



THE PERSONNEL/COMBATANT MOTIVATION – AN OVERWHELMING FACTOR FOR THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE MISSION

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Motivation is the basis of the functioning of the personnel/combatant performed and represents the concept that explains the difference between the mode of action of each soldier / combatant that results in the accomplishment of the mission successfully or without satisfaction. All combatants should learn that the next mission is the most important one. Commanders must therefore be aware that the motivation of subordinates is their ability - primarily through personal example - to create an environment in which subordinate human resources can and want to achieve the required objectives, to use their potential to maximum. Motivation has not only the role to determine people to work, regardless of the quality of their work, but to make them work well, to encourage them to use all the physical and intellectual resources they have. If there is motivation, there is superior performance and productivity, there is job satisfaction, therefore the ultimate goal of the organization is met.

Keywords: military organization; motivation; psychological factors; military personnel; commander.

In recent decades, we have witnessed what security and safety experts call the "revolution of military affairs" that has led to radical changes by states and alliances in doctrines, regulations, manuals and approaches to conflict and crisis situations. From time immemorial, man as part of the military organization has been a major concern for the decision makers of the military operation, but technological changes have brought to the fore another approach to maximum protection of the combatant because we know very well that the most important and "expensive" resource is the human one.

Thus, we are talking about the emergence of capabilities/capacities that contribute substantially to the fulfillment of the mission and no longer present the previous risk attributed to the combatant who, most of the time, no longer has to expose himself to maximum risks and is an operator of new technology felt the presence in the military field. This, of course, does not exclude situations in which human presence is absolutely needed, but we are talking about a tendency to replace, as much as possible, the human factor directly involved in risk.

At the same time, we are talking about a multitude of factors not only external, but

also internal that influence the functioning of organizations and implicitly the military, factors that represent real challenges for them. In this extremely dynamic environment, in which a group of variables escapes control, the growing obstacles faced by organizations lately, are increasingly placed on the "shoulders" of human resources, which organizations must take into account.

In order to achieve its objectives, the military organization and implicitly the military unit must have the capacity to ensure and maintain the human resources it needs, by anticipating the evolution of the system which it is part of, as a result of its adaptation to the current politico-military realities.

An issue that conditions, to a large extent, the development and rational use of human resources in the Romanian Army consists in the introduction of behaviors systematically oriented towards strategic objectives. A central role in the design and substantiation of human resources activities is played by personnel strategies and policies, which have become essential components of human resources and managerial ways to professionalize it. It seems that at the level of the Romanian Army "the awareness and accountability solution [...] is relatively simple to formulate, but it is more difficult to implement: the consistent and permanent investment in people"¹.

Considering that human resources are one of the most important resources of defence and represent

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the "essence of the process of transformation"²² of the army, I consider that modernization in the field of human resources should not be limited to reducing the number of members, for reasons of flexibility, but should materialize in modern and qualitative staff structures that provide a high level of performance through a motivating human resource management. Moreover, if we take into account the scale of the phenomenon called "artificial intelligence" we cannot ignore the high degree of specialization and professionalism required of personnel working within and for the military organization and this in direct competition with large multinational corporations that use methods increasingly modern to stimulate and motivate its own staff.

What I want to emphasize is that, in this material, I do not address motivation in terms of determining whether or not to execute the orders received by the military, but in its internal "mobilization", to make every effort and use all skills to the fullest in order to contribute substantially to the fulfillment of the mission. We know very well that there is a difference between doing something because you "have to" and doing the same thing because you want, like or any other feeling that starts from having the motivation to perform that action efficiently and at the highest standards.

Moreover, the reality around us shows us that it is important to motivate the subordinate staff to continue to work in that structure and to continue to specialize in that field, which supports the fulfillment of the mission of our unit. Without specialized staff we cannot carry out the specific activities of the annual recruitment plan, which means that we cannot fulfill the mission of the unit.

Conceptual aspects of the motivation

According to the *Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian language*, motivation is defined as "the totality of reasons or motives (conscious or not) that determine someone to perform a certain action or to aim at certain goals"²³.

From the perspective of the psychological field, motivation is a "fundamental concept in and in general in human sciences, expressing the fact that the basis of human behavior is always a set of motives – needs, trends, affections, interests, intentions, ideals – that support the achievement certain actions, facts, attitudes"²⁴ and "a set of

factors or impulses that trigger, energize, maintain (or interrupt) and direct a person's actions or behaviors"²⁵.

Studying and analyzing the definitions presented, we deduce as an essential idea of motivation the existence of something inside the individual that underlies subsequent actions, that something aware or not by the individual that determines in his mind the need and desire to take that action. We consider that something starts from a desire/need of the individual, but we also ask ourselves the question: Can we influence the appearance of that something that would determine the individual act towards a certain action?

Going to the military field, motivation is seen by specialists in the field as "Convincing the military to adhere to the objectives of the mission in which they are involved"²⁶. Also, "the main aspects of teamwork are related to communication, common goals, cohesion and leadership. Common goals represent the direction and motivation for action, and commitment to common goals forms the team"²⁷. We also deduce from this approach the main action: the reason to do something based on a set of factors that determine people to behave in different ways to external or internal stimuli. Thus, we can say that a certain external factor may have different effects, depending on the time of application, in conjunction with other internal factors, even on the same individual which leads us to believe that certain influences exerted by the organization on the individual may determine choosing a direction, making the necessary effort and, in particular, the persistence of involvement in the execution of a military action, i.e. the application of specific techniques to give some reasons to the combatant.

From a military point of view, motivation can be understood as a process of investigating undesirable behavioral tendencies, which lead to "physical and mental disengagement, to group disintegration, emphasizing the balance between duty and desertion, between involvement and indifference, between engaging in combat and withdrawal"²⁸. In other words, motivation is a force that causes members of the military organization to behave in a certain way to accomplish a certain goal (mission).

Therefore, we reiterate the fact that through motivation, the military is more or less dedicated

to the way of fulfilling the mission and not to choosing between executing and not executing the mission. We want our subordinate staff to act in all situations at the maximum level of skills, aptitudes and abilities available so that the quality of the work undertaken is reflected in the effectiveness of the effort made to fulfill the mission received or that contributes to the team.

Considering the study and analysis of the concept of motivation, we can draw certain conclusions, namely:

- the concept of motivation is used to explain why the individual does what he does, so motivation is the cause (genesis) that tends to determine an individual to trigger and perform actions;

- as a process of organization, functioning and development of the human psyche, motivation explains a certain situational or perspective human behavior;

- motivation is determined by phylogenetic, historic and individual antecedents, but at the moment of its manifestation, due to the previous accumulation, it acts from inside;

- motivation has a dynamic and directional character, it is directly related to the process of knowledge and affectivity;

- motivation can be determined, even without the individual's knowledge, by external factors.

Studying and analyzing the main provisions in the field in the military organization, the motivation of the personnel can take the following forms, in opposite pairs:

Positive motivation and negative motivation – determined by the influence of purpose and belief on the satisfaction of the combatant in carrying out activities within the military organization.

Positive motivation highlights the beneficial effects of praise, appreciation and rewards (promotions, bonuses, awards, etc.) on staff efforts to perform the tasks received.

Negative motivation refers to the achievement of the organization's objectives by using aversive stimuli (threat, sanction, blame, etc.). The efficiency of this type of motivation is variable and involves huge physical, mental and emotional consumption and therefore must be used with caution by commanders.

Both the positive and the negative motivation materialize through economic stimuli (salaries, bonuses, salary imputations, etc.) or moral-spiritual

stimuli (awarding medals, praises, criticism, warnings).

Intrinsic motivation (internal or direct) and extrinsic motivation (external or indirect) – take into account the location of the source of the motivational effect.

The intrinsic motivation concerns the relationship between the expectations, perceptions, feelings of the military and the concrete content of his work. This form of motivation consists in determining the military to get involved in order to obtain the desired results within the military unit. By carrying out these activities, the subject obtains satisfactions related to his personality (self-fulfillment), stimulating professionalism at the same time. Specific to this type of motivation is to obtain satisfaction by performing an appropriate action.

Extrinsic motivation is generated by the external work environment and is applied by someone else. In other words, the military carries out the necessary activities to achieve the objectives of the organization because his actions will generate certain reactions from the military unit that will produce satisfaction.

It is recommended that the two types of motivations be used equally by commanders and that a clear distinction be made between the reasons why staff remain in a unit in a particular position and the reasons why they decide to move to another unit, military, to another position or even to resign from the system. The military mentions intrinsic causes when they say what they like about their job, and when they have to justify why they quit a job, they tend to invoke extrinsic factors.

Depending on the immediate needs of the military, we meet:

Cognitive motivation and affective motivation. *Cognitive motivation* is determined by the intellectual stimulation of the individual and has its origin in the need for information, knowledge, learning, innovation, etc. *The affective motivation* strictly targets the human, sentimental dimension of the military, emphasizing the satisfaction of the needs to obtain the adhesion and recognition of the other members of the organization. This type of motivation aims for the military to have a good and relaxed tone at work in the company of colleagues and to be sympathized and appreciated by them.



Within the military organization, the motivational process should be complex, by combining all the motivational forms presented above, to achieve the objectives. A commander should know when and how to capitalize on all types of motivation to get maximum results. Depending on the specific needs of each subordinate, his/her particularities, the commander should be able to identify the best incentives to determine his/her motivation. In the military, it is very difficult to use positive motivation, by offering economic rewards. If in civilian organizations, employees can benefit from all kinds of motivations, because it is up to the manager to grant bonuses, promotions, salary increases, in military organizations the possibilities to stimulate people financially are limited, and promotions must follow lengthy procedures. Therefore, military commanders are at a disadvantage compared to managers in private companies, as they have fewer opportunities to motivate their subordinates to achieve their objectives.

Motivation – complex phenomenon of psychic activity

The approach to motivation usually begins with the description of the force existing in the individual, which determines him to act or persist in thinking and / or action. Motivation is a basic concept of human performance that can explain individual differences in behavior.

Regardless of the formative aspect of the psychological system, motivation starts from the empirical finding that any human behavior is directed from within, regardless whether it is about thinking or acting. In order to understand the complex structure of motivation, we aimed to analyze different motivational phenomena and the functional links between them, which can be considered, on the one hand, more or less complex forms of motivation, and, on the other hand, motivating factors. Thus, among the motivational phenomena we can mention:

- needs – the fundamental motivational elements of the personality, showing most strongly the bio-psycho-social balance of the human being in the conditions of the environmental demands;
- impulses – which consist in the appearance of an accentuated excitability of certain nerve centers that trigger the action;

- the motives – the motives that trigger, sustain energetically and orient the action;
- the intentions – the elements through which the transition from motives to goals is achieved;
- purpose – which symbolizes the mental outline of the desired result;
- tendencies – the expression of orientation, directing the action in a certain sense;
- interests – active and sustainable orientations of the individual towards certain things or phenomena, fields of activity, etc.

In the context of the approached issue, we will try to analyze, in short, the interdependence between needs, motives and interests.

Need is the body's source of adaptive energy. Based on and by virtue of necessity, under the influence of internal stimuli or impulses, the most diverse actions are undertaken. Satisfaction of the need leads to a reduction in tension (rebalancing). Thus, the need goes from the active state to the latent state.

The human being, in the conditions of social and cultural life, mediates the satisfaction of natural needs through various means of civilization. Thus, the natural needs are diversified, becoming selective. To a greater extent in man, under the influence of social living conditions and through the internalization of social relations and models of action, new needs appear, unrelated to hereditary endowment. There are secondary or acquired needs that are divided into material ones (smoking, alcohol consumption, clothing, etc.) and spiritual ones (need for coexistence, interpersonal communication, knowledge, etc.). The latter result from the conditioning of internal energies and develop analogously to organic needs.

The needs are activated after a certain periodicity at intervals of hours, days, months. So they appear as dimensions necessary for life. The flagrant dissatisfaction of needs generates states of unhealthy tension. Over-satisfaction of needs leads to either their extinction or their underdevelopment. In each person, depending on the conditions of life and activities, a constellation of variable needs is formed in terms of intensity, periodicity, orientation and method of satisfaction. Knowledge of man also implies a description of the individual system of needs. It is very important for a commander to know the specific needs of subordinates, to take into account the states of tension or imbalance that



arise as a result of deprivation or overload in order to apply those methods of motivation and stimulation of the individual's motivation to obtain results in accordance with the mission of the military unit.

The need defined as an internal state, an instinct or an impulse, as mentioned above, is a reserve of energy. When the need develops in this way, as it triggers the action, it becomes a motive. The reasons are energizing, pulsating and orienting, directional. This is why selectivity results. The variety of motives in the context of the human personality makes everyone relate differently to the same objects of reality.

Our cognitive relationships with the world are doubled inside by certain positions, respectively personal motives. The objective meanings acquired are associated with the subjective-individual meanings, also resulting from a certain life experience. Reasons psychologically explain human actions, but they are not always confused with goals.

Since, as a rule, the means of satisfying needs are indirect, the cause (reason) does not coincide, in principle, with the purpose (objective). The purpose is obvious; it results from the activity. The motive that drives the action can take many forms. Educating the higher motives with a high social significance is very important. In the Armed Forces, we must finally get a motivation appropriate to its content and social functions.

When in the plan of knowledge, the reason coincides with the purpose, an interest is constituted. The soldier carries out an activity with pleasure. Success in performing actions that repeatedly influence motives strengthens them and turns them into interests. The coincidence between reason and purpose in accomplishing an activity leads to the shaping of the inclination, which is of interest not only for knowledge, but also for practical action, often professional.

If interest and inclination are added the consciousness of the corresponding aptitudes, then the conditions for the constitution of a vocation are created. The subject not only likes a profession, but even feels a calling in this regard because, having the necessary skills for the profession, he/she feels it is his/her duty to society to adopt it and realizes that only in this way can it be achieved. The vocation unites the love of the profession with the spirit of social responsibility. That is why the Army needs

vocational personnel, mastered by the love of the military occupation and aware of its significance.

The association between an idea or image and the corresponding need leads to the formation of a belief. Usually, these are images with great social significance. The emotional implantation of the idea determines the military to act for its fulfillment, to feel it as an inner necessity, not to admit its contradiction and to defend it with all its might. Belief is a reason for supreme efficiency, it is an idea and a force. In this situation we can speak of a strong internal motivation, of a self-motivation even, in carrying out the activities.

From what has been shown, it results that each soldier has primary and secondary needs, motives, interests, inclinations, beliefs, going as far as defining a conception. It is clear that the motivational constellation is individual. No two subjects can have the same system of needs and motives. Then comes the fact that in this relationship with life situations, the motives persist latently or are activated. Practically our whole life takes place in a series of objective situations that respond or not to the needs, give or not satisfaction to our motives and interests.

Stressful psychological factors involved in military activity

In order to better understand the motivation of the military, it is necessary to review some psychological factors that can affect military personnel/combatants.

In general, stressful situations can be physical in nature (noise, temperature, floods, earthquakes, dangers of all kinds, etc.) and mental (fear, conflict, pressure, imminent death, etc.). Typically, any internal or external factor that exceeds (up or down) the limits of a certain threshold can become a source of stress, altering the behavior and mental activity of an individual. Stressful situations can be positive or negative, depending on the meaning assigned to them by the subject.

As military status is one of the most stressful occupations, we will highlight the main sources of stress that may occur during specific activities: poor quality of the mission preparation process, high degree of physical and mental stress of missions, possible dangers of carrying out activities with high risk or handling of weapons and combat equipment, low level of military order and discipline, prolonged



state of relative isolation of the military, quarrels between the military, unresolved problems in the civilian environment from which they come, diseases, marriage, childbirth, inadequate work climate in subunits, abusive and irregular leadership style of commanders, insufficient equipment, water, food, accommodation and leisure conditions, etc.

Obviously, during combat missions, which the military performs in conflict areas, the superficial treatment or evasion of these stressors, which may manifest in this case, amplifies the tension, reduces the resources available to overcome this mental phenomenon and substantially reduces the effectiveness of military actions.

Among the specific situations of the theater of operations in which the military contingents were deployed and which are stressful factors, our opinion is that the most important are the following:

- awareness of the increased lethal power of modern and extremely sophisticated weapons from the endowment of the enemy;
- noise and agglomeration of an unprecedented level in the deployment areas as well as the terrifying image of the area where the missions are carried out: civilians dead, wounded, maimed, destruction of all kinds, etc.;
- the vaguely defined, fluid combat space, which limits the possibilities of movement and orientation, practically not offering the combatants a real protection against the possible dangers on land, on water or in the air;
- missions in difficult field and meteorological conditions, which demand to the maximum or even exhaust the physical and mental resistance of the military;
- the danger of using weapons of mass destruction, suicide bombers, sniper machines or any other type of weapon that has not been used against them;
- missions and activities at night, as well as in conditions with low visibility, inactivity, isolation, monotony and boredom;
- inconsistencies and leadership deficiencies of commanders;
- short-circuited flow of information vertically and horizontally, which leads to a deficit of knowledge both about the situation in the area and about one's own;
- internal conflicts between the sense of duty and the spirit of preserving personal integrity;

- the feeling of futility and helplessness in relation to the results of the fight, the disgust towards the fact that the man no longer means anything, being used only as a tool;

- the development by the enemy of intense actions of propaganda, psychological influence and misinformation;

- the use by the enemy of a wide range of means of combat, tactics and combat procedures that induce a high degree of danger for the soldiers against whom they are used;

- prolonged and stubborn resistance of the enemy, beyond the known/expected limits;

- diseases that are specific to the area of dislocation (malaria, sleeping sickness, etc.).

During life, the human being is faced with many barriers. He is often able to find solutions to overcome them and get out of extreme situations. However, there are situations and dangers that require him physically and mentally to such an extent that he does not have the ability to overcome them. Man reacts differently to the same events, but in different situations. It is necessary to know the factors that threaten the mental integrity of the military, so we can give them some reasons to do something, knowledge being a balancing factor. Through the mechanisms of psychic self-protection, each individual more or less consciously appeals to certain behavioral habits, which allow reducing the anxiety specific to combat missions.

The motivation of the personnel/combatant

Achieving the objectives and fulfilling the missions of the ground forces depends very much on the attitude and behavior of the human resource in front of the tasks that are influenced by the way they are motivated by the management.

Highlighting the importance of the fighter's motivation during military action, I cannot help but discuss the action, from 207 BC, of the Chinese general Xiang Yu to achieve victory in the battle of Julu.

Xiang Yu's army of 20,000 soldiers crossed the Yangtze River to attack the Qin dynasty's armed forces. After crossing the river, the general ordered the boats to be submerged and the food rations destroyed, to force his troops to choose between dying on the battlefield and defeating the enemy's overwhelming force of 300,000 soldiers. After nine engagements in battle, the result of motivating

Xiang Yu's soldiers was what he expected, namely the general's army defeated the forces of the Qin dynasty.

It is noteworthy that the Chinese general used the survival instinct of his soldiers and won the victory. This instinct is, in the previous situation, the reason that provoked and supported the triggering of the behaviors necessary to achieve the proposed goal, victory.

It is easy to understand that the example given is one taken to the extreme, but the basic idea is that by using certain methods and techniques that represent external factors, the individual can create the need from within, namely the motivation to act in a certain sense. It is important for the most significant positive results to be obtained so that the combatant might feel inclined to act in a certain way in order to be able to self-determine their acts towards the maximum use of the available resources, and the commanders or the organizations they belong to can act in this respect by implementing some arguments that give them reason to do/act in a way that lead to the emergence of the combatant's motivation.

From our point of view, the emergence of the combatant's motivation is essential in the conditions of a constantly changing confrontation environment and is much more effective than other methods of persuasion that can be applied to him. Identifying what motivates and stimulates the fighter leads to the implementation of measures, actions or external factors that "give birth" to his motivation. Moreover, by resorting to these methods, in the end, the fighter will have a satisfaction of the work and of the effort made for the fulfilment of the missions specific to the structure of which he is part or with which he acted in the respective situation.

Conclusions

The more united a military structure is, the easier it can achieve its objectives for which it was created. The set of common rights and obligations of the military, as well as the environment in which they carry out their activity determine the creation of special service relations. These connections are encouraged in the system aiming at the birth of that kind of altruism which, in critical situations, can make the capital difference between victory and defeat.

Applying the right motivation to the members of a team/subunit leads them to use all their skills

and abilities to achieve maximum effects, which contributes to achieving group cohesion or, as it is known in military language, esprit de corps. The cohesion of a military structure, a determining factor in achieving operational capability, is based primarily on the respect shown by each of its members to the rest of the staff, regardless of position in the military hierarchy, as well as on the internal motivation of each.

That being said, we can conclude that motivation is the essence of successfully fulfilling the entrusted missions. Moreover, as I have pointed out in this material, it is imperative that organizations and commanders identify modern methods of motivating to stimulate combatants so as to create those conditions that are essential and conducive to the fighter's motivation, leading to his contribution to a maximum level, fulfilling the specific missions of that military structure or of the military organization as a whole.

NOTES:

1 Gl. (ret) M. Orzeacă, PhD, „Cheia succesului transformării organismului militar este omul”, *Gândirea Militară Românească*, no. 1/2009, p. 78.

2 *Ibidem*, p. 79.

3 [Romanian Academy – „Iorgu Iordan” Institute of Linguistics], *Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române*, Univers Enciclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1996, p. 656.

4 *Dicționar de psihologie socială*, Scientific and Encyclopedical Publishing House, Bucharest, 2002, p. 148.

5 *Dicționar de sociologie*, Babel Publishing House, Bucharest, 1993, p. 375.

6 Col. Vasile Marineanu (coordonator), *Manual pentru pregătirea psihologică și controlul stresului operațional*, Technical-Editorial Center of Army Publishing House, Bucharest, 2015, p. 26.

7 *Ibidem*, p. 78.

8 G. Arădăvoaicei, L.D. Niță, *Motivația și motivarea în mediul militar*, Academy of Higher Military Studies Publishing House, Bucharest, 1996, p. 20.

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