

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR MOTIVATIONS SO THE TOUGH TIMES CAN'T STOP YOU

### FUEL YOUR GOALS

As I said in the [video](#) on fueling your goals with motivation, the biggest killer to success is people's inability to sustain their motivation through challenging times. This is when many people just give up.

Of course, if your goal turns out to be a bad idea, let it go. But if a goal is something you really value, let's make sure your motivations stay strong when you inevitably hit obstacles and challenges.

### A TRUISM TO REMEMBER

The more you are stretching yourself, the more likely you'll hit obstacles and deviations from your plan. It's the very nature of stretching yourself. When you do so, you take yourself into unfamiliar territory. You can prepare yourself in advance by connecting to your motivations to sustain yourself through the challenges.

### THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION IS WHY?

Motivations usually explain WHY we do what we do. Motivation is the fuel that drives all great human endeavors. When you want to determine your motivations, ask yourself WHY you want something or WHY you are doing it. You will uncover your motivations. They'll fall into one of two main categories—external and internal motivations.

The ideal state is to have both external and internal motivations to drive you. Most people neglect internal motivations, mainly from a lack of awareness or reflection.

Essentially, an external motivation (aka, extrinsic motivation) is a motivation to do something for someone else and an internal motivation (aka, intrinsic motivation) is a motivation to do something simply for yourself.

### MOST NEGLECTED: INTERNAL MOTIVATIONS

While both external and internal motivators have value, this worksheet will emphasize internal motivations because they are the least understood and most underutilized of the two.

### DEFINITIONS:

#### EXTERNAL MOTIVATIONS—DRIVEN BY OTHERS

*Two main categories:*

##### 1. Commitments/obligations to others

You'd describe these motivations as things you "have to do", "should do," or "must do."

- Promises to others to provide them something they want or need.
- Commitments to someone to keep your word, e.g., a work out buddy who you'll meet at the gym.
- Community/family obligations—things that you've committed to do or are expected to do because of who you are, e.g., as a good parent, as a responsible neighbor or good citizen.
- Cultural expectations—the world around you says, "this is what you should do, this is how you should behave," e.g., by age X, you should be married, own a house, be a VP, etc., or as a man/woman you should do ABC. The list could go on forever. Cultures create unspoken expectations for all of us, some helpful, some annoying or more.

## 2. Desire to impress or “show” others

Sometimes, we’re motivated to achieve results because we know or hope someone else is watching and will notice.

- Authority figure—we want the coach, boss, parent or mentor to be impressed and applaud our efforts or progress.
- Inspiring icon—while they may never notice, we are inspired to emulate someone who we respect—a leader or role model (this may actually fall into internal motivations, if you’re doing this for yourself).
- Someone who doesn’t think we’re capable. We sometimes want to prove to someone that we’re capable of showing we can do something they thought we couldn’t, e.g., in order to prove our competence or superiority we’re motivated to achieve a difficult goal, make X money, drive a big car, own a big house, or do better than they did.

## INTERNAL MOTIVATIONS—DRIVEN FROM WITHIN YOURSELF

Internal motivations may often be described as a reason bigger than just yourself, a purpose or a cause you believe in. But sometimes pure joy and fun is your motivator.

Internal motivations tend fall into one of five categories, creating the acronym **FFUEL**.

1. **Freedom:** Increasing your capacity to do something or express yourself in a bigger way, to flex your muscles and enjoy the experience expansive feeling of freedom. Sometimes you want this freedom for others, so you combine it with unconditional service.
2. **Fun:** Doing something because you enjoy doing it. How many research studies tell us that happy workers are more productive? Duh! Fun and joy feel great AND help you keep your goals alive. Sometimes you want this fun for others, so you combine it with unconditional service.
3. **Unconditional Service:** Wanting to serve a person, a group, or a cause because you want to, because you enjoy it or value it. It’s not out of obligation (then it becomes an external motivation) but from your own inner will and preference.
4. **Empowerment:** Feeling powerful and strong, advancing your own learning and capabilities is a great motivator. Sometimes you want this empowerment for others, so you combine it with unconditional service.
5. **Love:** A caring and respect for a result, a person or group or a cause. You just feel good when you offer your care and support and it keeps you motivated through difficult times. Yes, this can occur at work.

## MOTIVATION MAXIMER

### MY GOAL #1

WHY I WANT TO ACHIEVE IT (MY MOTIVATIONS):

INTERNAL

EXTERNAL

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Will these sustain me when things become difficult? If not, what adjustments will I make?

### MY GOAL #2

WHY I WANT TO ACHIEVE IT (MY MOTIVATIONS):

INTERNAL

EXTERNAL

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Will these sustain me when things become difficult? If not, what adjustments will I make?

### MY GOAL #3

WHY I WANT TO ACHIEVE IT (MY MOTIVATIONS):

INTERNAL

EXTERNAL

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Will these sustain me when things become difficult? If not, what adjustments will I make?

## FAQ's

### **Which is better—internal or external?**

A combination can be valuable. The challenge is that most people are much more in tune with their external motivations than their internal motivations. For example: The boss told you to do it. Your parents (substitute in any authority figure here) are breathing down your neck. You know that other people are watching. Everyone else has already done it. Those are all great things that will motivate you externally. And they're easy to identify because other people often keep reminding you of them! Yet, when you encounter a big challenge, these are usually not enough by themselves to keep you going.

### **Which will give me the biggest payout?**

Internal motivations are the often the motivations that are most neglected. During difficult times, they're often the ones that sustain you the longest – and they're the ones that give you the most satisfaction when you've been successful. They'll even make the challenges seem more satisfying. No kidding!

### **What is the best form of internal motivation?**

Do the work above to answer that question for yourself. Most internal motivations become a purpose or cause that are bigger than just you. Depending on the project and depending on where you are in life and work, different ones will have more value.

### **What is the best form of external motivation?**

Just like above, it depends on what is important to you. Many external motivations can drive you to achieve a goal. If you're also hoping to feel great satisfaction upon achievement of the goal, making a commitment to someone who is also committed to your success is often the most fulfilling external motivator.

### **What is the biggest watch out?**

Many people strive toward a goal because they believe when they achieve "it" they will feel happy and fulfilled. Yet, too many times, people grit their teeth through the hard work, then achieve the goal. They don't enjoy the process of delivering the goal and they still don't feel satisfied when they achieve it. This is extremely common. When this happens, it's almost always because they aligned completely with the external motivators and had no internal motivators. People who have a strong connection to internal motivations not only feel more satisfaction when they achieve the goal, they surprisingly enjoy moments when the plans fall through or gruesome obstacles appear. It's not nirvana when things don't go as planned, but it's better. Can you tell which motivation I'm biased toward?

### **How do I become wildly successful and achieve nirvana?**

Well, if I were you, I'd watch my [9-minute training video](#) on internal and external motivations. And make sure you've [signed up for future free training videos](#) I'll send. Oh, and share this with your friends.