

Motivation . . . “Change is apt to occur when we realize we can change. This is the greatest motivation of all. Nothing sparks the fires of desire more than the sudden realization that you do not have to stay the same.” *John Maxwell*

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## The Leader Within

“Get motivated” was the counsel that was given to me by a group leader while I was going through a very difficult period of adjustment. I had admitted that I wasn’t very motivated for the task at hand. It would have been nice to just “get motivated” but it wasn’t that easy.

Employers hope for a motivated workforce. Motivated workers excel in their activities and advance in their careers. Often, they are promoted or move on to greater challenges. Sometimes, they get attention from co-workers, not always positive. Motivation has a funny way of affecting us and those around us.

If you were to do a literature review, it would become apparent that leaders of business have been given the responsibility of creating a motivated workforce. That’s quite a challenge when you consider all the different personality types, backgrounds, values and the dynamics within the workplace.

How big are material rewards in motivating people to achieve more? Consider your own situation. How much more money would spark your desire to perform at a higher level? Nowadays, it seems that people are even questioning whether they need or want more materially.

Patricia Panchak (of Industry Week) identified the following four practices as important to motivation in the workplace: provide work with purpose, eliminate barriers to performance, allow employees to become fully engaged in their work, build trust through “fair process” decision making (<http://www.industryweek.com/ReadArticle.aspx?ArticleID=2264>). This, like other lists of good practices, points to touching employees at places deeper than the pocketbook. These places include core values, purpose, meaning, significance and life balance.

Doubling everybody’s rate of pay will create excitement but sustainable improvements are stimulated by giving people more . . . personally. As experienced leaders, we know that the “more” is different for different people. Nothing beats a personal approach and that is why coaching has such value in the workplace for getting at what motivates individuals (not the same as creating motivation in the workplace). Does it take more time and effort than doubling everybody’s rate? Yes, of course. Yet, it will accomplish more and benefit more people in the long term. Coaching enables a client to identify what motivates him/her and to begin working with that self-awareness towards self-improvement.

*Bret Maukonen*

## The Coach Within

“What could possibly be the motivation behind a decision like that?” Ever asked that question about someone else’s behaviour? Or asked yourself, “What on earth made me do that?” Motivation can be assumed and interpreted, but it can’t be seen.

What do we mean when we talk about motivation? The word itself is derived from the Latin *movere* “to move.” So Garth Brooks’ “You Move Me” is really a song about motivation!

We often use words like “should,” “must,” “have to,” “ought to,” to motivate ourselves (and others) but these can tend to leave us feeling pressured. We will only be able to change behaviours (e.g., break unwelcome habits) if we are motivated to do so.

Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is the basis for one of the theories of motivation. This asserts that lower needs must be met before higher ones and that it is only unsatisfied needs which will influence behaviour. But it has been criticized for not explaining situations where desire to fulfill a higher need outweighs an unmet lower need; e.g., living in an unsafe and derelict neighbourhood in order to fulfill one’s sense of calling to help those oppressed by poverty.

David McLelland’s simpler version says that needs are shaped by life experience and are basically of three types—achievement, affiliation and power and that essentially these influence both motivation and effectiveness. The model I use talks about “security” and combines achievement and power in the term “significance.”

Children can be motivated by the stern tone of a parent’s voice or a peer’s “I double dare you!” Adults can be motivated by the lure of sudden wealth or lavish praise, by love and hate, fear and fun. Some things that motivate us are intrinsic—internal incentives (a hobby would be an example)—and some are extrinsic—external rewards.

Motivation is a rich topic to explore in coaching. Having a clear idea of what motivates you makes it much easier to encourage yourself towards worthwhile goals, and will increase the likelihood of your ultimate success in reaching them.

The question I leave with you is: What moves you?

*Lynne Maukonen*

To Ponder . . . When do you feel most energized and moved to act? If “earning a living” was not an issue, what would you like to be doing with your time? What is it that would motivate you to be doing that activity? Can you list 10 things that really move you to action and sustain interest? If you could start afresh, what would you do with your life?