

1. Definition

Motivation is the feeling, emotion, or desire that moves a person to take action. Motivation is an internal process and an integral part of making changes, achieving goals, and pursuing personal growth. Once a person achieves a goal and experiences success, the accomplishment generates new motivation to tackle other challenges and create new goals.

2. Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Two forms of motivation drive people to achieve their goals: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

2.1. Intrinsic Motivation

It is the driving force to take action that comes from within you. Intrinsic motivation is the most powerful and effective form of motivation because you “own” it, and you give it personal meaning, importance, and conviction. People with high intrapersonal intelligence use intrinsic motivation for personal development and self-understanding.

2.2. Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation, however, is the driving force to take action that comes from sources outside of yourself. Extrinsic motivation may stem from a desire to obtain an *extrinsic reward*, such as a prestigious award, a coveted prize, or monetary reward for work or performance. A desire to receive positive responses, praise, acceptance, or recognition from parents, family members, peers, co-workers, or a specific social group may be another type of extrinsic motivator.

3. Lack of Motivation and Procrastination

Lack of motivation is very common among students especially at university. It can be temporary (generally a kind of very short-lived “burn out” occurs after a student has completed a semester or after a number of terms without a break). Sometimes it reoccurs (particularly for those, perhaps, who have a long personal history marked by variable motivation). Procrastination, being a cost of lack of motivation, is a common part of human behaviour and is not the same as “laziness”. Below are some key points about procrastination:

- Procrastination means to decide for no valid reason to delay or not complete a task or goal you’ve committed to, and instead do something less important, despite the negative consequences of not fulfilling the original task or goal.
- Problematic procrastination can be distinguished from more general procrastination by how bad the negative consequences are.
- Procrastination can occur in many different areas of one’s life. It can involve tasks or goals -in domains such as work, household, study, health, financial or social life, etc.
- Procrastination activities are the things you do as a diversion from or substitute for the key task or goal you need to accomplish, e.g., pleasurable tasks, lower priority tasks, socialising, daydreaming...
- To avoid the guilt associated with procrastination, we often generate excuses for our procrastination which help us feel justified with putting things off. These excuses often imply that because of some set of circumstances, we are better leaving the task to another time.

5. Strategies for Getting Motivated and Overcoming Procrastination

- Let Go of the Past; Focus on the Present

Past experiences are strong influencing factors of who we are today. The expression, "Let it go," is often easier said than done, but it is important to move on.

- Use Positive Self-Talk

Self-talk is that ever-busy inner voice that ultimately affects your behaviour. Your self-talk may be positive or negative. Whenever you hear your negative critical inner voice telling you that you *can't* do something that you *won't* succeed, that you are *not* skilled enough, or any other similar negative comments, try to manage your thoughts by turning those statements around and counteracting with positive self-talk. Positive self-talk focuses on positive qualities, words of encouragement and statements such as "I am capable of doing this," "I have what it takes to succeed," and "I have the intelligence and skills to do well"

- Use Affirmations

Affirmations are positive statements used as motivators. Use the following suggestions for writing and using affirmations:

- ✓ *Use positive words and tones.* Avoid using words such as *no*, *never*, *won't*. Say, for instance, "I complete my written work on time," rather than "I will never turn in a paper late again."
- ✓ *Write affirmations in the present tense.* When you think and believe in the present tense, your actions begin to match your beliefs. Say, for example, "I am a non smoker," rather than "I will stop smoking soon," and "I complete assignments on time," rather than "I will get better at completing my assignments on time."
- ✓ *Write with certainty and conviction.* Avoid using words such as *want to*, *try*, or *hope to*. Say, for instance, "I exercise for thirty minutes every day," rather than "I want to exercise more each day," or "I manage my time well," rather than "I hope I can use my time-management schedule."
- ✓ *Repeat your affirmation frequently.* You can place your affirmation on cards around your house or inside your notebook. The more frequently you repeat your affirmation, the greater impact it has on your belief.

- Visualize Success

Visualizing yourself performing a task and achieving a specific goal imprints that image of yourself in your long term memory

- Acknowledge Yourself

You cannot expect nor rely on others to recognize or respond to all the positive accomplishments you experience on a daily basis. The person who can acknowledge and praise you on a regular basis is *you*.

Task: *Getting Motivated*

A good start is important for a successful study session. It helps to have the proper tools and a comfortable place to study. Even more, it helps to be mentally ready to begin.

A. At some time or another, everyone procrastinates—puts off an unpleasant task. Understanding the reasons for procrastination can help you overcome the problem.

1. On the line, describe a recent task or activity you did not want to do.

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2. Circle the reasons you did not want to begin the task. List any other reasons on the lines after the letter f.

a. You weren't sure you could do it.

b. You were afraid it would take too much time.

c. You had too many other things to do.

interrupted.

f. other reasons:

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3. Promise yourself a reward at the end of a task. This can motivate you to get started. Read the list of possible rewards below. Circle any that might motivate you. On the lines after the letter h, list any other rewards that might work for you.

a. talk to a friend

b. exercise, play a sport

c. have a snack

d. watch TV

h. other rewards that might motivate you:

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B. Motivating yourself is fully your responsibility (not the job for your teaching staff, your parents or friends). If you make a success of today, then you have already greased the gears for a successful tomorrow. The essence is to try and try. There is absolutely no substitute for experience.

- Share your experience with motivation and success by answering the questions below:

1. Identify a goal you have achieved in your life that was meaningful.

2. What was your motivation for achieving your goal? Was it the motivation of being challenged? To have a sense of personal power? To learn something new? To be recognized? Or something else?

3. What were the steps you took towards your goal.

4. What meaningful results did you experience in your pursuit?

5. How were you able to stay motivated to keep pursuing your goal?

