

## The Consequences of Job Satisfaction

One widely researched attitude is job satisfaction which is mentioned in Chapter 3 of your *Essentials* textbook. This area has significant managerial implications because thousands of studies have examined the relationship between job satisfaction and other organizational variables. Because it is impossible to examine them all, I'll consider a subset of the more important variables from the standpoint of managerial relevance.

The table below summarizes the pattern of results. The relationship between job satisfaction and these other variables is either positive or negative. The strength of the relationship ranges from weak (very little relationship) to strong. Strong relationships imply that managers can significantly influence the variable of interest by increasing job satisfaction. Let's now consider several of the key correlates of job satisfaction.

Variables Related with Satisfaction	Direction of Relationship	Strength of Relationship
Motivation	Positive	Moderate
Job involvement	Positive	Moderate
Organizational citizenship behavior	Positive	Moderate
Organizational commitment	Positive	Strong
Absenteeism	Negative	Weak
Tardiness	Negative	Weak
Turnover	Negative	Moderate
Heart disease	Negative	Moderate
Perceived stress	Negative	Strong
Pro-union voting	Negative	Moderate
Job performance	Positive	Weak
Life satisfaction	Positive	Moderate
Mental health	Positive	Moderate

### Motivation

A recent meta-analysis of nine studies and 2,237 workers revealed a significant positive relationship between motivation and job satisfaction. Because satisfaction with supervision also was significantly correlated with motivation, managers are advised to consider how their behavior affects employee satisfaction. Managers can potentially enhance employees' motivation through various attempts to increase job satisfaction.

### **Job Involvement**

Job involvement represents the extent to which an individual is personally involved with his or her work role. A meta-analysis involving 27,925 individuals from 87 different studies demonstrated that job involvement was moderately related with job satisfaction. Managers are thus encouraged to foster satisfying work environments in order to fuel employees' job involvement.

### **Organizational Citizenship Behavior**

Organizational citizenship behaviors consist of employee behaviors that are beyond the call of duty. Examples include "such gestures as constructive statements about the department, expression of personal interest in the work of others, suggestions for improvement, training new people, respect for the spirit as well as the letter of housekeeping rules, care for organizational property, and punctuality and attendance well beyond standard or enforceable levels. Managers certainly would like employees to exhibit these behaviors. A meta-analysis covering 6,746 people and 28 separate studies revealed a significant and moderately positive correlation between organizational citizenship behaviors and job satisfaction. Moreover, additional research demonstrated that employees' citizenship behaviors were determined more by leadership and characteristics of the work environment than by an employee's personality. It thus appears that managerial behavior significantly influences an employee's willingness to exhibit citizenship behaviors. This relationship is important to recognize because organizational citizenship behaviors were positively correlated with performance ratings.

### **Organizational Commitment**

Organizational commitment reflects the extent to which an individual identifies with an organization and is committed to its goals. A meta-analysis of 68 studies and 35,282 individuals uncovered a significant and strong relationship between organizational commitment and satisfaction. Managers are advised to increase job satisfaction in order to elicit higher levels of commitment. In turn, higher commitment can facilitate higher productivity.

### **Absenteeism**

Absenteeism is costly, and managers are constantly on the lookout for ways to reduce it. One recommendation has been to increase job satisfaction. If this is a valid recommendation, there should be a strong negative relationship (or negative correlation) between satisfaction and absenteeism. In other words, as satisfaction increases, absenteeism should decrease. A researcher tracked this prediction by synthesizing three separate meta-analyses containing a total of 74 studies. Results revealed a weak negative relationship between satisfaction and absenteeism. It is unlikely, therefore, that managers will realize any significant decrease in absenteeism by increasing job satisfaction.

## Turnover

Turnover is important to managers because it both disrupts organizational continuity and is very costly. A meta-analysis of 78 studies covering 27,543 people demonstrated a moderate negative relationship between satisfaction and turnover (table above). Given the strength of this relationship, managers would be well advised to try to reduce turnover by increasing employee job satisfaction.

## Perceived Stress

Stress can have very negative effects on organizational behavior and an individual's health. Stress is positively related to absenteeism, turnover, coronary heart disease, and viral infections. According to Linda Rosenstock, director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, stress at work has been increasing because of the widespread downsizing of corporate America in recent years. She believes that 25% to 33% of the workforce is under high stress and is drained and used up by the end of a workday. In addition, people are working more hours. For example, the average number of hours Americans work (47 hours per week) has increased by 8% between 1998 and 1999—20% of the workforce works at least 49 hours per week. Based on a meta-analysis of seven studies covering 2,659 individuals, the earlier table reveals that perceived stress has a strong, negative relationship with job satisfaction. It is hoped that managers would attempt to reduce the negative effects of stress by improving job satisfaction.

## Job Performance

One of the biggest controversies within organizational research centers on the relationship between satisfaction and job performance. The relationship between job satisfaction and job performance has been described as the “Holy Grail” of industrial psychologists and management scholars. People such as Herzberg, argue that satisfaction leads to higher performance while others contend that high performance leads to satisfaction. In an attempt to resolve this controversy, a meta-analysis accumulated results from 74 studies. Overall, the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance was examined for 12,192 people. It was discovered that there was a very small positive relationship between satisfaction and performance and interestingly enough the researchers found that it appeared that high performance lead to higher job satisfaction rather than the traditional belief that high job satisfaction lead to higher job performance (the “Happy Worker Is a Productive Worker” belief).

Robbins, in an earlier edition of *The Truth about Managing People* published in 2002 included the following truth: [Happy Workers Aren't Necessarily Productive Workers](#) (PLEASE READ THIS SHORT ARTICLE). I'm not sure why he did not include it in the recent edition of his book. I am more inclined to believe as Robbins did in 2002. To make your employees happy (and this is an important variable as suggested in this discussion so don't just consider this as

coddling) focus on making them productive. You should not necessarily expect that if you make workers happy they will be more productive. That's my view and I'm sticking to it! How 'bout dem apples?