Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a theory in psychology. It argues that there are five stages of human needs that motivate our behaviour. Abraham Maslow proposed his theory in 1943 after studying what he called exemplary people such as Albert Einstein or Eleanor Roosevelt.

First there are physiological needs, such as the need to breathe, eat, drink or sleep. The moment we got enough of that and we feel awake and our bellies are full, we get motivated by the next thing.

Now we want safety. We try to earn money, build up resources and look for shelter that protects us against dangers. Once we are satisfied and feel safe, we have time to think about what we want next.

At stage three we seek love and belonging. We desire to be close to family and friends, belong to a society or join a gang. But the moment we feel completely part of a group we already wish to be a little different than the rest.

At stage four we look for esteem, self-confidence and respect from our peers. We want to be someone. If we have money, we buy a fancy watch. If we have a brain, we write or think or work a lot. Motivation to perform and compete is now at its highest. Students, sportsmen and inventors excel. Neil Armstrong even flew to the moon. only if we breathe, and drink and eat and sleep enough and we feel safe and part of a group and still special, only then we can reach level five: self-actualisation.

Now we can relax, be creative, accept facts for what they are, give back or do whatever we want. No more pressure, unless of course there is trouble below.

If you are leader and believe in the theory, use it. First make sure everyone has eaten well. Then make them feel safe and help them belong to a group. Once they feel they belong, they are ready to stand out and excel. Thanks for watching!

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