczynski, 1997). Alderfer added to Maslow that there was not only a satisfaction/progression relationship but also a relationship of frustration/regression. For instance, an employee could reach a sense of high self-esteem, lose their job and regress to survival mode, in other words, one state does not necessarily lead to another and the element of the hierarchy can change, retrench, regress, and also co-exist (Porter et al, 2003). ERG theory argues that people will have a different order of needs in different stages of their lives.

⁷ Source: <https://bit.ly/2CoMy1Y> (extracted from the Internet on December 2018)



Picture 2: Alderfer's ERG Theory⁸

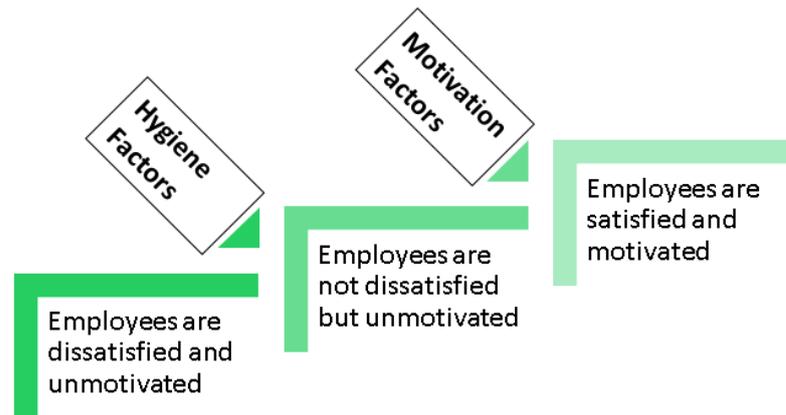
2.2.3. Herzberg's Theory

F. Herzberg's dual factor theory of motivation was introduced in 1959 and argues that there are certain factors in the workplace that cause job satisfaction, while a different set of factors can cause job dissatisfaction. Job dissatisfaction is influenced by the hygiene factors, such as the working conditions, interpersonal relationships with the coworkers, policies, and rules of the company, supervision quality, technical competence of the supervision and the salary amount. On the other hand, job satisfaction is influenced by the motivator factors. Some examples of motivator factors are achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement, personal growth and the work itself. By improving the hygiene factors, job dissatisfaction declines. By improving the motivator factors, job satisfaction also improves. From the aforementioned, we can easily derive that by focusing on improving the motivator factors, companies can achieve better results in the long term. Apart from that, if the hygiene factors are set and the employees are still dissatisfied, the motivator factors need to be taken into serious consideration. In other words, the wage is not always the issue, after all. What can be argued about Herzberg's theory is that hygiene factors do not have a positive impact on work performance. Their absence, however, causes great dissatisfaction, which also highlights the loss-aversion that characterizes us. The hygiene factors are

⁸ Source: <https://bit.ly/2RBcjGV> (extracted from the Internet on December 2018)

essentially extrinsic prerequisites for achieving a fundamental level of job satisfaction which must be constantly reinforced.

According to Herzberg, individuals are not satisfied with meeting the lower order needs at work; for example, those requirements related to minimum wages or safe and pleasant working conditions. Instead, people seek to satisfy the higher psychological needs related to the achievement, recognition, responsibility, progress, and nature of the work itself.



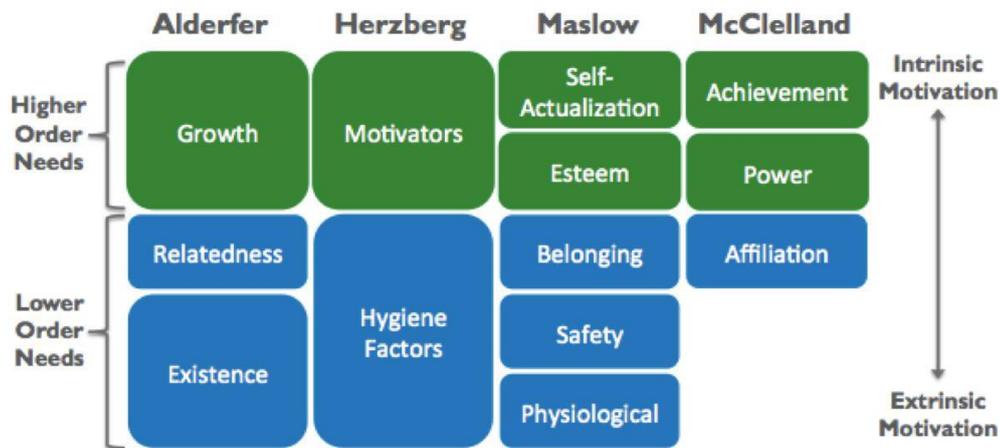
Picture 3: Hygiene & motivation factors of Herzberg's Theory.⁹

2.2.4. McClelland's Acquired Needs Theory (1961)

David McClelland, on his book "The Achieving Society", identifies three motivators that he believes that we all have: a need for achievement, a need for affiliation and a need for power, which he argues that are all learned. According to McClelland, regardless of our characteristics, one of the aforementioned motivating drives is the dominant of each person, depending on our life experiences, our culture, etc. By identifying the primary motivator for each person, we can structure our approach; set goals more effectively, decide the leadership style and the employee rewards and plan the project assignments properly around each individual team member. Therefore, we can effectively give praise and feedback, assign the appropriate tasks and keep our

⁹ Source: <http://www.humanbusiness.eu/herzberg-two-factor-theory-of-motivation/> (extracted from the Internet on December 2018)

employees motivated and satisfied with the work they are doing. The theory of David McClelland was actually the first real distinction between drives and motives.



Picture 4: Comparison of Early Motivation Theories (Source: Charis Perdikari, MBA)

2.2.5. Peter Drucker’s Management by Objectives (1960s)

Peter Drucker, also known as the Father of Modern Management Theory, worked towards the invention of the terms and strategies of leadership that are still being used. Instead of setting strict times and discouraging innovation, he chose a more flexible and cooperative approach. He attached great importance to decentralization, knowledge work, objective management (MBO) and a process called SMART. According to Drucker, “management’s concern and management’s responsibility are everything that affects the performance of the institution and its results-whether inside or outside, whether under the institution’s control or totally beyond it”¹⁰. In contrast to many early management theorists, Drucker believed that subordinates should be able to take risks, learn and grow in the workplace. Drucker’s management theory consists of many contemporary concepts, such as:

- Decentralization: Drucker focused on the decentralization of management in the workplace. He prioritized employees to feel valued and empowered, as their work and their beliefs are important. He believed in assigning tasks that

¹⁰ Drucker Peter, F. (2011) “Management’s challenges for the 21st century”, Routledge, NY, USA

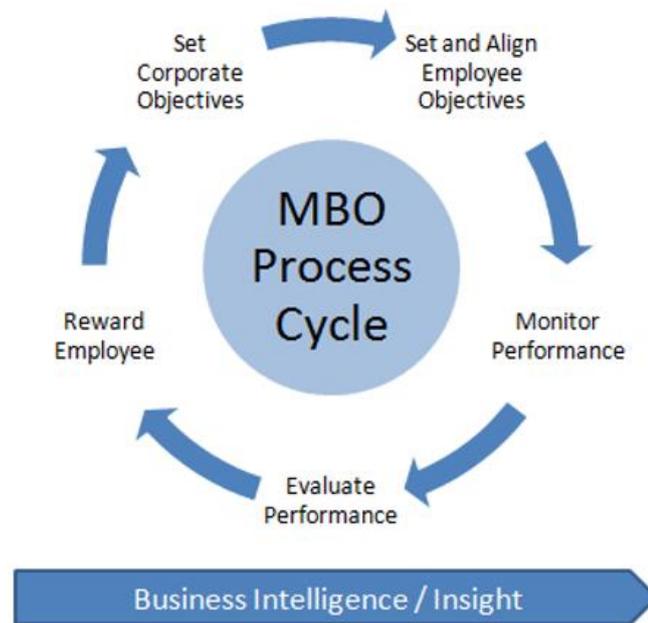
inspire employees while bringing together supervisors and subordinates to achieve common business objectives.

- Knowledge work: Knowledge workers are those whose jobs require information to be processed or used, such as engineers or analysts. Drucker attached great importance to workers who thought creatively towards the solution of various problems. He wanted to cultivate an employee culture that could give insights and ideas.
- Management by Objectives: Drucker conceptualized "Objective Management" (MBO), a process that encourages staff at all levels to work together. Each worker has the same say, sharing his own insights and opinions in order to reach a common position. From there, teams set common objectives and delegate tasks based on skills and interests. According to Drucker, all objectives are derived from objective setting at a corporate level and the goal is these objectives to be aligned with the employees' objectives. In management by objectives, Drucker recognizes five steps: goals' review, objective-setting, progress monitoring, performance evaluation, and employees' reward. In his MBO practice, Drucker used the S.M.A.R.T. process that was introduced by George T. Doran and tries to increase the efficiency in work-related tasks. Therefore, according to S.M.A.R.T., the objective has to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented.

If we want to lead our team to success while supporting and encouraging each individual, we should consider implementing Drucker's approach with the following methods:

- The delegation of equal power across the board, in order to remind them that everyone is treated equally and shares the same responsibility with the rest of the colleagues.
- Encouragement of collaboration, so that the staff feels like a united team and is able to share ideas and experiences towards the company's benefit.
- Utilization of the S.M.A.R.T. concept, in order to increase efficiency which is derived from a proper objective setting.

- Innovation boost, through supporting employees and their ideas and promoting creativity.



Picture 5: MBO process cycle¹¹

2.2.6. Edward Lawler on Job Enrichment (1969)

Job enrichment is a process of broadening the experience of work in order to enhance the satisfaction of the employees' needs and to improve their work motivation and performance. The concept of job enrichment has become a key tool for managers who are determined to improve the motivation of the employees and the growth of the organization. Job enrichment occurs when employees derive pleasure and fulfillment in their position as a result of a greater variety of skills (Kamal; Chris; Patterson; Robinso; Stride; Wall & Wood, 2008) and tasks that require self-sufficiency (Behson, Eddy, & Lorenzet, 2000). According to Leach and Wall (2004), job enrichment is a job design that results in the increase of the autonomy, control, variety of skills and the responsibility of employees, which invariably helps to reduce rigidity, tediousness, lack of creativity and dissatisfaction among employees.

¹¹ Source: <http://bit.ly/2Cw23oW> (extracted from the Internet on December 2018)

In other words, this theory promotes the importance of rearranging the procedural aspects of the job in order to make it interesting for the employees, if we want them to perform better. Job enrichment inevitably improves motivation and performance in the working environment, if applied in the correct way. We can achieve job enrichment by designing the duties properly, in other words by promoting intrinsic rewards, which is crucial. The design of an individual's job determines both the kind of rewards available and what the individual has to do to get those rewards. Therefore, choosing people who fit and have the right qualities to get the rewards is of critical importance. The relationship between performance and intrinsic rewards is usually more immediate and direct than that between performance and extrinsic rewards¹².

As we can see, by adding meaningfulness on the task that the employee is working on, contributes to their job enrichment. Employees need to see significance in their work in order to feel motivated to work in a more effective way.

2.2.7. Michael Maccoby's "New Generation" (1988)

Michael Maccoby in his book: "Why Work?" (1988, 1995) suggests that in order to motivate the employees, leaders must acquire an appropriate mix of four Rs: Responsibilities, Relationships, Rewards, and Reasons. In detail, according to Maccoby:

- Responsibilities must be meaningful, engage the employees' abilities and develop their skills. Especially when they fit a person's values, responsibilities can be highly motivating.
- Relationships: relationships among team members must be supportive and conflicts should be quickly resolved. Employees can be motivated by good relationships with other colleagues, collaborators, and customers. Someone with strong care values can be motivated by helping other coworkers or customers. For many, the relationship with their boss is of utmost importance

¹² Business environment seminar at IHU "HR management during downturns", as presented by Charis Perdikari (2018)

and determines the productivity of other work relations. Maccoby argues that managers would follow a leader who cares about them, coaches them and takes their ideas into consideration.

- Rewards: appreciation and recognition are two types of rewards that enhance relationships. Some people, of course, are motivated by monetary rewards. Undoubtedly, rewarding subordinates for following our orders can strengthen our authority as an employer, but unfortunately, it will not motivate employees to do their jobs in a more effective way. Pink (2009) argues that they actually may be demotivated by compliance pressure.
- Reasons: reasoning can be the most powerful motivator for everyone. Workers who carried out repetitive, assembly tasks during the Second World War were very motivated actually because they helped win the war. The same work in peacetime could be seen as unpleasantly long-lasting. People feel proud of the work that contributes to the well being and common good of others.

In other words, advanced technology creates jobs ever more complex and knowledge-based, that require: information processing, diagnostic abilities, problem-solving skills, and increased responsibility.

The key needs of knowledge workers are the following:

- Clear management commitments on responsibilities and rewards
- Opportunities for expression, challenge, and development
- Increased business involvement, not to be a passive receiver of orders
- Individual growth that contributes to team growth
- Fair and meaningful rewards
- Reasons, information, to be included, to know why

Therefore, it should be clear that we should focus on enhancing and strengthening the intrinsic motivation of our team members, by taking into consideration the previous four Rs. By articulating and communicating the purpose of the various processes and projects and how it will serve the organization and the customers, their ownership upon the problem increases and employees feel empowered.

Hence, after all the aforementioned theories, we can reach the concept of empowerment. Empowerment is the term given to organizational arrangements that allow employees more autonomy, discretion and unsupervised decision-making responsibility (D. Buchanan & A. Huczynski, 1997). With sufficient empowerment, employees can work at the top of their potentials. Some of the empowerment indicators are when employees know where they stand, when they are able to decide how to do their work, when their job counts for something, when they are encouraged to express their opinions and when they feel in control and have the power to change their circumstances¹³.

But the ultimate goal of every company should be *employee engagement*. Employee engagement can be described as "the extent to which employees are motivated to contribute to organizational success and are willing to apply discretionary effort to accomplishing tasks important to the achievement of organizational goals" (Albrecht L. Simon, Handbook of Employee Engagement, 2010). In other words, employee engagement is "the emotional commitment the employee has to the organization and its goals" (Kevin Kruse from Forbes.com). Employee force is the heartbeat of the organization and the companies that work on that track are often the most successful and profitable companies in the world. We can achieve it with: Relationships, Enrichment, Appreciating contributions, Collaboration and Honest communication (Hewryati R., 2018)

¹³ Business environment seminar at IHU "HR management during downturns", as presented by Charis Perdikari (2018)

3. Research

The research for the dissertation was conducted in two steps. First of all, the constantly increasing competition situations in the industry make clear that a *Strategic Management plan* is necessary while trying to understand the new environment that is formulated. Through this process, the company can become more proactive in shaping its route and at the same time commit to the actions that need to be taken. By conducting a Strategic Management Plan, we can invent concepts that are more profitable and successful. Apart from that, we can make more informed decisions and expect both short-term and long-term benefits. The aforementioned could be considered as financial benefits. Apart from these, we can also have non-financial benefits, such as thorough understanding and action upon external threats, enhanced awareness of the competitors' strategies, empowerment of employees that results from them feeling more responsible and reduced change resistance.

What cannot be argued is the fact that whatever analyses we conduct according to the external environment in general and the competition in particular, the latter will continue making our work lives difficult. If we do not focus on the internal strengths and weaknesses and what we can do in order to improve our business from the inside, the outer situations will always carry us away from our real target, which is what we can do in order to reassure that our company will have a successful future.

The need to focus on our internal elements results in the fact that we need to make sure that our company is as strong as possible towards the external dangers. Therefore, we need to ensure that our employees, who are the most valuable asset of every company, feel motivated and empowered in order to feel better with their working life and eventually help their company evolve.

In order to see their way of thinking about motivation and what they believe that can be done in order to improve their everyday working life, I decided the primary research for this thesis to be based on interviewing personally the employees of the company. The scope of the aforementioned was to approach them, ask for their opinion and make them understand that their beliefs matter so that they feel more empowered. I strongly believe that if they feel motivated to work better and grow

through their working life that will consequently result in the growth of the business and the better flow of everyday work.

The first part of this chapter consists of the Strategic Management plan elements that were necessary for the analysis of the competition in the local industry of car spare parts. In detail, I will conduct a competitor analysis, an external and internal factor analysis, a SWOT matrix that contains both external and internal components and last but not least, a QSPM matrix, in which I will evaluate the feasibility of two alternative and mutually exclusive plans for the company.

The second part of the chapter is dedicated to the primary research I conducted with the form of interviewing the employees of the company, since it is a small family company and the questionnaire method is not applicable, due to lack of sufficient staff size.

3.1. Industry analysis

With the careful study of the data that occur from the industry analyses, such as the competitor analysis and the external factor evaluation, we will be able to determine the situation of the industry and at the same time, by combining them to our internal factor evaluation, generate multiple alternative strategies that need to be pursued, in order to achieve the mission and the objectives of the company. The first stage is the input stage, that includes the EFE, IFE and CPM matrices. The second stage is the matching stage or the SWOT matrix in other words. Lastly, the third stage is the decision stage, that includes the QSPM matrix.

3.1.1. Competitor Analysis: the CPM Matrix

The Competitive Profile Matrix identifies a firm's major competitors and its particular strengths and weaknesses in relation to a sample firm's strategic position. The comparative analysis provides important internal strategic information.¹⁴

The two main competitors I need to analyze are the following:

¹⁴ Fred R. David (2011), *Strategic Management. Concepts and cases, 13th edition*, Pearson, New Jersey, USA

- **Iaponiki SA:** Iaponiki SA is a firm that started operating in 1973. In the beginning, they were selling only at wholesale, but in recent years they have forward-integrated into the industry and are also selling at retail. Nowadays it has 17 branch stores all over Greece. The company's turnover for 2018 was approximately 40 million Euros. Their personnel at the branch in Ioannina are 18 people. The company has a remarkable inventory with a wide range of car spare parts from many brands, as they have invested in being part of the TEMOT International Group as shareholders, which allows them to be leading distributors, e-commerce operators and key aftermarket divisions of automotive conglomerates. Their greatest advantage is the fact that they have that remarkable inventory in every branch and its customers can rely on them about finding every needed part, even if it is not offered at the most competitive price, compared with other similar companies. TEMOT International cooperates closely with a number of carefully selected international suppliers, a large percentage of who are the same as ours. TEMOT International's quest of adding value in the automotive aftermarket is pursued through serious networking, common procurement, information technology services, garage concepts & systems, and public affairs.

In detail, TEMOT shareholders, without giving away their final sovereignty in local purchasing decisions, select their suppliers preferentially from the pool of the commonly defined TEMOT International suppliers and comply with them.

Apart from that, TEMOT International Information Technology Services develop and provide market-leading vehicle-related information technology solutions for TEMOT shareholders to gain competitive advantages in their markets. These solutions include a comprehensive portfolio of product data modules, technical platforms concerning Diagnostics Open Standard Interface, Database for Vehicle Maintenance and Repair of Information, Content Management as well as web-based tools. Furthermore, as one of the marketing activities, TEMOT International supports various garage concepts of its shareholders adapted to the countries demands to cover a wide range of answers to the automotive aftermarket's requirements.

- **Inter Cars Greece S.A.:** Inter Cars Greece S.A. is a subsidiary company of the Polish Inter Cars S.A., which is the greater importer and distributor of spare parts for passenger and commercial vehicles in the Middle East and Europe. Their range includes –apart from spare parts- various solutions for garage equipment and specified tools for the maintenance and repair of cars and motorcycles. It constitutes of more than 200 branch stores in Poland only and at least 190 in Europe generally, while its staff counts more than 10.000 people. The European centre Logistics ILS in Zakroczym – Swobodnia, which is located in Poland, near Warsaw and Gdansk, occupies an area of 15 acres and involves a warehouse of 30.000 square meters that is equipped with a 14.000-square-meters rack system of 4 levels, 17.000 pallet positions, 18.000 shelf positions and a transport system with a total length of 11 km, which is connected with two modern sorcerers. Its’ total turnover approximately amounts to 2 billion Euros annually. The expansion of Inter Cars S.A. in Greece has raised serious questions, with the “big players” of the sector awaiting the results of its arrival in the Greek car spare parts scene. The Greek aftermarket sector has a turnover of 500 million Euros and the six larger companies combined are entitled to 200 million Euros of that turnover¹⁵. Many people of the Greek market are not worried, because the Greek market already has a lot of competition, while it is being supplied with spare parts of worldwide brands at very good prices. On the contrary, many people are afraid that the already stiff competition will get even worse after the entrance of Inter Cars, which is the third foreign company that “silently” entered the Greek aftermarket sector after the Bulgarian Skuba Jellas (Thessaloniki) and MK Spear Parts (Athens). Their goal is to open 65 shops in the Greek market. At the moment, 5 shops already operate. Inter Cars SA opened a branch store in Ioannina about a month ago and the local aftermarket sector is deeply concerned, as there are already more companies than needed in comparison with the population of Ioannina and Epirus in general. Their great advantage is the fact that they import spare parts in lower prices than the rest of us, as prices supplied by the manufacturing companies for countries of Eastern Europe are lower. In other words, they import goods in Poland, as it is

¹⁵ <https://infoservice.com.gr/auto/inter-cars-ellas-nea-eteria-antallaktikon/> (extracted from the Internet on January 2019)

more inexpensive there, and they distribute them in their branch stores all over Europe, outperforming even the largest Greek importing companies, that are doomed to sell at higher prices. Since they started operating only a few weeks ago in Ioannina, we cannot have a clear image about their movements and the future of the local automotive sector. We cannot claim that they can provide better prices in every part's code, as we have seen numerous examples of us selling cheaper than them in some part codes, but they are overall price-competitive, which is highly evaluated by the local garages and retail customers. They initiated operations with a 5-person staff, which is definitely to be increased. Their entrance in the local market deeply concerns us; nevertheless, we continue doing the best we can as a company every day.

Table 1: CPM Matrix.

	Critical Success Factors	Weight	Protogeros SA		Iaponiki SA		Inter Cars SA	
			Rating	Score	Rating	Score	Rating	Score
1	Product quality	0.15	4	0.60	3	0.45	2	0.30
2	Price competitiveness	0.10	3	0.30	2	0.20	4	0.40
3	Management experience	0.10	4	0.40	3	0.30	2	0.20
4	Financial Position	0.10	3	0.30	4	0.40	1	0.10
5	Customer Loyalty	0.15	4	0.60	3	0.45	1	0.15
6	Market Share	0.10	3	0.30	4	0.40	1	0.10
7	Inventory system	0.10	2	0.20	4	0.40	3	0.30
8	Sales distribution	0.10	4	0.40	3	0.30	2	0.20
9	E-commerce	0.05	1	0.05	4	0.20	2	0.10
10	Advertising	0.05	1	0.05	3	0.15	2	0.10
	Total	1		3.20		3.25		1.95

As we can see from the CPM Matrix (Table 1) and the above indicative factors, our major competitor, Iaponiki SA, is overall stronger, but we have a higher rating in critical factors such as product quality, management experience, customer loyalty, and sales distribution. We are able to ship goods any time of the week, as we have increased the number of the distribution times to the other cities we serve apart from Ioannina, including weekends, while Iaponiki distributes fewer times per week and Japanparts

only serves the area of Ioannina with their own fleet. Distributing goods directly with the company fleet and not by other transport companies is necessary for building a strong bond with the customer, as it is crucial for the latter to reduce expenses such as transportation costs that are transferred to the mechanics when receiving goods with transportation companies or the intercity buses. Finding the parts that every customer needs for every vehicle as correctly as possible, at the right prices and by distributing them as soon as possible to the clients is the combination that leads to customer loyalty and finally success, in the aftermarket sector. The score for Inter Cars S.A. is significantly lower than both Protogeros S.A. and Iaponiki S.A., but this can easily be interpreted by the fact that they initiated operations only a few weeks ago and they have not created customer loyalty or a robust market share yet. In order to be able to provide a justified opinion and express the whole thing better, we need to conduct a CPM matrix again after six months or a year, in order to have correct facts.

3.1.2. External Factor Evaluation (EFE) Matrix

Using the External Factor Evaluation Matrix we will be able to summarize and evaluate economic, social, cultural, demographic, environmental, political, governmental, legal, technological and competitive information. The EFE Matrix can help strategists evaluate the market and industry, but this tool, along with the following ones, must be accompanied by good intuitive judgment.¹⁶

Table 2: The EFE Matrix.

	Key External Factors	Weight	Rating	Weighted Score
O	Opportunities			
O1	Car fleet is renewed very slowly	0.05	4	0.20
O2	Increase in the sales of the aftermarket sector	0.05	3	0.15
O3	Increasing growth of electric cars	0.03	1	0.03
O4	Customers have limited time to search the needed parts	0.05	4	0.20
O5	Opportunity for advertising through social media	0.03	3	0.09
O6	Opportunities for sales in the	0.01	2	0.02

¹⁶ Fred R. David (2011), *Strategic Management. Concepts and cases, 13th edition*, Pearson, New Jersey, USA

	motorcycle sector			
O7	Extended customer base	0.04	2	0.08
O8	Higher market share for the aftermarket, than for dealerships	0.10	3	0.30
O9	Opportunity for further use of e-commerce	0.10	3	0.30
T	Threats			
T1	A new competitor firm, Interparts SA, is about to enter the market	0.10	3	0.30
T2	Delaying imports	0.03	3	0.09
T3	Spare parts manufacturers moving to China	0.05	2	0.10
T4	Economic instability	0.05	1	0.05
T5	Low disposable income even for the necessary services	0.05	2	0.10
T6	Large companies sell directly to retail	0.10	3	0.30
T7	Numerous competitors in the sector	0.08	3	0.24
T8	Low emission vehicles / electric cars are taking advantage	0.08	2	0.16
	Total	1		2.62

In the above matrix (Table 2) we can see a few factors that affect us primarily from the external environment.

As far as the opportunities are concerned, the vehicle fleet in Greece is still slowly renewed due to the economic downturn of the previous years. This leads to an advantage of the aftermarket automotive sector, as the vehicles do no longer apply to the guarantee provided by the car dealership's terms (e.g. the service of the car for the first 3 years is included in the initial price of the car). Consequently, there is an increase in the sales of aftermarket sector, which is estimated to continue and be around 3% per year until 2030, according to a survey conducted by McKinsey & Company¹⁷. As a result, customers look increasingly on their own for solutions in the aftermarket sector. What can also be derived from the above is the fact that we have access to extensive statistical data about product codes that are being used in the existing vehicles and we can easily manage our inventory.

¹⁷<http://www.autospecialist.gr/el/news/8997/to-mellon-ston-klado-toy-aftermarket> (extracted from the Internet on December 2018)

Another opportunity that can be exploited by the company is that the “wear and tear” products, also known as consumables, that we are mainly occupied with, accrue to the 50% of the revenues in the automotive sector¹⁸. The growth rate will eventually slow down due to the rise in the sales of electric cars that already has started taking place more in the rest of Europe, rather than in Greece, but for the time being there is still time for exploitation of this condition.

Moreover, we are thinking to exploit the increase in the sales of the electric cars that are the new trend due to the environmental problems that have intensively arisen the previous years. For the time being, 90% of the electric vehicles in Europe can be found only in Germany, Denmark, France, United Kingdom, the Netherlands and in Sweden¹⁹. Therefore, we could search the field of electric cars and reserve the dealership of an e-car brand and be in the leading position in our area.

Apart from the aforementioned, another crucial factor that can be exploited is the further use of e-commerce in collaboration with our presence in social media. Our B2B program is being created by an informatics company and we are waiting for it, as it will help in our finding the parts easier and in less time. Moreover, it will be beneficial for our clients, who will be in the position to search on their own for the parts they need, check the prices and still consult us when they need something complicated.

Lastly, the customer base in the area is extended because the car spare parts companies of Ioannina also serve the rest of the region of Epirus, as in the other cities there are only a few companies similar to ours. This means that this large customer base is an opportunity that we can continue exploiting in a better and more effective way, as we can already cover their daily needs with our delivery schedule in a very functional way.

As far as the threats are being considered, the number of competitors in the automotive sector of the area that I am examining is quite high, if compared with the population of Ioannina²⁰. The car spare part shops are more than 20 and a new

¹⁸ The rest are other spare parts, spare parts of the body of the car, diagnostic tools, and other related services.

¹⁹ <http://www.autospecialist.gr/el/news/9806/ayksanontai-synexws-oi-pwliseis-twn-e-cars> (extracted from the Internet on December 2018)

²⁰ Almost 113.000, according to 2011 census

competitor is about to enter the sector. Interparts SA is an international company with numerous branches already located in other cities of Greece. Apart from that, many suppliers of ours have already started selling at retail, "detouring" the intermediate importing companies, such as ours. What can be added to the intense competition is that 42% of international suppliers of spare parts believe that autonomous driving and the electrification of the passenger cars will lower the already limited profit margins in the sector.²¹ Of course, the market will evolve, but in other directions, such as the new services that will arise regarding the digitization of the driving data of the population, but for the time being, it seems rather distant. Our moves as a company must focus on keeping the loyalty we already receive from our already existing customers by fulfilling their needs in the best possible way.

Another threat that will become a cause of worry in the next years will be the increase in sales and eventually the domination of the electric car. This is because the engine of an electric car consists of 75% fewer components than the diesel and petrol engines that are being used now. This will cause important agitations and changes in the automotive sector, e.g. huge reductions in working positions.

Moreover, the sector of the aftermarket has moved a big part of its manufacturing business in China, which has led to a decrease in the quality of the parts. From our side, we are doing everything possible to ensure premium quality, although it is generally difficult.

Another external threat is the delay in the imports of the parts due to the fact that the payments must be checked and verified by the bank that will make the transaction. The situation is better than in the previous years, but this delay still affects our inventory needs negatively.

Overall, as we can see, the total weighted score of Protogeris SA is higher than the average weighted score which is 2.5, which means that the firm's strategies take advantage of the existing opportunities relatively well and try to minimize the potential adverse effects of external threats in a satisfactory level.

²¹ <http://www.autospecialist.gr/el/news/8997/to-mellon-ston-klado-toy-aftermarket> (extracted from the Internet on December 2018)

3.1.3. Internal Factor Evaluation (IFE) Matrix

This strategy-formulation tool summarizes and evaluates the major strengths and weaknesses in the functioning areas of a business, and it also provides a basis for identifying and evaluating relationships among those areas.²²

Table 3: The IFE Matrix.

	Key Internal Factors	Weight	Rating	Weighted Score
S	Strengths			
S1	Experienced, skilful, helpful employees	0.10	4	0.40
S2	High customer loyalty	0.10	3	0.30
S3	Inventory is very satisfactory	0.05	4	0.20
S4	Good location of the premises	0.01	3	0.03
S5	Well-functioning distribution	0.05	4	0.20
S6	Opportunities for a wider range of products through the supplier network	0.04	4	0.16
S7	Two new employees who help more	0.02	4	0.08
S8	Supplier network can provide feasible informatics solutions	0.05	4	0.20
S9	Unique dealerships of some brands in the area of Epirus	0.08	4	0.32
S10	Products with low price as we import them ourselves	0.05	4	0.20
S11	We can have access first to new technologies of vehicles	0.03	2	0.06
W	Weaknesses			
W1	The software has become slow and often customers wait too long to check out	0.09	1	0.09
W2	Hardware equipment needs to be changed	0.01	1	0.01
W3	The vehicle fleet is relatively old and damages happen more and more often	0.03	2	0.06
W4	Decreased employee morale	0.07	1	0.07
W5	The e-shop platform is not delivered yet from the responsible software firm	0.07	1	0.07

²² Fred R. David (2011), *Strategic Management. Concepts and cases, 13th edition*, Pearson, New Jersey, USA

W6	The yet non-existent e-shop platform does not allow us to reach retail fully	0.05	1	0.05
W7	Not enough budget to expand the product range as we would like	0.05	2	0.10
W8	Pool of candidate employees is limited because of the specification of the subject	0.05	2	0.10
	Total	1		2.70

As we can see in the IFE Matrix (Table 3), due to the fact that the company exists in the automotive sector of the area for many years, we have created customer loyalty that could hardly be broken. Our employees are helpful, skilled and experienced and happen to be in the position of understanding what the mechanics need every time. The inventory is overall satisfactory, taking into consideration the fact that we serve every type of car along with motorcycles, trucks, buses, agricultural machines, and even boats. In other words, no matter how big the inventory range is, there will always be a part that will be missing from it. Being the unique representatives of some spare part brands and by importing directly nearly half of our range gives us the opportunity to offer quality products at very competitive prices to our customers. Lastly, the distribution of the goods has intensified and we can serve our customers more frequently within the week, with almost every day deliveries.

On the other hand, there are weaknesses that cannot be left aside. The e-shop platform that has not been delivered yet makes it more time consuming to find the necessary codes of the parts that we are looking for. The B2B program will also give the customers the opportunity to order parts on their own and check the prices, without having to occupy one of our employees on the phone to help them. In that way, the employees will also have the possibility to do something more useful and meaningful at that time. Another crucial issue is that the inventory is never enough, as new needs appear with the frequency that new car models appear on the roads. This is derived from the fact that the budget is limited, mostly due to the fact that customers might not be able to repay their invoices within a reasonable time, which is an issue that should be resolved as fast as possible.

Another major issue that is derived from the previous matrix and the aforementioned is the fact that the employees feel demotivated or even disengaged. There are times when their morale is decreased and I feel that they are not willing to do what they are asked to do. This could be resulting from the fact that most of them are doing the same job for many years, or because their salaries have remained stable or even declined over the past years, due to the difficult economic situation in Greece. In any case, since the employees are the most important factor in the operation of every company, this situation must change. A tricky part is the fact that the job is very specific and there are not enough candidates that could substitute some of our existing members instantly if needed. A new employee would need some time to adapt to the requirements of the job, and it is even more difficult if he has limited knowledge about engine mechanics, which is also a crucial part.

Overall, as we can see, the rating of the company is notably above the average weighted score. There is definitely room for improvement in many sectors, operations, strategies, policies, and procedures, in order to be able to conquer the competition.

3.1.4. SWOT Matrix

The SWOT Matrix is the second stage of the comprehensive strategy-formulation framework. In this stage, also known as the matching stage, we can connect the company's internal resources and skills with the opportunities and the risks that result from the external factors.

Table 4: The SWOT Matrix.

	Strengths		Weaknesses		Opportunities		Threats	
	S 1	Experienced, skilful, helpful employees	W 1	The software has become slow and often customers wait too long to check out	O 1	Car fleet is renewed very slowly	T 1	A new competitor firm, Interparts SA, is about to enter the market
	S 2	High customer loyalty	W 2	Hardware equipment needs to be changed	O 2	Increase in the sales of the aftermarket sector	T 2	Delaying imports

S 3	Inventory is very satisfactory	W 3	The vehicle fleet is relatively old and damages happen more and more often	O 3	Increasing growth of electric cars	T 3	Spare parts manufacturers moving to China
S 4	Good location of the premises	W 4	Decreased employee morale	O 4	Customers have limited time to search the needed parts	T 4	Economic instability
S 5	Well-functioning distribution	W 5	The e-shop platform is not delivered yet from the responsible software firm	O 5	Opportunity for advertising through social media	T 5	Low disposable income even for the necessary services
S 6	Opportunities for a wider range of products through the supplier network	W 6	The yet non-existent e-shop platform does not allow us to reach retail fully	O 6	Opportunities for sales in the motorcycle sector	T 6	Large companies sell directly to retail
S 7	Two new employees who help more	W 7	Not enough budget to expand the product range as we would like	O 7	Large customer base	T 7	Numerous competitors in the sector
S 8	Supplier network can provide feasible informatics solutions	W 8	Pool of candidate employees is limited because of the specification of the subject	O 8	Higher market share for the aftermarket, than for dealerships	T 8	Low emission vehicles / electric cars are taking advantage
S 9	Unique dealerships of some brands in the area of Epirus			O 10	Opportunity for further use of e-commerce		
S 10	Products with low price as we import them ourselves						
S 11	We can have access first to new technologies of vehicles						

In the SWOT Matrix (Table 4), I summarize the four pillars of the external and internal environment of the company, through its strengths and weaknesses and opportunities and threats accordingly. The following step is the matching stage, where we can generate as many alternative strategies as possible, in order to exploit the external opportunities and reduce the impact of the external threats by using our strengths and improving our weaknesses.

Some of the proposed strategies could be the following:

- (S8/O10): Through the existing technology, we are able to interconnect our inventory with the inventories of our suppliers through our e-shop software. In that way, we will be able to provide our customers more of their products with availability, for example, within 2-3 working days. In other words, fewer products will appear as unavailable. The customers will have the choice to get them not today, but in i.e., 3 days, as the codes will appear as "expected". This thought is a result of our experience, as we have noticed that customers who search for parts but they find them unavailable for a couple of times in a particular company, do not come back to that firm and search at other competitors instead
- (O7/T5): Through wider advertising, especially through social media, we will be able to let more people know that we offer good quality products at inexpensive and reachable prices and convince them not to neglect the necessary services of their vehicles, as it can lead to larger problems.
- (S9/O7): Since we have unique dealerships with some brands, these brands may mention and include us in their advertisements on the radio or in the other media.
- (W6/T7): The fact that our e-shop platform/B2B/B2C program is not ready yet, while there are numerous competitors in the area is a subject that should be resolved as soon as possible. It must be carefully designed in a functional way that will help the customer find the parts he is looking for in an easy and user-friendly way.
- (S2/O4): It is widely known that our customers have limited time to search for the parts, and many of them also do not have the knowledge to do so, especially if they are not mechanics. As a result, to increase the loyalty, we must keep serving them in the best possible and understanding way and provide technical facts through our

website for them to study, if they feel that they need it, and establish ourselves as industry experts.

- (S1/O9): We can take advantage of the fact that we have access to new technologies and knowledge about vehicles and engines and arrange workshops and educational seminars not only about the customers, which is usual but also about our employees and invest in their education and their personal growth.
- (S6/T2): In order to deal with the delivery delays from our suppliers, we can exploit in a more careful way our numerous collaborations within the country or abroad, be more flexible, make our range as large as possible, given the existing budget constraints and finally provide wide stock options to our customers.
- (S5/T7): Our already good distribution system must be further elaborated on, as there is constantly increasing competition in the area. We must not leave it as it is, but keep on searching for the better route, in order to serve as many customers as possible in the fastest possible way.
- (O9/T8): Electric cars and autonomous driving are the future of the automotive sector, which are almost already here. We can begin looking for a possible collaboration with a brand that produces electric cars and create the ground for an expansion in the field of car sales.

3.1.5. The QSPM Matrix

The quantitative strategic planning matrix is a method that has been designed to determine the relative attractiveness of alternative measures. Its advantages are that, firstly, a set of strategies is evaluated simultaneously or sequentially and secondly, the fact that it integrates internal and external factors that are relevant to the decision-making process.

Table 5: The QSPM Matrix.

	Weight	<u>Strategy 1: Connect our inventory with our suppliers' in our e-shop</u>		<u>Strategy 2: Collaboration with a brand of electric cars and possible dealership</u>	
		AS	TAS	AS	TAS
Key Factors		AS	TAS	AS	TAS
Opportunities					
Car fleet is renewed very slowly	0.05	2	0.10	1	0.05
Increase in the sales of the aftermarket sector	0.05	3	0.15	1	0.05
The increasing growth of electric cars	0.03	1	0.03	4	0.12
Customers have limited time to search the needed parts	0.05	4	0.20	1	0.05
Opportunity for advertising through social media	0.03	3	0.09	4	0.12
Opportunities for sales in the motorcycle sector	0.01	-		-	
Large customer base	0.04	-		-	
Higher market share for the aftermarket, than for dealerships	0.10	3	0.30	2	0.20
Opportunity for further use of e-commerce	0.10	4	0.40	1	0.10
Threats					
A new competitor firm, Interparts SA, is about to enter the market	0.10	4	0.40	1	0.10

Delaying imports	0.03	4	0.12	1	0.03
Spare parts manufacturers moving to China	0.05	-		-	
Economic instability	0.05	-		-	
Low disposable income even for the necessary services	0.05	4	0.20	1	0.05
Large companies sell directly to retail	0.10	4	0.40	1	0.10
Numerous competitors in the sector	0.08	4	0.32	2	0.16
Low emission vehicles / electric cars are taking advantage	0.08	1	0.08	4	0.32
Total	1				
Strengths					
Experienced, skilful, helpful employees	0.10	-		-	
High customer loyalty	0.10	4	0.40	1	0.10
Inventory is very satisfactory	0.05	4	0.20	1	0.05
Good location of the premises	0.01	-		-	
Well-functioning distribution	0.05	-		-	
Opportunities for a wider range of products through the supplier network	0.04	4	0.16	2	0.08

Two new employees who help more	0.02	-		-	
Supplier network can provide feasible informatics solutions	0.05	4	0.20	1	0.05
Unique dealerships of some brands in the area of Epirus	0.08	3	0.24	4	0.32
Products with low price as we import them ourselves	0.05	2	0.10	1	0.05
We can have access first to new technologies of vehicles	0.03	1	0.03	4	0.12
Weaknesses					
The software has become slow and often customers wait too long to check out	0.09	-		-	
Hardware equipment needs to be changed	0.01	-		-	
The vehicle fleet is relatively old and damages happen more and more often	0.03	-		-	
Decreased employee morale	0.07	-		-	
The e-shop platform is not delivered yet from the responsible software firm	0.07	3	0.21	1	0.07
The yet non-existent e-shop platform does not allow us to reach retail fully	0.05	3	0.15	1	0.05
Not enough budget to expand the product range as we would like	0.05	3	0.15	4	0.20
The pool of candidate employees is limited because of the specification of the subject	0.05	-		-	
Total	1		4.63		2.54

In the QSPM Matrix (Table 5), I decided to compare two strategies that are almost mutually exclusive, at least in the beginning.

On the one hand, the need for the creation of the e-shop appears to be crucial in order to be able to compete with the other firms of the sector on an equal basis, to attract a larger customer base and to increase the revenues from reaching retail in a more straightforward way. As this is already in the making, after some discussions with some suppliers, we can elaborate on the idea of interconnecting our inventories. This will be extremely helpful in order to reduce the time we need to find when an object -we do not have in our inventory at the moment- will be available. Apart from that, the customer will not receive “unavailable” as an answer to his query, but he will be able to see in how many days he can receive it. Trying to serve every customer is a fundamental way to enhance the customer loyalty that we are enjoying.

On the other hand, a possible future collaboration and dealership with a brand of electric cars might be a good idea to invest on for the future, but for the time being the total attractiveness score is lower than the previous strategy, which is reasonable, although it must be kept in mind for exploitation at some point.

The result of the QSPM Matrix is that we should opt for the e-shop software with the connected inventories feature, as it would help us increase the customer base and also the customer loyalty. Through this strategy, the customer remains at the centre of every decision of ours and every move is made towards his benefit in less time and with less effort from our side. Such a program is usually used within the branches of large companies and it has not been yet used among many companies. It requires excess work from our IT collaborators, more discussions with our suppliers in order to get as many as we can in our side, but it will only contribute to the better functioning of the company, as it will also solve the problem of the slow software and check-out (invoices), because the software will be modified in order to fit the new purposes.

3.2. Primary research

The part of the primary research is necessary not only for the dissertation but also for the company itself, in order to ensure the good collaboration between the staff and the managers. Since the working staff of the company constitutes of three managers (one of whom is the owner and the other two are shareholders, including myself, who also work full time in order to run the company) and eight employees, the questionnaire method would not be appropriate, as the sample size would be very limited and therefore we would not be able to support a statistically important analysis. Apart from that, the concept of the interview aims in showing that we are actively listening to the employees, taking into consideration their ideas and appreciating the fact that they are trying to make the work environment more functional, through the expression of their beliefs.

As a result, I decided to conduct the interviews with them myself, as I am the younger of the managers and I also am closer to them and I could introduce the recreation of the working environment, in a couple of months that I will become president of the company. My six questions towards them aimed in seeing what motivates them and what they think that is missing from the working environment, in order to make them feel more empowered²³.

In the beginning, we started talking about their age, their current and also their previous working experience. In the main part of the interview, I started by asking them how they would define a successful career and what they would like to have achieved in order to consider their working life as a successful one. With this question, I would like to see their thoughts upon success and the hopes they have about their life in general. Secondly, I asked them to describe an event from their working life that was affecting their everyday life negatively by decreasing their motivation for work and how they coped with that. This question aims in releasing the miserable feelings that I can see that many of the employees have daily, due to other colleagues or even the managers and their decisions. In the next question, I asked them to mention what they think is missing from our work environment that could make them more

²³ The exact questions can be found in the Appendix.

productive and happy. Managers usually are in the position of understanding what each employee needs, especially if they coexist in the same environment for many years. In spite of that, you will never get a clear answer to that question by assuming it; but only with asking directly. Moreover, I inquired them to think like a manager and suggest how they would create a more motivating work environment and if they would use more penalties than motives or vice versa. With this question, I tried to share some control and delegate some risks, even for a while, as participative decision-making can be considered as an incentive that eventually leads to engagement. Furthermore, I asked them to describe what they would consider as a motive that could increase their motivation for everyday work. It is known from the literature that money is not always the issue and that there are several non-financial incentives in the manager's toolkit that could be applied in order to offer challenging and purposeful work to the most important asset of each company, its employees. Their answer to this question was of great importance. In the last question, I inquired them to state if they have observed any actions or interactions in every work environment they have worked in, that encouraged their coworkers and motivated them in order to perform better. With this question, I would like to see if they were capable of recognizing a good practice of motivation in any previous work that they felt happy about and could possibly be applied in our company too.

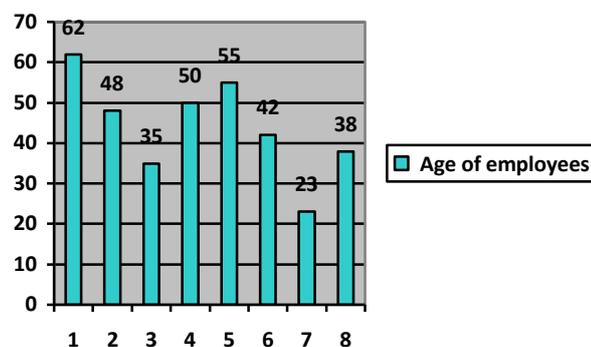
The analysis of the answers will be presented in the following chapter.

4. Data Analysis

In this chapter, I will present the analysis of the interviews I conducted with the staff. Firstly I will present some demographic data and secondly the main part, in which they share their views upon the issue of motivation, incentives and other good practices that could be used in order to make their everyday working lives better.

The staff of the company consists of 11 people, three of whom are the managers and will not be analyzed in this study. All the employees are men (apart from me). The car spare parts sector is a work environment that attracts mainly men, as I have seen only a few women in this sector in my entire work life. People –wrongly, in my opinion- believe that this sector is a "man's world" and they rarely trust a woman for the needs of their vehicles, unless they have "tested" her skills and ability to find the parts they need several times in the past. That was a major issue I used to face since I began working, but as the years went by, I earned the trust of our partners, both customers, and suppliers.

Graph 6: Age of employees.

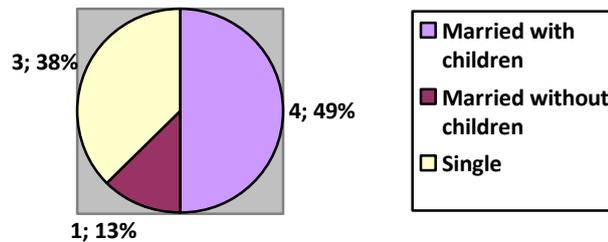


The *average age* of our employees is 44 years old, as we can see in graph 1, which means that the staff has many years of work experience in our company and other companies as well. The team consists of:

- four salesmen, who are responsible for visiting the customers, taking the orders from them and delivering the products to the customers

- two employees, who are responsible of finding the parts, both from clients that visit the shop themselves, such as retail customers and also remote customers, such as garages and other selling shops that place their price inquiries or orders through calls, emails, etc
- one office employee who is responsible for invoicing and accounting issues
- one inventory employee who is responsible for completing the customer orders through gathering the goods from the warehouse, check the inventory, take inventory when necessary, etc

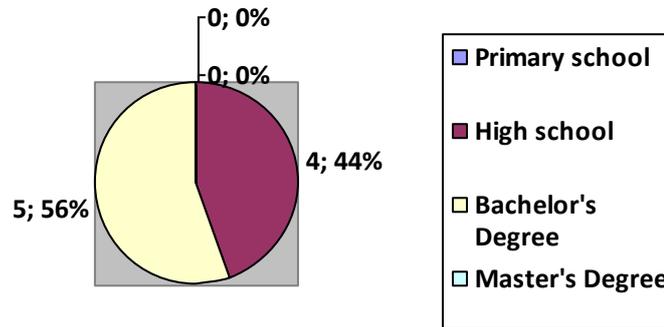
Graph 2: Marital status of employees.



As far as their *marital status* is concerned, as we can see in graph 2, the vast majority of the employees are married and most of them have children. The younger of the employees are not married yet.

As far as their *educational level* is concerned, 56% of the employees hold a bachelor's degree from a Greek University, while the rest 44% have attended High School.

Graph 3: Educational level of employees.



As far as their *previous working experience* is concerned, they all have worked previously in almost same positions as they are working now in other companies. The office employee has worked in an accounting office. The inventory employee and one of the sellers have worked as drivers and also as workers in the inventory of the same company that bottles water in the region of Ioannina. The two employees who are responsible for finding the parts and the rest three of the salesmen have worked in other companies of car spare parts as salesmen. Therefore, we can tell that they have more than adequate experience in the field of spare parts.

Most of the employees have been *working for Protogeros SA* for many years. One of the salesmen has worked for us for more than 30 years, while two others work for us for more than 20 years. The inventory employee has been in the company for 15 years. The average of the years that our employees have stayed with us is calculated in 12.5 years. By this, we can extract that the management trusts its employees and tries to keep them if good aspects are seen. In the same way, the employees trust the reliability, the punctuality and the clear terms of the company and the employer.

Moving forward to the main part of the interview, the following table will summarize the answers in which the employees seem to agree to.

Table 7: Summary of the answers received in the interview.

	Questions	Most common answers
1	How would you define success for your career? At the end of your work life, what must have been present for you to feel as if you had a successful career?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy-going work environment • Satisfactory financial rewards • Good collaborations • Recognition from employees and coworkers • Having worked in an interesting environment
2	How have you coped in the past when an event or the actions of a person in your workplace adversely affected your personal motivation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the issue with him and try to find a solution • Avoid the particular coworker unless absolutely necessary
3	What is missing from our work environment that could make you more productive & happy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial incentives • Better collaboration with the coworkers • Better coordination • Better task distribution • Respect & equality • Nothing is missing
4	If you worked in a management role, how would you create a work environment that employees found motivating? Would you use motives or penalties more?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy work environment with better collaborations • Distribute higher financial rewards • Mostly incentives - penalties only in extreme cases
5	Would you only consider salary raise as a motive or other measures, such as flexible working hours, the ability to work from home, or create work groups that would be responsible for a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily financial incentives • Equally important

	specific project?	
6	Observing your co-workers, in your current or a past job, describe what actions, interactions, and encouragement motivated their best performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good collaboration between the staff • Good coordination of the tasks • Financial raise • There were no incentives for a better performance

As we can see in table 6, the answers of the employees often lead to the same route while in other questions, the answers are more diversified. In the first question, for example, success is defined differently for each employee. Something that most of them believe is that at the end of your career you must have earned a satisfactory amount that will allow you to live comfortably after retirement. Another factor of fundamental importance for them is having built good relationships and collaborations with other individuals, in an interesting work environment that completes a well-balanced life. Although, there was one employee who said: "career is only for those who aspire of personal growth; for the rest, it is only a matter of survival".

In the second question, the results are equally divided. Half of them would discuss the issue with the coworker who would negatively affect their personal motivation. The rest of them would avoid the particular coworker unless it was absolutely necessary that they should collaborate for a project. There is also one employee who mentioned that he never had a similar incident in his workplace.

In the third question, most of the employees would demand higher financial incentives in order to be more productive, if possible, and this is what almost everyone mentioned firstly. Although, apart from financial incentives, improving the coordination, the collaboration and the way the company acts in several issues and conditions are a couple of issues that seem to bother them. One employee is strongly in favor of group projects, that would give them the responsibility of the particular project and autonomy, and he believes that better results would be achieved in this way.

In the fourth question, I asked them to "become a manager for a day". Most of them would build better connections amongst them, in order to achieve better collaborations and eventually a healthier work environment. The distribution of higher financial rewards was mentioned several times. As I expected, they would vastly use motives rather than penalties, because as they noted: "they are more effective in the working place". As they claimed, they would use penalties only in some extreme cases, where motives would not be applicable anymore.

In the fifth question, the majority of the staff suggests that financial incentives are not always the case. They believe that having some more free time, e.g. working one day less, could be equally satisfactory. As one of them characteristically mentions "living well and having free time to do things that make you happy are of vital importance. Therefore, you cannot use a salary raise as the only incentive." Although, a little less than 50% of the staff supports that the incentives given to them must definitely be financial.

In the sixth question, the staff supports that something that could be used in order to achieve higher motivation is better coordination and collaboration between the individuals. Financial raise was also mentioned as a measure of encouragement. There was also one individual who stated that he has never seen incentives for better performance; only warnings about not working properly.

5. Discussion

In this chapter, I will summarize what can be derived both from the primary research and also from the industry and competition analysis that was conducted in the third chapter.

The primary research clearly shows that the theory is confirmed by the aforementioned empirical data. Individuals need financial incentives in order to perform better, but this is not always the case. They crave for appreciation, recognition, and equality in the workplace that will emerge from working collaboratively with each other. They are willing to establish better communication channels with their coworkers, in order to help achieve a healthier working environment. Flexible working hours and group projects that would allow them to be more autonomous seem tempting to them and it should be something that we should think about arranging. The company should also find a way to make them connect more as individuals outside the working environment, in order for the team to be able to communicate more effectively during the working hours. Restructuring the process in order to match their needs and their values is a crucial part that we the managers should take into consideration. Understanding the external factors and what motivates them will give us the opportunity to make the motives intrinsic to them, which will reduce absenteeism and empower them. Not letting bad situations accumulate, leading by example, committing to them through hard times and showing genuine interest in their needs and fears are some points that should be evaluated on a regular basis.

As far as the strategic management is concerned, the competition situation in the car spare parts sector is constantly growing. The arrival of Inter Cars S.A. particularly in Ioannina concerned us deeply, even from the moment that the local sector found out that a new competitor was about to enter the market. This is because the entrance of a branch of such a strong, foreign company directly affects the sales of the biggest Greek importing companies. Examining the practices of the competitors and trying to analyze their next possible move is of practical importance. On the other hand,

focusing on our strengths and weakness and we will be able to enhance and overcome them respectively, is the best possible practice. The Competitive Profile Matrix showed that our rating is very good, as we have achieved customer loyalty after all these years in the market, and that there is still room for improvement. The External Factor Evaluation Matrix showed that the firm's strategies take advantage of the existing opportunities relatively well and try to minimize the potential adverse effects of external threats at a satisfactory level. The Internal Factor Matrix highlighted the need for improving internal issues such as the decreased employee morale and the yet non-existing e-shop platform as soon as possible in order to confront adequately the competition. In the SWOT Matrix or the matching stage, in other words, new strategies were generated, which shows that for every existing problem you can find multiple effective solutions if you combine the inputs creatively. In the Quantitative Strategic Planning Matrix, two attractive actions were compared and the result was that an innovative software program could help the company a lot at the moment.

Overall, no one can argue that the situation is not as easy as it could be. Although, by giving the right importance to Business Strategy, every company, in spite of its size, can approach its goals easier, methodically and finally reach new heights of achievement and success.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

To conclude, this study was the final part of the MBA postgraduate program of International Hellenic University. I decided to work upon a real case, which is our family business for almost a century and in which I am occupied with since I can remember myself. Observing the low employee morale that was gradually accumulating as well as the difficult competition situation that was being established in the sector for the past few years and in the recent time period, I resolved to examine these two prominent issues in this dissertation.

The only way to empower employees who feel demotivated was to actively inquire their opinion about what could make them feel better in a personalized interview. It sounds self-explanatory and a logical thing to do, but in everyday work life we usually pass that by, as other critical problems are illuminated in the foreground. The result of this investment in their time and thoughts was that the goal of the managers should be the employee engagement, through different measures and practices of enhancing their intrinsic motivation.

As far as the Business Strategy is concerned, it is an extremely useful tool that can help our company build on what it has achieved so far, gain a sustained competitive advantage, have a greater impact on the market and eventually reach new heights of success. In this dissertation, I focused on a small part of the Strategic Management process and therefore there is plenty of room for further research from me outside the boundaries of this dissertation and this postgraduate course, as it can be a focus of interest of another project itself.

Further research on the motivation of the car spare parts sector employees in Greece overall in comparison with the European sector could also be the subject of another thesis. Advanced quantitative methods could be applied in this case, as many more employees would take part. Robust results about employee motivation could be extracted from such research.

This dissertation was just the beginning of continuous research for solutions and best practices that should accompany each one of us in our working lives.

7. Bibliography

1. Andriopoulos Costas, Lecture notes for Business Strategy, March 2018, International Hellenic University, EMBA 2017, Thessaloniki, Greece
2. Abusharbeh M., Hasan Nazzal H., (2018) *The impact of motivations on employee performance: case study from Palestinian commercial banks*, International Business Research; Vol. 11, No. 4; 2018, Published by Canadian Center of Science and Education ([URL:https://doi.org/10.5539/ibr.v11n4p142](https://doi.org/10.5539/ibr.v11n4p142))
3. Aryan, R. (2015). Impact of Motivation and Recognition on Employee Performance: A Study on Public and Private Sector Banks in Punjab and Haryana. Global Journal of Management and Business Research.
4. Bateman, T.S. and S.A. Snell, 1996. Management: Building Competitive Advantage. (3rd ed) Chicago: Irwin.
5. Budhwar, P. S., Varma, A., & DeNisi, A. (2008). Performance Management Systems: A Global perspective. Routledge.
6. Budhwar, P., Lecture Notes for Human Capital Management, June 2018, International Hellenic University, EMBA 2017, Thessaloniki, Greece.
7. Burton K., (2012) *A study of motivation: how to get your employees moving*. SPEA Honors thesis, spring 2012, Management Faculty, Indiana University
8. Carolyn Wiley, (1997) "What motivates employees according to over 40 years of motivation surveys", International Journal of Manpower, Vol. 18 Issue: 3, pp.263-280, (<https://doi.org/10.1108/01437729710169373>)
9. Drucker Peter, F. (2011). Management's challenges for the 21st century. Routledge, NY, USA
10. Drucker, P.F., 2005. Effective Supervision Developmental Approach, (6th edition). Rising Sun Consultants.
11. Hackman, J.R., & Lawler, E.E. (1975). Development of the Job Diagnostic Survey. Journal of Applied Psychology, 60: 159-170.
12. Harvard Business Review by Amato A., & Molokhia A., (2016) Leadership Development: *How to cultivate agility*, Corporate Learning, Harvard Business Publishing, USA

13. Harvard Business School Press (2006) *Motivation: the Not-So-Secret Ingredient of High Performance*. Excerpted from chapter 2 "Performance management: Measure and improve the effectiveness of your employees", Boston, Massachusetts, USA
14. Huczynski A, Buchanan D (2007). *Organisational Behaviour, An Introductory Text*, Prentice Hall 6th Ed.
15. Ikhlas Khan M., *The impact of training and motivation on performance of employees*, (2012) Research journal of the Institute of Business Administration (Karachi-Pakistan), Business Review-Volume 7, Number 2
16. J. Richard Hackman (Yale University), Greg R, Oldham (Department of Business Administration) (1975), , Development of the Job Diagnostic Survey, *Journal of Applied Psychology* , University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Vol. 60, No. 2, 159-170)
17. Jannica Andrea Renfors, (2017) *Employee Motivation and Engagement as a Business Strategy*, Bachelor's Thesis Degree Program in International Business
18. Khan, A., Ahmed, S., Paul, S., & Kazmi, S. H. A. (2017, July). Factors Affecting Employee Motivation Towards Employee Performance: A Study on Banking Industry of Pakistan. In *International Conference on Management Science and Engineering Management* (pp. 615-625). Springer, Cham.
19. Linz, S., & Semykina, A. (2013). Job Satisfaction, Expectations, and Gender: Beyond the European Union. *International Journal of Manpower*, 34(6), 584-615.
20. Maccoby, M. (1988). *Why Work: Leading the New Generation*. New York: Simon & Schuster
21. Machado C., Davim P., (2018) *Organizational Behavior and Human Resource Management. A guide to a Specialized MBA course*. Springer International Publishing, Switzerland
22. Management Sciences for Health, "*Creating a Climate that Motivates Staff and Improves Performance*", *The Manager* (Boston), vol. 11, no. 3 (2002): pp. 1-22, MSH Publications, Boston, Massachusetts, USA
23. Miss Richa Aryan & Dr. Amrinder singh. (2015) *Impact of Motivation and Recognition on Employee's Performance: A Study on Public and Private Sector Banks in Punjab and Haryana*. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research: Administration and Management*, (Volume 15 Issue 13 Version 1.0)

24. Neckermann S., Fey B., (2008) *Awards as incentives*, Institute of empirical research in Economics, University of Zurich, Working paper series (ISSN 1424-0459)
25. Nohria N., Groysberg B., Lee L.-E., Harvard Business Review, July 2008, *Employee motivation: A powerful new model*
26. Perdikari Charis, Lecture notes for HR Management during Downturns, July 2018, International Hellenic University, EMBA 2017, Thessaloniki
27. Pink, D. H. (2009). *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*. New York: Penguin-Riverhead.
28. Ryan R., Deci E., (January 2000) *Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development and Well-Being*, American Psychologist, vol. 55, no. 1, 68-78
29. Salau, O., Adeniji A., Oyewunmi (2014), A relationship between elements of job enrichment and organizational performance among the non-academic staff in Nigerian public. *Management&Marketing*, volume XII, issue 2/2014
30. Sara Ghaffari, Dr. Ishak Mad Shah, Dr. John Burgoyne, Dr. Mohammad Nazri, Jalal Rezk Salleh., (2017) *The Influence of Motivation on Job Performance: A Case Study at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia*. *Aust. J. Basic & Appl. Sci.*, 11(4): 92-99, 2017
31. Tan, P. (2000). *Business Excellence in Entrepreneurship through Motivation Audit*. *Managerial Auditing Journal*, 15(7), 338-347.
32. Welpel I., Wollerstein J., Ringelhan S., Osterloh M., (2015) *Incentives and Performance. Governance of Research Organizations*. Springer International Publishing, Switzerland
33. <http://www.humanbusiness.eu/herzberg-two-factor-theory-of-motivation/>
34. http://www.maccoby.com/Articles/4Rs_Of_Motivation.shtml
35. <https://bit.ly/2CoMy1Y> (Maslow's pyramid of needs)
36. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two-factor_theory
37. <https://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/money-and-quotas-motivate-the-sales-force-best>
38. <https://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/motivate-me-please>
39. <https://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/the-most-powerful-workplace-motivator>
40. <https://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/to-motivate-employees-give-an-unexpected-bonus-or-penalty>
41. <https://infoservice.com.gr/auto/inter-cars-ellas-nea-eteria-antallaktikon/>

42. <https://www.bls.gov/osmr/pdf/ec060010.pdf>
43. <https://www.business.com/articles/management-theory-of-peter-drucker/>
44. <https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/10634-peter-drucker-management-theory.html>
45. <https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/8676-managing-older-employees.html>
46. <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/human-motivation-theory.htm>
47. <https://www.motivationleap.com/alderfers-erg-theory/>
48. <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/motivation-job-interview-questions-for-employers-to-ask-1918749>
49. <https://www.yourcoach.be/en/employee-motivation-theories/erg-motivation-theory-alderfer.php>
50. McLeod, S. A. (2018, May 21). *Maslow's hierarchy of needs*. Retrieved from <https://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>
51. www.pwc.nl, (October, 2015) *The changing performance management paradigm: evolution or revolution? Is there a future for performance management?*

Appendix

Interview Questions

Dear colleague, I would like to ask you a few questions that will help me understand your point of view upon the subject of motivation, which is also the subject of my dissertation for my MBA postgraduate studies. Your answers will not be made public to your coworkers, as I will not discuss your answers with them. However, they will help me understand what could be improved in our company, in order to create a more productive and efficient working environment. Thank you for your time in advance.

1. Name
2. Age
3. Education level
4. Marital status & number of children
5. Current working position in the company
6. Previous working experience (years & position)
7. How would you define success for your career? At the end of your work life, what must have been present for you to feel as if you had a successful career?
8. How have you coped in the past when an event or the actions of a person in your workplace adversely affected your personal motivation?
9. What is missing from our work environment that could make you more productive & happy?
10. If you worked in a management role, how would you create a work environment that employees found motivating? Would you use motives or penalties more?
11. Would you only consider salary raise as a motive or other measures, such as flexible working hours, the ability to work from home, or create work groups that would be responsible for a specific project (e.g. sellers team, inventory & stock team, etc)?
12. Observing your coworkers, in your current or a past job, describe what actions, interactions, and encouragement motivated their best performance.