

# A Research on the Incentive Mechanism for Marketing Personnel in Shaoguan Meipeixian E-Commerce Co Ltd

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## **Abstract:**

Marketing personnel is considered as the key talent in an enterprise which is proved by the impact of their capability and working attitude on the profits and development of the enterprise. Therefore, it has become an essential part in the development of enterprises to improve the incentive mechanism for marketing personnel and effectively attract and retain excellent marketing talents. Shaoguan Meipeixian e-commerce Co., Ltd. is a sales-oriented company in logistics of fresh food, with several system problems and management challenges to be addressed. Guided by Herzberg's double factor theory, the researcher analyzed the problems in the company such as unreasonable salary system, lack of welfare, imperfect training mechanism and lack of career development of marketing staff. Strategies targeting marketing staff are proposed as reference for Shaoguan Meipeixian e-commerce Co., Ltd to cope with the current problems concerning marketing incentive mechanism. The strategies include optimizing the pay mix, increasing corresponding benefits, improving training mechanism and establishing career development for marketers.

**Keywords:** Marketing Personnel, Talents, Motivation, Incentive mechanism, Optimize.

## **Research background**

With the rapid development of the economy in the new era, the market is witnessing an increasingly intense competition, and efficient human resource management is indispensable for enterprises to take root and survive in the market competition [1]. For an enterprise, talents represent the inner driving force and important engine for its development. The lack of effective talent-management strategy will make it difficult to support the long-term and stable development of the enterprise. Therefore, managing talents in an effective way and building incentive mechanism play a crucial role. Feasible incentive strategies can maximize the motivation of employees and greatly increase their loyalty, thus promoting the fast and positive development of the enterprise [2].

For an enterprise to survive in a fiercely competitive market and achieve a leading position, the core lies in profitability [3], which must be preceded by marketing, and the core of marketing implementation lies in the marketing staff. As one of the core aspects of human resource management, the incentive mechanism for marketing staff needs to be continuously optimized and improved by human resource management department as it can directly and effectively determine their enthusiasm to enhance the growth and development of the enterprise. Only by stimulating the motivation and enthusiasm of

marketing staff and improving their working efficiency can enterprises achieve sustainable development [4].

## RESEARCH SIGNIFICANC

The research focuses on the incentive mechanism for marketing personnel, which is not only important for the company itself, but also is of significance for the current incentive for marketing staff in enterprises across China[5].

Through the analysis of the situation of the incentive mechanism of the marketing personnel of the company, based on the relevant theoretical knowledge regarding incentive, the research finds out the current problems of the incentive mechanism and propose coping strategies so as to effectively improve the incentive effectiveness, train more qualified talents for the development of the marketing department of the company, and then provide strategic support for the long-term development of the company. Additionally, the research aims to help the company improve its core competitiveness and achieve sustainable development in the future. Therefore, the research has certain practical significance[6].

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### A. Marketing Personnel

Marketing personnel identifies the goods and services to emphasize and then creates content and resources to promote that. Marketing staff have characteristics that are clearly different from employees in other departments, which can be demonstrated by the fact that marketing staff are more dynamic due to dismissal, which is caused by external factors, internal factors and individual factors. External factors include economy, traffic, legal environment, competitors in the market and social values while internal factors include low salary and inadequate benefits, lack of promotion and development opportunities, dissatisfaction with the leadership of supervisors, not being valued, inability to play their own talents and excessive work pressure, etc. Individual factors can be boiled down to these: personality, traits of the position, family elements, and motivation for achievement [7].

In a company, marketers are different from other managers because the high job mobility can bring them raises and promotions, which would attract those in marketing positions. In addition, marketing staff are not required to have a framework of knowledge in a specific industry, which means that with general skills they can apply for jobs in any company and there are more choices for them, a situation that tends to make it easier for them to leave the company they work for.

However, for the overall business team, the turnover of marketing staff can cause some consequences, as they usually have their own clientele, who have established close relationship and trust with them. A stable marketing team would serve as a driving force to maintain a stable clientele, enhancing the image of a reliable and stable company. High mobility of marketing staff leads to loss of a stable clientele, which in turn can affect the smooth development of the corporate team. Therefore, in order to be able to retain marketing talent, it is needed that they should be guided and motivated[8].

Marketing jobs are flexible and diverse, without the limitation of space and time. So, they can attract more customers in targeted ways based on their different traits, such as online marketing and on-site marketing[9]. It would be difficult to supervise and manage marketing staff due to little time and space constraints. They generally do not work at fixed hours and spend most of their time exploring the market. This makes it difficult to supervise them, especially to carry out management practices such as daily clocking in. Therefore, the best way to retain them is to establish a full-fledged incentive mechanism [10].

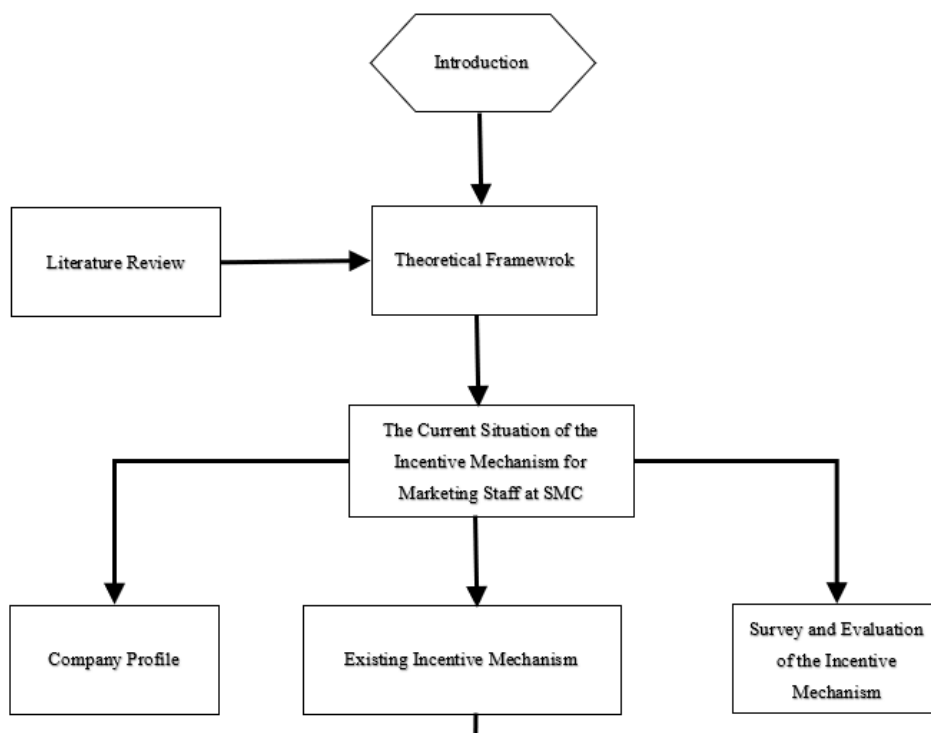
**B. Incentive Mechanism**

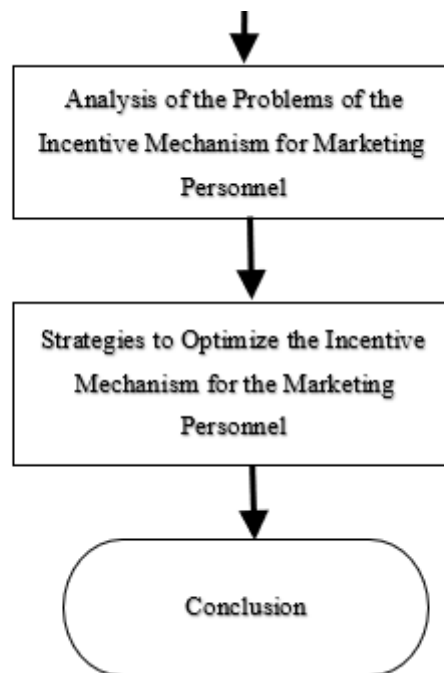
Incentive mechanism refers to a management system established by the top management team through practices and demonstration based on the actual operation of the enterprise. In the company management, managers tend to use a variety of incentives to stabilize and standardize the staff team, so as to connect with the staff, and form a mutual constrain between the company and the staff, which represents a guarantee for the company to transfer the blueprint into practical output. The main role of the incentive mechanism is to integrate the allocation of resources as well as to reduce the turnover rate. Only by giving full play to the leverage of the incentive mechanism can the company effectively ignite the enthusiasm of the staff, effectively improve the service quality of the enterprise and the efficiency of the staff, create an atmosphere for the staff to strive for excellence, and promote them to be qualified for any missions. It might be beneficial for the company to focus on the actual assessment of work, cultivate the sense of responsibility of focusing on actual performance, adhere to the basic principle of rewarding the best and punishing the worst. The company may consider to establish a reasonable reward and punishment mechanism, improve the ability of employees to perform their work, and strive to promote the rapid development of enterprises.

**C. RESEARCH CONTEN**

Chapter one states the research background, while determining the research flow as well as the method. Chapter two introduces an overview of the relevant theories. Chapter three analyses the current situation of the incentive mechanism of the marketing staff of the company, in which the motivation factors and hygiene factors of the incentive mechanism for the marketing staff of the company are analyzed based on the two-factors theory, and the causes of the existing problems are identified. Chapter four proposes strategic measures to improve and optimize the company's marketing staff incentive mechanism based on the current situation of the incentive mechanism of the company and Chapter five is the conclusion of the research.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**





This paper draws on previous research findings regarding the development of the industry from Chinese and international researchers and uses the following methods to analyze the problems of Shaoguan Meipeixian e-commerce Co Ltd.

#### **A. Literature Review**

By browsing and collecting relevant studies and referring to previous research findings, the theoretical basis for this research is provided, and the researcher can be clearer and more logical in writing.

#### **B. Questionnaire Method**

By researching the previous research results, a questionnaire survey was conducted on the marketing staff of the company in a small sample, and a questionnaire on the satisfaction and demand of the incentive was designed in a targeted way to obtain first-hand data on the evaluation of the incentive situation of the company by the marketing staff, which is very helpful for proposing strategies to enhance the incentive mechanism for the marketing staff.

#### **C. Field Research Method**

By visiting the company, the researcher conducted a comprehensive survey on the organization, development, competitive environment and strategic position of the company, as well as the structure of the current marketing team and the current incentive mechanism of the company, in order to ensure that the author has a full understanding of the situation of the marketing staff of the company.

### **THE CURRENT INCENTIVE STRUCTURE OF THE MARKETING PERSONNEL**

#### **A. Company Profile**

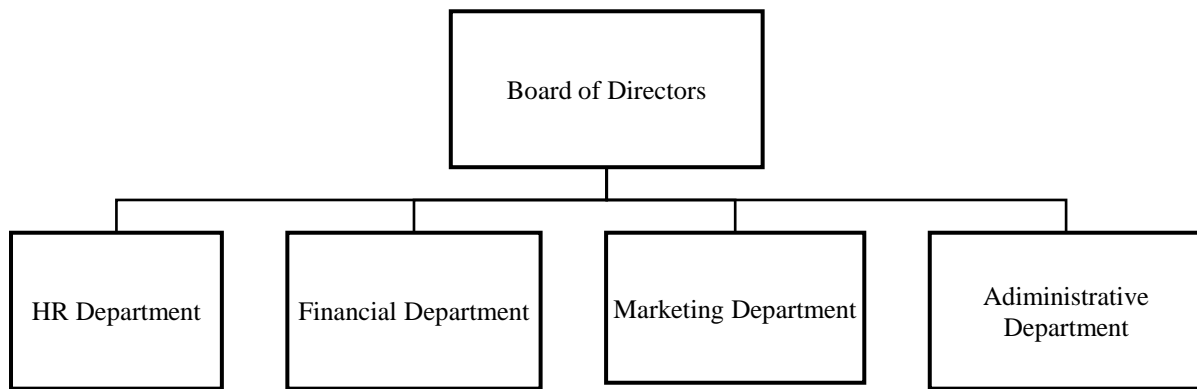
Shaoguan Meipeixian e-commerce Co., Ltd, a small-scale company in the retail and wholesale sector, was founded on 20 May 2020 with a registered capital of 500,000 RMB and business scope ranging from the sale of pre-packaged food, fishery products, agricultural and sideline products to logistics of daily necessities. It is located in the town of Datang, Qujiang District, Shaoguan, Guang Dong province in China. The company faced many problems in its initial development, especially the rapid turnover of its marketing staff and their slack attitude to work, so retaining them and stimulating their motivation and creativity have become extremely important for the company's future development. It is in this

context that this research is presented. Therefore, it is a major issue for the company to improve the incentive mechanism for marketing staff to effectively attract and retain excellent marketing talents, and to ensure that the long-term strategic objectives of the company are achieved.

**B. The Basic Situation of the Employees of SMC**

The core of this research is the satisfaction level of the marketing staff with the company's incentive system. The author found out the problems in the system and analyzed them in the paper in order to propose a set of incentive measures that are in line with the company's current development and help it to have more competitive advantages. Therefore, understanding the basic situation of the company's employees represents the first step of the research.

**Table- II: Organizational Structure of SMC**



**Table- III: Basic Information of Employees in SMC**

Items	Basic Information	Number	Ratio
Gender	Male	13	81%
	Female	3	19%
Age	18-24	11	68%
	25-30	4	25%
	31-40	1	6%
	Over 40	0	0%
Education Background	Less than High School	0	0%
	Vocational College	10	62%
	Undergraduate	6	38%
	Master and Doctoral Degree	0	0%
Years of Working Experience	Less than 1 month	0	0%
	1-3 months	4	25%
	4-6 months	5	31%
	More than 6 months	7	44%

**C. Characteristics of the Marketing Personnel of SMC**

Younger generation represents the majority of the marketing team in the company, with 11 marketers between the age of 18-24, 4 between the age of 25-30 and only 1 over the age of 30. This is conducive to

creating a vibrant team and promoting communication between marketers, and establishing connection between them.

The ratio of men to women is high, with 13 men and 3 women in the company. All of the company's marketing staff have relatively higher education background, among which 6 finished undergraduate education and 10 received professional training from vocational colleges. They are qualified for the job, so they have stronger demand for career development and the possibility of realizing their own value will be higher.

Most of the employees of SMC do not have too much working experience as it is a newly-founded company, but it is also clear that the mobility of the marketing staff is high, which would have a profound impact on the orderly operation of its business in initial stage.

## **THE CURRENT SITUATION OF THE INCENTIVE MECHANISM FOR MARKETING PERSONNEL OF SMC**

### **A. Current Situation of the Salary Mechanism**

The current salary mix of the marketing department of SMC is divided into three main sections: the monthly salary of the grassroots marketers is RMB 3,500, with no commission on sales performance. They are required to complete specific assignment, and would suffer salary deduction if they fail to complete it. Marketing executive has a guaranteed monthly salary of RMB 3,000, plus a sales commission for the team. The general manager of marketing has a guaranteed salary of 6000 per month, plus a percentage of commission on all sales in the marketing department.

There is a cap on the salary of marketing staff at basic level in the company, and their salary is based upon the sales commission, up to a maximum of RMB 3500. Salary for the head of the marketing department and the general manager of the marketing department includes a basic salary and commission.

This type of salary system can serve as an incentive at initial stage, however, as time goes on, its drawbacks will emerge. It gradually builds up antagonism and dissatisfaction between the marketing staff at basic level and higher level.

### **B. The Current Situation of the Welfare System**

There are two types of benefits currently offered to marketing staff, namely statutory benefits and fringe benefits. Statutory benefits include statutory holidays, social insurance, etc. The company signs employment contracts with all the marketing staff, and pays insurance for its employees in accordance with the labor laws and regulations promulgated by the Chinese government. Such additional benefits as communication and transportation allowances, a fixed and safe working environment and the necessary work equipment are also provided by the company. Statutory benefits are employee benefits required by law, and both employees and employers are required to make contributions to the social security system.

### **C. Current Status of Career Management**

Career planning is a process of continuous and systematic planning of work according to employees' own characteristics and career inclinations, identifying the best goals and making proper arrangements in order to achieve their goals and realize their dreams and values. In this research, the author analyses the current situation of career management of the marketing staff of SMC from two aspects: training and career development and promotion.

The existing training methods of the company for marketing staff are short-term mentoring and on-the-job training, as a result the marketing staff are not very satisfied with the training methods and training contents of the company.



Career development planning includes employees' plan for their own career development, and the company's management system targeting their career path. This research focuses on the company's career development planning for its employees. Creating a goal-oriented career development plan is not only a responsibility to be fulfilled by employees, but also an obligation to be performed by the company for managing all the employees efficiently. Through career development plan, human resources can be effectively integrated, staff structure can be optimally adjusted, the efficiency of employee management can be improved, positions can be better identified, and effective training program can be provided to employees in order to promote the sustainable development of the company. However, up to now, SMC does not have a formal and specific career planning policy. Employees improve their working abilities and comprehensive qualities through self-learning. The company values highly accomplished, competent and experienced marketing talent, while neglecting the training of high-potential marketing talent.

**QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS OF THE SATISFACTION OF MARKETING PERSONNEL OF SMC**

**A. Purpose and Process of the Survey**

The factors affecting the incentive mechanism are the core of this research. Questionnaire survey was conducted to study the incentive mechanism for all the marketing staff of SMC as it is considered as the most effective and direct method to discover the problems in the existing mechanism and the company can optimize the incentive mechanism later based on the result of the survey. Participants of the questionnaire include all the employees in the marketing department of the company. 16 questionnaires were used as the tool to collect data for the research.

**B. Questionnaire Analysis**

Sixteen questionnaires were distributed and all of them were returned. The results are as follows:

**Table- IV: Statistic Table of Satisfaction of Hygiene Factors**

Hygiene Factors	Items	Extremely Satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Slightly Satisfied (3)	Neutral (2)	Dissatisfied (1)	Total	Mean
Salary and Benefits	Salary	0	1	5	9	1	38	2.37
	Salary Mix	0	0	4	11	1	35	2.18
	Welfare System	0	0	5	11	0	37	2.31
Working Relationship	with Manager	3	6	5	2	0	38	3.63
	with colleagues	4	8	4	0	0	64	4

Supervision	Supervisor	0	8	7	1	0	55	3.43
Company's Policies and Management	Policy and Management	0	8	8	0	0	56	3.5
Working Environment	Working Environment	0	7	7	2	0	53	3.31
	Competition Environment	0	8	7	1	0	55	3.43
Job Securities	Organizational Stability	4	7	4	1	0	62	3.88
	Equality	1	7	7	1	0	56	3.5

As shown in Fig. 4, the hygiene factors are divided into six categories: salary and benefits, working relationship, supervision, company policies and management, working environment and job security, and then the six factors are subdivided into several questionnaire items.

**Table- V: Statistic Table of Satisfaction of Motivation Factors**

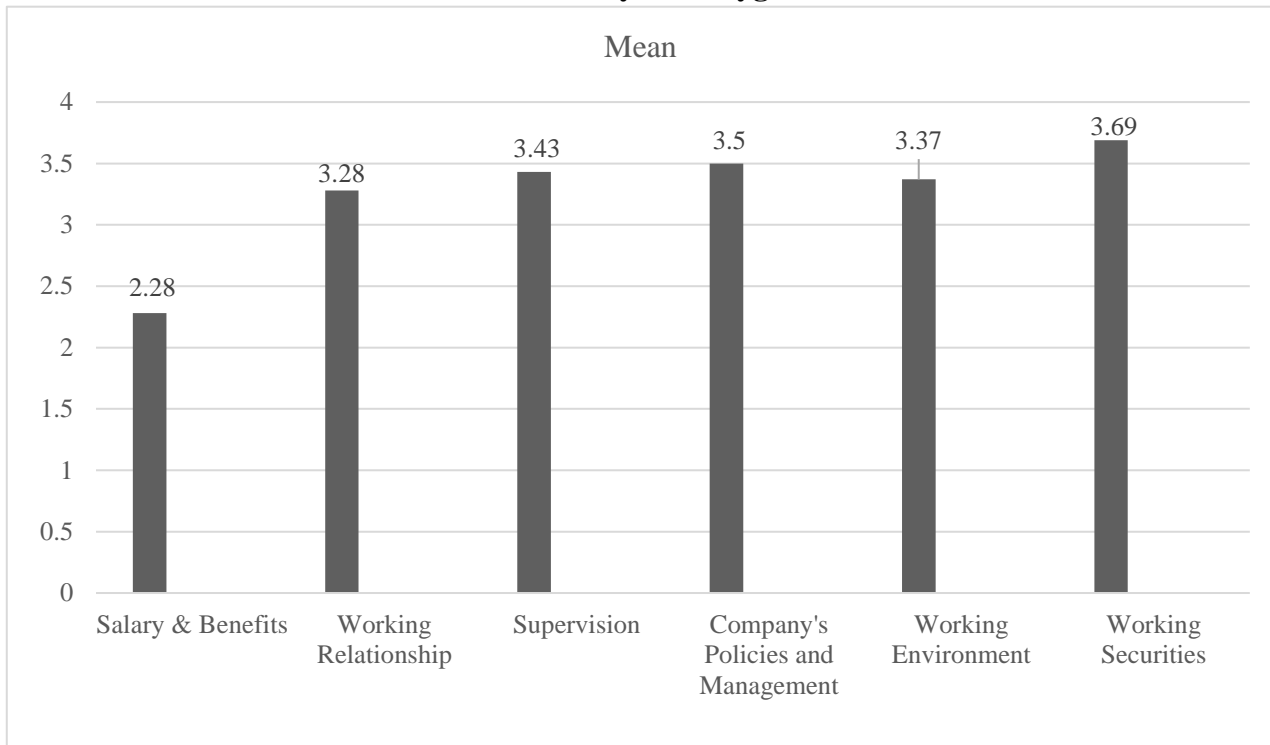
Motivation Factors	Items	Extremely Satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Slightly Satisfied (3)	Neutral (2)	Dissatisfied (1)	Total	Mean
Work Performance	Sense of Achievement	0	2	5	9	0	41	2.56
Work Recognition	Recognition from Managers	3	7	5	1	0	60	3.75
	Recognition from Colleagues	3	7	6	0	0	61	3.81
Work Responsibility	Team Work	3	5	7	1	0	58	3.63
	Individual Work	2	6	7	1	0	57	3.56
Growth	Training Content	0	0	5	11	0	37	2.31
Work Content	Work Content	3	9	3	1	0	62	3.88
Promotion & Advancement	Promotion	0	0	5	10	1	36	2.25



	Advancement	0	1	4	30	1	38	2.37
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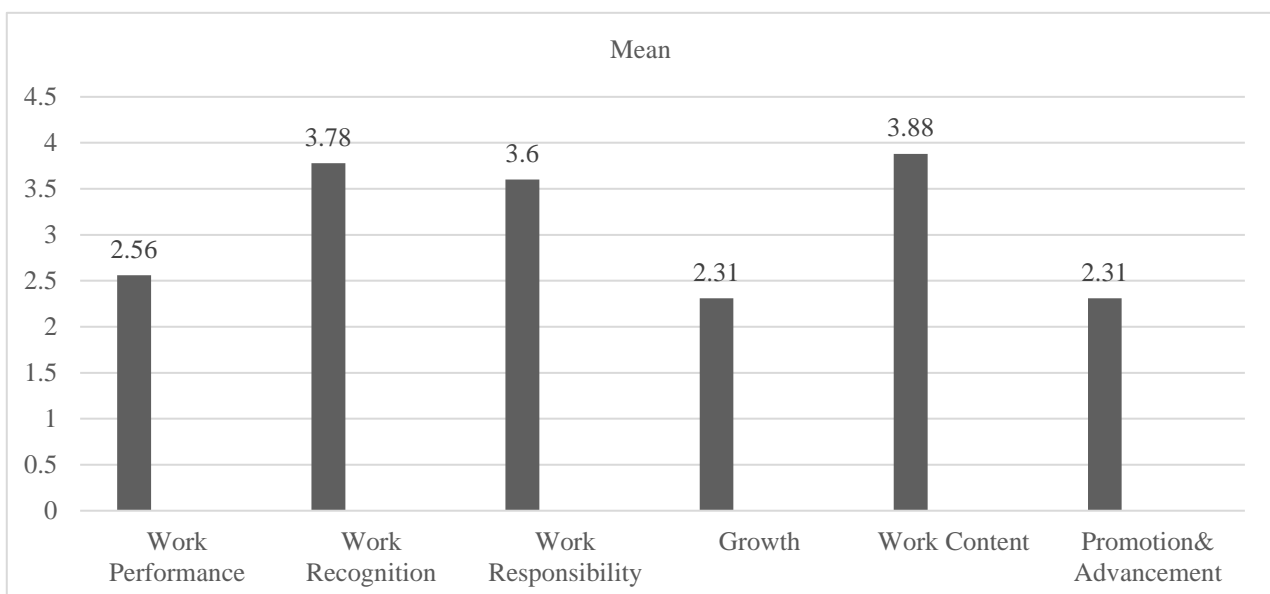
As shown in Fig. 5, the motivational factors are divided into six categories: work performance, work recognition, work responsibility, growth, work content, and promotion and advancement, and then the six factors are subdivided into several questionnaire items.

**Table- VI: Analysis of Hygiene Factors**



As can be seen from Fig. 6, among the health care factors, salary and benefits scored 2.28, ranking at the bottom of the six factors and with a large gap to the other five factors.

**Table- VII: Analysis of Motivation Factors**



As can be seen from Fig. 7, among the motivational factors, growth has the lowest rating of 2.31, followed by work performance in the bottom three with a lower rating of 2.56.

## **ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEMS AND CAUSES OF THE INCENTIVE MECHANISM FOR MARKETING PERSONNEL OF SMC**

### **A. Unreasonable Salary System**

Through the survey, the author found that due to the problems in management, employees in the marketing department hold different satisfaction level when it comes to the company's welfare. The salary for the marketing staff at the basic and higher level are at both ends of the spectrum, which can explain the result of the questionnaire that the senior managers are more satisfied with the salary and welfare which only represents a small portion while grassroots marketing staff are not satisfied with the existing salary which represents a larger proportion.

As SMC is in the early stage of development, it is pursuing fast growth and economic returns. In this context, the company put a premium on maximizing the value of the marketing staff when setting up the salary and welfare system, but ignores other needs and demands that are related to the basic interests of the marketing staff, thus failing to retain top marketing talent.

### **B. Inadequate Benefits**

The welfare benefits are inadequate, leading to demotivation among employees. The number of year-end bonuses vary for different levels from senior managers to grassroots marketing staff, which is the same as the company's current salary system and is not tied to performance metrics. Although the company does not announce this to its employees, it still causes confrontation between grassroots marketing staff and top management team. As for the five mandatory insurance schemes, the company only paid the five social insurance to the marketing staff and did not pay the housing fund, which has actually violated China's Civil Code in the relevant provisions of the labor law. Although failing to pay housing fund for employees is a typical phenomenon, this should be changed for the long-term and stable development of the company. As for subsidies, there is a lack of housing, transport and heat subsidies, and the travel expenses are sometimes even partly borne by the employees. Additionally, absence of humanistic care has led to shortfall of affection and a sense of belonging among the marketing staff. The company also failed to provide grassroots marketing staff with such welfare facilities as staff canteens and staff dormitories, which is an obstacle to the improvement of employees' life.

As the company is in its infancy stage, the importance of strengthening human resources management and incentive mechanisms is not fully understood and the company is still stuck in the initial unsystematic staff management mode. In addition, there are still some problems in other aspects, such as failure to meet employees' needs, unguaranteed basic necessities for employees, priority to economic benefits, which prove the fact that the company fails to place a high value on safeguarding staff welfare.

### **C. Unsystematic Training**

The company's training is not systematic enough, without long-term, systematic training courses conducive to the company's development and employee's development. Training content is relatively outdated as all the training program targeting marketers in the company are conducted when problems and needs are identified in the workplace, which aims to meet immediate needs and realize short term profits. Additionally, the company's training courses are conducted by the internal leaders, which lead to the fact that the knowledge presented to the trainees is obsolete with theoretical knowledge as the core of the training program due to the trainers being unqualified. Therefore, most of the training programs failed to achieve expected results. The company also did not evaluate the training effect in time at the

end of the program, therefore it is difficult for the company to assess the effects and identify the obstacles and problems in the existing training program. In a nut shell, the training did not accomplish expected outcome, and the unsystematic management system for the whole training process give rise to a waste of human and financial resources of the company.

The reasons for the lack of systematic training system in the company can be boiled down to the following aspects: Firstly, the top management team did not attach great significance to systematic training with the belief that the financial gains realized from training program is not as large as expected. They only treat training programs as a tool to solve short-term problems. Second, experts in the industry were not invited to contribute to the training programs as a consequence of which the company is not fully aware of the fact that the current training system needs to be improved and optimized and the internal trainers are unqualified for providing useful training content and professional skills, let alone realize financial gains from training programs. Third, the training content failed to touch on the core issues and the training courses were not evaluated in a timely manner, resulting in low training effectiveness.

#### **D. Imperfect Career Planning for Marketing Personnel**

The promotion channel is narrow, and the company has a flattened organizational structure, with limited and fixed senior and middle management positions, which means the marketing staff could not see lots of opportunities to get promotion even with outstanding working performance. Without opportunities for advancement, they may become complacent and less likely to take risks or come up with new ideas. This can limit the company's ability to innovate and stay competitive. Guidelines on career development are not provided for marketing staff.

A good career development plan can unlock the potential of employees, fully develop their talents, improve their sense of self-achievement at work and maximize their value. If the company does not have a clear development path for its marketing staff, they will not be able to find the direction of their career path. When employees see limited opportunities for career growth, they may become disengaged and less motivated to work hard or stay with the company for a long-term development.

There is poor communication between the company's top managers and the grassroots marketing staff and the management team does not take the career development of marketing staff into consideration, which can be explained by the fact that the company is in the initial development stage with the focus on business expansion, growth, retention and immediate profits while ignoring the company's long-term development and sustainability. It is suggested that the company needs to improve employees' recognition especially those from marketing department and make them feel valued.

### **STRATEGIES TO OPTIMIZE THE INCENTIVE MECHANISM FOR MARKETING PERSONNEL OF SMC**

#### **A. Optimizing the Remuneration System**

The remuneration system is the most basic incentive of a company and must be integrated into and matched with the company's specific strategy to ensure the successful achievement of the company's goals.

Material rewards are a much stronger incentive for employees in marketing department than for those in other department, so it is urgent to establish a remuneration system that is "internally fair and externally competitive".

In general, most start-ups have a low base salary and a high commission strategy. This is because a relatively low base salary reduces the fixed costs of the business and reduces the risk of the business. As

a result, the salary of marketing staff in SME is more dependent on their performance in the initial stage. However, for SMC, a fast-growing company, its existing remuneration model based on the highest monthly commission is no longer suitable for the company's development because it falls short of motivating the sales force effectively. On the one hand, the lack of a base salary does not meet the demands of the marketing staff. On the other hand, the maximum monthly salary is not an effective incentive for competent marketing staff. It is suggested that the salary for the marketing staff can include base salary, commission, allowances, benefits and financial rewards for team performance.

The commission structure should be: sales amount \* commission ratio - excess business expenses. In other words, the personnel compensation package of the marketing staff in SMC is mainly composed of base salary, marketing compensation and other allowances. The base salary level should be increased, and the marketing compensation system, allowances and subsidies should be optimized to establish a competitive and equitable salary structure for the marketing staff, as a way to increase their sense of security belonging and make them feel more engaged. The company is suggested to address employees' concerns so that they can devote themselves to enhancing their professional skills and making contribution to the company. The base salary is mainly based on a number of dimensions, such as the work experience, education background and comprehensive ability of the marketing staff. The marketing compensation is mainly determined by the company based upon the overall performance of the team and the actual marketing performance of individual employee. An effective performance evaluation system could be created to ensure that the evaluation results are fair, objective and reasonable. The marketing compensation should be issued according to the evaluation results of the marketing staff, which would strengthen the belief that all efforts would be paid off. Allowances mainly include overtime allowance, transport allowance, food allowance, communication device allowance, as well as housing allowance, pension insurance and housing provident fund, etc. On the basis of improving personnel remuneration packages, it is also necessary to enhance the team's sense of cooperation, strengthen teamwork, achieve information sharing on customer resources, promote fair competition and avoid malicious competition among marketing staff during peak season. For example, the company can choose to pay out only 90 per cent of each marketer's sales commission in that month, with the remaining 10 per cent being kept as the team marketing performance compensation, and then 70 per cent of this compensation may be distributed equally to each marketer after each quarterly summary, with the other 30 per cent being awarded to the best marketers.

### **B. Upgrading Welfare Mechanism**

Benefits are an indirect reward for employees. However, the company has not invested enough in its welfare system which can be demonstrated by the fact that the company seldom gives out holiday pay to employees on major traditional festivals, which reflects the fact that the company failed to provide humanistic management, support employee's well-being and ignore their emotional needs. Consequently, employees do not have a sense of belonging to the company and feel disengaged. Through in-depth interviews, the author summarized that employees and their families can strongly feel about the company's respect and blessings for them. Many marketers said, "It makes people feel good to go home with a gift from the company. Family members are excited about it."

While raising salaries is an important method, having an effective and appropriate benefits mechanism is even more crucial for a company to attract and retain talent. It can effectively motivate staff, and serve as a driving force for the company's long-term development and the improvement of its corporate image. Additionally, a strengthened welfare mechanism would contribute to boosting employee loyalty and improving company cohesion. Therefore, the company is suggested to make the following

improvements on the welfare mechanism for its marketing staff.

Five mandatory insurances and housing fund for each marketing staff represents basic welfare measures of the company.

The company is suggested to enhance the paid family and medical leave system according to specific reality in order to protect the basic rights and interests of marketers' holiday leave, demonstrate the company's care for marketers, regulate the company's discipline and maintain good working environment and order. According to the years of working experience of marketing staff, the annual paid leave for them should be extended appropriately. For example, paid leave for employees who have served in the company for more than two years should be extend by two to three days on the basis of ensuring the five days of paid annual leave according to Chinese Labor Law and Labor Contract law. On the other hand, the company may organize work outings for team building for marketing staff with good performance, which is considered as an alternative to take leave and also an effective way to reward outstanding staff and improve their motivation.

The award system in the company may be improved. Award package can include financial rewards and non-financial awards, namely all the non-monetary incentives awarded to employees by the company. For example, the company can issue a certain percentage of its profit in each quarter to marketing personnel as award and bonus. In addition, the company can give employees holiday bonus or holiday gifts in such traditional festivals as the Lantern Festival, Spring Festival, Mid-Autumn Festival and National Day, thus increasing the happiness and sense of achievement of marketing staff.

The company is encouraged to improve the working environment for employees. Basic hardware equipment and infrastructure in the company need to be facilitated as far as possible to provide the assistance and support for the marketing staff to boost their productivity and strike a balance between work and life. For example, the basic living necessities and working needs of the employees can be met by building canteens, dormitories, gymnasiums and upgrading transportation.

### **C. Optimizing Training Incentives Mechanism**

It is suggested that the training incentives mechanism of Shaoguan Meipeixian Company could be established on three aspects: training needs, training content and training methods.

Training need is highly relative to the company's development goal which is to grow into one of the leaders in the logistics of fresh food supply chain in northern Guangdong and even across Guangdong province to provide customers with fresh and green foods and top-quality service, guided by the customer-centered and product-based operation philosophy. Therefore, Shaoguan Meipeixian company is suggested to have a proclivity for employees' working philosophy and individual comprehensive quality in optimizing the training incentives mechanism. Specifically, the training program should educate the employees the company's core value and policies with an expectation to improve their professional ethics which could be highly consistent with that of the company. This can help them to integrate the company's philosophy and value into their daily working performance. Additionally, the training program may focus on the professional requirements for marketing staff as they represent the driving force of the company's development which can be demonstrated by the fact that they need to deal with clients on behalf of the company, which requires the training program to equip them with both soft social skills such as clear communication and coordination and professional hard skills such as insights into the industry and knowledge regarding the logistics of fresh food supply chain.

Training content should include the industry-specific knowledge with an expectation to help them to become more familiar with the industry's expertise, the business mode, the knowledge of the products and commodities in market as these are the foundation for the marketing staff to be able to handle clients



effectively and market the company's business efficiently. In addition, there are several marketplace skills that they can apply to a number of different marketing tasks including creativity as marketing involves working with ideas. Another skill is the ability to conduct market research because marketers develop savvy campaigns that encourage customers to connect with the company. The rest of the workplace skills that are important to develop and sharpen throughout marketers' career include communication, analytical and critical thinking, and collaboration. On top of this, the professional ethics of the marketing staff need to be improved through training programs with an expectation that the marketers can put customers first and make their contribution to the growth and reputation of the company.

As for training methods, firstly, the company may continue to conduct the original training programs with the leaders of SMC as the trainers. But old days' training methods fall short of everything they can do to maximize learners' attention and information recall. Additionally, in corporate settings, they ignore the collateral effects of effective training methods. As a result, companies miss a terrific opportunity to make their employees happier and more productive. Therefore, the training program is required to engage learners by being innovative, creative, fresh, lightweight, and sometimes funny. Secondly, instructor-led training can be implemented which requires the company to invite professional lecturers in the industry to conduct systematic training for the company's marketing staff. Learners can ask the instructor questions that the materials don't cover in real-time. Instructors can monitor learners' progress and engagement and professional knowledge would be easier to teach in a classroom, which would be conducive for the marketers to enhance their comprehensive ability. Thirdly, exchange visits among companies in the industry are recommended, from which all the marketer can learn from and communicate with each other as a way to grow into a qualified and experienced marketer.

#### **D. Enhancing Career Development Plans for Marketers**

In the past, SMC has failed to attach significant importance to the career development plans for its marketing staff. In the future, it is suggested that the company may develop a targeted career development plan for the marketing staff based on their demands and reality. The idea that marketing is not a formal career needs to be changed and the company is duty-bound to devote its efforts to the management of career planning for marketing staff.

In the implementation stage, it could be an option for SMC to invite experts in the industry to the company to design a detailed questionnaire to collect data about the marketers' ability and their insight into the industry with the intention of developing customized career plan for them. The company could conduct career development training courses for marketing staff. In addition, it can also set up offices in selected areas as a training base and deploy the best marketer to the office as a manager in charge of a marketing and sales team to increase sales and promote business in the region. The team will be required to be responsible for its loss and profit statement and to be evaluated twice a year. Managers who fail to meet the standard in three consecutive years would be demoted for not being a good fit. This mechanism could be implemented in the Qingyuan market, in which new business would be explored with a view to provide more opportunities for the qualified and outstanding employees to move up the career ladder.

## **CONCLUSION**

To sum up, the author combined theory with practice in this research and found out that the management and incentive mechanism for marketing staff in SMC is not suitable for its employees, leading to a high employee turnover rate and even decline of the company's business, which has become a critical matter necessitating immediate resolution. Against the background, the author dug deeper into the marketing

staff incentive mechanism with the aim to find out the problems and causes via questionnaire and arrived at a conclusion that SMC prioritizes profit and underplays employees' demands and development as the company is still at the initial stage of its growth with inefficient management, which triggered low motivation and enthusiasm. Guided by Herzberg's two-factor theory, the motivation mechanism of the marketing staff in the company was analyzed through questionnaire and come to a conclusion that the marketing staff are dissatisfied with the hygiene and motivation factors of SMC. In this context, hygiene factors that cause job dissatisfaction are salary and benefits in the company while motivation factors that trigger dissatisfaction are self-growth and work performance. Strategies are proposed in this paper in an attempt to address the existing problems of the company's incentive mechanism for marketing staff and make contribution to its future development.

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