

WHAT MOTIVATES US?

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Abstract: Motivation is an internal force which triggers individuals to take an action towards particular goal. Without inner motivation, our desires unlikely to be satisfied effectively. Therefore, before seeking for triggers and some techniques to stay motivated, being conscious about internal and external factors which provoke motivation, instances that lead to loose of motivation, allow us to understand the science behind motivation. If people deeply understand what motivates them, it is easier take an action and avoid distractions. Therefore, the significance of what motivates us never has to be underestimated.

This article provides a brief explanation of factors that activate motivation with the examples of what motivates university students and main cases of being demotivated. Moreover, in last parts of the article, wide range of practical methods are offered to remain motivation.

Key words: *motivation, types of motivation, intrinsic, extrinsic, enthusiasm*

Introduction

From our practice we are already aware that our desires unlikely to be fulfilled without adequate level of enthusiasm. We procrastinate to take an action towards our goals before we feel an inner force or enthusiasm which triggers us to act. In other word we call this enthusiasm-that forces us to take an action to achieve our goals or particular desire- motivation.

People sometimes feel a lower rate of enthusiasm, while other times it skyrockets. So what is the reason? Why are we sometimes fully motivated and why do we often lack it?

What you think is important

Before completing a particular task, our brain starts to visualize the pattern of the whole process. And what our brain firstly notices is challenges. Because our brain is “as lazy as us” and therefore it always tries to find shortcuts for difficult cognitive and physical tasks. When we embody the complex aspects of task, the desire to accomplish it probably disappears. And this is the main reason why we sometimes deprive of adequate enthusiasm before starting a new task.

By contrast when we anticipate a reward, our motivation to act rises, too. [1] The release of dopamine when we predict the rewarding outcome of task motivates us more even if nothing had not happened yet. For most individuals it is usual to think that dopamine is released when we experience a pleasure, but indeed it is also typical to feel the rise of dopamine when we anticipate the “pleasure”. In other words, if we anticipate that we have already completed a new book before even starting to read it, the “pleasure” that we have completed it causes a dopamine rise. Feeling the pleasure of completing a particular task is what gets us to take an action.

When we fulfil our desires the reward system is activated in our brain and surprisingly the same system is activated when you just predict it. Because the results of our actions are always satisfying, even if it is just cleaning the room-you get clean as a result, and anticipating the result is also as satisfying as getting it.

Therefore, what you anticipate about your desire is crucial. You will absolutely be motivated towards your goals when you predict the desirable result you will get. And conversely you are likely to experience inadequate level of enthusiasm unless your predictions are positive.

Types of motivation

Generally, motivation has two types: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is mainly referred as motivation which is derived from internal triggers and involves internal rewards like self-improvement. When people are internally motivated, the dominant force that triggers them to do something is love and enjoyment. For example, someone can draw picture just for fun-which is the clear sign of internal motivation, whereas others do it to sell their work (in this case what motivates them is external reward not inner enjoyment). [2] By contrast extrinsic type displays tangible and intangible rewards such as money and praise respectively. Individuals who crave for external rewards will continue working out even if something is no more attractive and satisfying for them. [3] Because external rewards like money and fame will always prevail personal enjoyment and force individuals to perform a particular task.

But if we dive deep into the types of motivation, they might be categorized in more than two groups.

For instance, the internal motivation itself might be divided into 5 groups. They include learning, attitude, achievement, creation and psychological motivation. [4]

- Learning motivation demonstrates that people are motivated to learn something because that just simply enjoy the process of learning thereby getting better skills.
- Attitude motivation is activated when someone’s aim is to change other’s perception and making themselves and people around them feel more positive.
- Achievement motivation refers to the type of motivation which is related to human’s desire to achieve particular goal.

- Creative motivation states for desire to create something new.

- Physiological Motivation is an innate trigger which might not be fully understood. It is related to deep psychological feelings that are out of our control and we cannot ignore them.

Incentive, fear, power and affiliation motivation are extrinsic drivers.

- The most prevalent extrinsic factor is financial reward. And the incentive motivation does not only define financial reward, but also it states for any type of reward for action. People who are victims of this motivation will always pursue a task to get a reward even if it is not satisfying for them. The number one priority for them is reward.

- By contrast in the fear motivation unlike incentive one you will not be motivated by reward but the fear of losing something dominates your feelings. For example, some people work effectively to gain more reward while others move forward to keep their position at work.

- Power motivation is associated with controlling the environment around us- our lives and lives of others. While sometimes it might be a wrong decision to control others, taking a control over your life can be a progressive step forward.

- Affiliation or social motivation forces us to take an action because of social factors. Humans, being social creatures, always desire for belonging and acceptance by other social groups. In other words, we always crave for interaction with other people and need their support. Therefore, having enough supporters, who accept and appreciate our thoughts, will absolutely motivate us to new heights.

However, I consider that there are more types of motivation if we want to explore it deeply. Because all individuals are different and they don't experience same feelings and motivation. It means that types of motivation may vary from person to person and sometimes it might be difficult to understand what others are experiencing and what triggers them people to take an action. But all types of motivation noted above are basic ones that all of us might have ever had or will have soon.

What motivates university students?

When I was gathering a data to this article I was curious on to reveal what motivates my peers (university students) to study. Because motivation in education has a vital role and its absence might decline student's learning.

Interestingly, I have found out that the level of extrinsic motivation among students of my university (Uzbekistan State World Languages University) is higher than intrinsic one. Especially reward motivation has substantial effect on student's performance. Most students, particularly those who were recommended for students on the basis of state grant, receive monthly stipend (about 50\$) unless they have low marks. Therefore, they always study hard to get desired results and stipend. Subsequently, rate of the fear motivation is also noticeable between students. If

students fail the exam, they need to study a particular subject they've failed on again during the summer vacation which requires extra funds. The fear of failing the exam and extra money requirements force student to perform better during class and get desirable results.

On the other hand, there are students who are motivated to study hard not because of external factors noted above, but inner desire and their enthusiasm to learn specific subject triggers an inner motivation. Especially learning and achievement motivation are profoundly pursued by many. Every student has their own interest to specific field and an inner desire to study this subject is activated through learning motivation- student's own willingness to learn certain field. For example, most students enjoy learning English, French or other language just because they simply love it. In other words, students might like special features of the language such as pronunciation, accent or vocabulary which keeps their enthusiasm to learn it. Moreover, one of the primary goals of students is to get only high scores as it provides wide range of opportunities, including the chance of getting special stipends which are two or three times higher than usual one. This states for achievement motivation- intrinsic desire to achieve special goal.

Interestingly, students are also highly motivated when they receive new intriguing and challenging projects. When teachers give new exciting assignments that students haven't done before, students are likely to feel a strong enthusiasm to try it. Because new challenges are always attractive and students are enthusiastic to compete it which means it's motivating them. This may also happen during the lesson. When teacher applies new approach to the lesson, providing students with attractive materials, the level student's enthusiasm boosts noticeably. Finally, when something is new, more encouraging and challenging, people are more inspired or more motivated to do it.

A lack of motivation

Motivation does not refer to permanent force and may fluctuate time to time. Therefore, sometimes individuals experience increased motivation while other times it deploys. This may include different causes like depression, lack of interest and health problems.

The environment we live in is mostly poisoned by greenhouse gases and solar flares. While they cannot be noticeable to human eye, they are still reflecting detrimental impacts on our health. Especially, frequently happening solar flares (geomagnetic storms) cause different illnesses including headaches which leads to mental disorder and stress. [5] Obviously people with these symptoms unlike to feel motivated to do something. Moreover, recent studies show that different pollutants in air might cause neurological disorder, depression and anxiety. [6] The study indicates that this particles, particulate matter and ozone can trigger hypothalamic-pituitary-

adrenal (HPA) which releases glucocorticoid stress hormones. As our brain is sensitive to stress, this stress hormones might cause mental disorder and stress.

Second primary factor of being demotivated is lack of interest. When people do not have an inner interest toward some activity, they are highly likely to feel low level of motivation to do it. In particular, if students are not enthusiastic enough to special subjects, they just simply end up learning it as they are not motivated sufficiently. Therefore, planning lessons interesting and attractively important to motivate students.

How to stay motivated?

Even though the level of motivation we feel might deprive sometimes, different practical solutions are available to boost it. For instance, James Clear in his book *Atomic Habits* suggests that one the best ways to stay motivated is to do task which are not extremely difficult or too easy. Undoubtedly our brain loves to take new challenges. However, when they are too busy we may get bored. By contrast when it is too complex we might get stressed and eventually loose motivation. For example, playing a chess with 3-year-old kid can be easy while playing it with grandmaster can be really challenging. But playing with one whose level is same as yours is manageable and exciting. And this is what states for staying motivated. The level of task you are pursuing must be manageable or medium in other words, not too easy or complex. In addition, he also noted the importance of receiving a feedback. In this case receiving feedback refers to measuring the progress you made. When we work on special task whether it is learning something or doing our regular job, we always make progress even if it is not noticeable. However, it is also crucial to measure that «unnoticeable tiny progress, because noticing the progress, tiny or huge, is always motivating.

But before finding some techniques to activate motivation we need to determine what motivates us mostly and what type of motivation we need. It is easy to be motivated externally when you find an external cue that motivate you. Conversely it is difficult to manage intrinsic motivation as sometimes people cannot dominate over their feelings. As described above, intrinsic motivation is accumulated through inner forces which are difficult to manage. However, reminding yourself about your real targets every day or noting them might expose your brain to absorb your goals which will consistently keep internal motivation.

Conclusion

The level of motivation we experience might fluctuate time to time. Some occasions make feel us demotivated while other times we are extremely enthusiastic to accomplish different tasks. In order to be fully motivated when it is necessary, we need to have a basic understanding about factors that motivate us or lead to its decrease. When we are already aware about those factors, it becomes easier to determine the ways of staying motivated.

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