

How to best Motivate Yourself

By Craig Lock

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HUMAN MOTIVATIONS

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What motivates us to do the things that we do? Why do we think and behave as we do? What influences people to do what they do?

Is it all because of that one word MONEY, which drives us to do what we do? I think not.

The word "motivation" means different things to different people.

One thing for sure is that you can't buy a jar of it: it has to come from within yourself. A person's brain needs constant motivational input just as muscles need exercise, engines need petrol and plants need water.

I used to think that motivation was a slick American fad and that it wasn't for me. After all, I was very motivated already!

People are the product of their thoughts and the aim of motivational material is to improve the quality of your thoughts. Motivation is nothing more than encouragement and we all perform better for it.

Friends of mine say that I am a good motivator, because I simply encourage others.

"We become what we think about all day long."
- Emerson

"Most people think only what everybody else is doing."
- Earl Nightingale

The road to achievement starts with a goal. Implant that

goal in your mind and think about it all day long. I am doing that with this manuscript and my goal is to have it published and be an author. I think I have taken the right action steps so far, so that I eventually reach my target. Pay the price by making sacrifices. Take small steps towards your goal every day, instead of occasional bursts of activity.

The principal difference between the average person and the one who is highly successful seems to be in the degree of his or her personal motivation. Motivation is the hidden power in the successful person's arsenal and is the key ingredient for success. Most people, I believe are motivated or have the potential if they are aroused and interested in the activity.

However, one thing is for sure: It is not something someone else can give you. It must be self-generated from within; it is not external "RA RA" hype. In other words, motivation is an inner energy, rather than a fire lit by others.

Strong motivation also stems from a deep rooted belief in what you are trying to do; it is strongest when it comes from your inner values. This creates a feeling of ENTHUSIASM which is essential in order to remain motivated. Look at the zeal of a missionary or a Jehovah's Witness. The best salesmen are those who get very excited about and have total faith in their products. They sell with a firm conviction that their product is the best available.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN SOURCES OF MOTIVATION?

What influences people to do as they do? There are many diverse influences. It is difficult to pin-point which one is most important, but some factors are as follows: different cultures, social environment and biological influences (e.g., hunger, thirst) in work and in play. Other influences are our thoughts, our perceptions. Everyone is different and unique, so there are great individual differences in our drives.

There are two main sources of motivation: What will happen if you do? What will happen if you don't? For example, your doctor advises you to give up smoking. If you do, you will feel better and live longer; if you don't your health is going to deteriorate. Both sources (and implications) are equally powerful.

There is a strong correlation between motivation and achievement. Highly motivated people are nearly always achievers. Thrillseekers like sky-divers and stuntmen often need to do life threatening activities to keep them motivated. Danger gives them pleasure and keeps them motivated.

Why do we work? Is it just for money or is money merely a short-term issue? I am personally not motivated by money. I prefer interesting and exciting work that offers a challenge and the opportunity for personal growth. Others may feel the need for affiliation or to contribute to society. In the following chapter there is an exercise on this.

Understanding motivation gives us the power to accept our behaviour when we have strange reactions. It can also enable us to change what we think and do if we want to improve our behaviour or performance. So when going for a job it is critical to understand your motivations. What do you really want and expect from it?

What do others expect of you? Our behaviour is directly affected by our needs. If you are clear about the answers you will be happiest.

THEORIES OF MOTIVATION:

There are three main theories of motivation:

1. Desire for achievement
2. Desire for power
3. Desire for affiliation or sense of belonging.

These theories are linked to the concept of extrinsic and intrinsic rewards. Extrinsic motivation comes from outside, for example, the prospect of fame, recognition, monetary rewards, gaining power, respect or social approval/belonging (=sense of affiliation). With intrinsic rewards, the task or situation is in itself motivating or compelling. Motivation is often defined in terms of our goals. Marie says that contributing to society by daring to be different is what motivates me - strange! I think that I get bored easily without a challenge. Enough about "little old me"!

There are six main steps or elements in the process of motivation.

1. Desire: First, to be motivated you must have an intense burning desire to get where or what you want.
2. Decision: You must make a conscious decision on what to aim for.
3. Determination: to climb mountains so that absolutely nothing will stop you. You need to be able to repeat the habits which are necessary to get there.
4. Discipline: It is critical to pay the price whether you like it or not. Motivation is strongest when it is the internalisation of your goals and dreams, in other words, when you are headed on a

clear path in your life's direction.

5. Focus

6. Direction

Certain people have the constant challenge to reach and sustain an optimum level of motivation which overcomes problems and brings results. If there is no challenge in what you are doing, motivation will soon wither and die.

Always remember:

The buck starts - and stops - with you.

Self knowledge is the key to self-motivation:

- why do we behave as we do?
- what makes us tick?

Also critical for motivation is the image or snapshot you have of yourself. This is based on your inner belief in yourself as well as your attitude and views of your strengths and weaknesses. If you believe in yourself and expect success, you will act confidently and be highly motivated.

Key Points of this lesson:

- * We must define success for ourselves.
- * Be aware of our own strengths and weaknesses.
- * Your personal solutions lie within you.
- * To sustain motivation, do better than in the past.
- * Motivation often comes from a challenge.
- * It is necessary at times to make a positive out of a negative.
- * The most important thing for an achievement-orientated person is to have a clear goal.

What comes first? The chicken or the egg? Motivation or action? The answer surprisingly is Action. First, we have to prime the pump and the way is through action. People who tend to procrastinate confuse motivation and action.

SO WHY NOT GET STARTED ON THAT NEXT ARTICLE OR EVEN BOOK? WHAT'S STOPPING YOU?

Authors Note:

Craig Lock has written extensively on the subject of time management, as well as in the field of self help. This extract is from his first published book HANDBOOK TO SURVIVE- a collection of writings on various subjects to help every man or woman survive in a rapidly changing, uncertain world.

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"Life is about finding, then following the dream...
and one's dream/vision comes to reality through believing in yourself,
making the commitment and then creating it."

- Craig Lock

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