

Motivation: It's All Up to You

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Introduction

No one can motivate anyone else. They may inspire them, they may stimulate them, but motivation is personal and is up to the individual. Motivation is like learning. You can be taught, but the learning is up to you. In Steven Covey's book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, he states that "Between stimulus and response, is our greatest freedom, our freedom to choose." Motivation is our choice.

Target Audience

- a. EHC
- b. Adults

Objectives

- a. Teach people are motivated for different reasons
- b. Use personal examples to demonstrate different ways of motivation
- c. Discover signature strengths of an individual

Main Teaching Points

- a. Demonstrate why you can't motivate anyone
- b. Ways to stay motivated
- c. Factors that cause loss of motivation

Why You Can't Motivate Anyone

In Steven Covey's book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, he states that "Between stimulus and response, is our greatest freedom, our freedom to choose." A classic example of this would be a football coach giving an inspiring speech at half-time to a team that was behind. Some of the players felt really motivated and went back out and played harder. The other players felt it was no use, the other players were bigger and in better shape and felt they were already beaten and even played worse. All the players heard the same inspiring speech at halftime, but each player had the freedom to choose how they would react to the speech.

Eight Tips on Motivation

Tip 1: Choose to Be Happy

Happy is defined as: characterized by or indicative of pleasure, contentment, or joy: a happy mood; a happy frame of mind. Our attitude sets our motivation. Our attitude is set for the day many times by the way we greet the morning. Are we positive and say “Good Morning Lord” or do we reluctantly get out of bed and say, “Good Lord.....Morning.”

Benefits of Laughter:

Health:

- **Laughter relaxes the whole body.** A good, hearty laugh relieves physical tension and stress, leaving your muscles relaxed for up to 45 minutes after.
- **Laughter boosts the immune system.** Laughter decreases stress hormones and increases immune cells and infection-fighting antibodies, thus improving your resistance to disease.
- **Laughter triggers the release of endorphins,** the body’s natural feel-good chemicals. Endorphins promote an overall sense of well-being and can even temporarily relieve pain.
- **Laughter protects the heart.** Laughter improves the function of blood vessels and increases blood flow, which can help protect you against a heart attack and other cardiovascular problems.

Social:

- Strengthens relationships
- Attracts others to us
- Enhances teamwork
- Helps defuse conflict
- Promotes group bonding

Note: Complete the Fordyce Emotions Questionnaire

Tip #2: Leave your Comfort Zone

Be gutsy and take risks. You may feel like you’ve jumped off a cliff and you’re free falling through outer space- and if you're living your dream, chances are, you are. Embrace it! The free fall is exciting, and you never know where you’re going to land. Jumping off the proverbial cliff means that anything can happen.

Tip #3: Don’t Limit Your Thinking

Have you ever said?

- I can't do that!
- I don't know how to do that!
- I can't do math!
- I can't pass college work!
- I Never win anything!
- I'll never get that job!
- I wish I could play like that

Have you ever said phrases like these? People that have accomplished great things did not say things like this. Great athletes, great musicians anyone that is great at anything practice, practice, practice. The first step in motivating oneself is believing in oneself and that belief does not include negative thoughts. As the saying goes, "Attitude determines Altitude".

Activity: Have participants do the nine dot activity. See PowerPoint for example and answer. Also review the Optimists' Club Creed

Tip # 4: Set Goals

For something to be a goal, there are two requirements. First, the goal must be written down or it is only a dream. Second, you must tell someone your goal so that you can be held accountable. When choosing a goal, think of a goal in terms of a **SMART** goal. First, the goal must be **Specific**. Second, it must be **Measurable** using some form of measurement. Third, it must be **Attainable**. Can it be done? Fourth, is it a **Realistic** goal? Finally it must be **Tractable** over time. For example, I will lose 30 pound over the next year. **Specific:** 30 pounds; **Measureable:** pounds; **Attainable:** yes; **Realistic:** yes (not 30 lbs. in 30 days); and **Tractable:** 12 months, so can weight monthly to see if making progress on a realistic schedule.

Note: Review the Lou Holtz story and be prepared to share with the group.

Tip #5: Practice Self-development

You should practice self-development. Do something for yourself. Read a good book or listen to inspiring tapes. It has been said that "someone who does not read is no better than one who cannot read." One way to practice self-development is complete the Signature Strengths questionnaire either online or using the paper copy. This questionnaire identifies your signature strengths as developed by Martin Seligman in his book *Authentic Happiness*. Seligman recognizes 24 signature strengths. Once you have your top five, concentrate on ways to improve upon what you are already doing using those top five.

Note: There is a worksheet to find your Signature Strengths but it would be best if participants could do the online survey. It is free, but you do have to register. It is a product of the University of Pennsylvania, by Dr. Martin Seligman. Once you go to this site, find the selection (usually in the middle) for VIA Survey of Character Strengths. There are 220 questions, but once registered, you can go in and out of the site, just need to log back in. Once completed, your results are immediate and can be printed. This will give you your character strengths in order. <http://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu/Default.aspx>

Tip#6: Dream Big

We have to dream big and not give up. Our dreams are only limited by our imagination. One of the most recent examples is the story of Susan Boyle on Britain's Got Talent. Review the you-tube video above if possible. Susan was 47, when she appeared and was straight out of the villages. Shabby looking, ever one was laughing at her as she walked out on the stage. The laughter was even louder when she said she wanted to sing like Helen Page. When asked what she was going to sing, she said, "I Dream the Dream." When she sang the first note, you could hear a pin drop. She was flawless and later became a big star. She was someone who had a big dream and never gave up on her dream.

Susan Boyle: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jca_p_3FcWA

Fred Smith is not a household name but he is another one that never gave up on his big dream. He started what is known today as FedEx. He wrote a college paper on his business plan for starting this type of business. His professor was skeptical that such a venture would work and gave him a C on his paper. One could understand the magnitude of this dream in 1965. He had a huge dream, that almost failed, but succeeded and look at it today.

Tip#7: Failure is Never Final, Success is Never Ending

Thomas Edison said it best. "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up. I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." Some of our most famous people suffered defeat but didn't give up their dream. Lucille Ball was dismissed from drama school because she was too shy to put her best foot forward. The Beatles were turned down by the Decca Recording Studio because they didn't like their sound and guitar music was on its way out. Michael Jordan was cut from high school basketball team and went home and cried. Walt Disney was fired from his newspaper job because he lacked imagination and had no original ideas. To be successful you have to take risk. Risk = Life. If you've never failed, you've never lived.

Tip#8: Finish What You Start

Business uses a phrase known as the sense of urgency, which means to stay focused and get things accomplished. When we have multiple unfinished tasks, many of us become scattered and then have a difficult time finishing anything. When this happens, the negative thoughts start creeping into our head and it becomes harder to get anything accomplished.

The movie **Rudy** was inspired by Rudy Ruettiger's. It is a story of someone who set a goal, quitting just before realizing his goal. He wanted to be a Notre Dame football player and be able to run out of the tunnel so his coal mining father could see him. Unfortunately, he wasn't a good student; he was small and not a very good athlete. His mentor inspired him to return to the team and he got to play the very last play of the very last game of the season, going into the history book as being a Notre Dame player.

Note: Read the complete story of Rudy from the handout and be prepared to explain further if necessary.

Conclusion:

There are certain ways that we can motivate ourselves. There are also reasons why we lose our motivation. There are three main reasons why we lose our motivation: Lack of confidence, becoming complacent and needing direction and focus. In Spencer Johnson's book, *Who Moved My Cheese*, these three reasons are exemplified through a fable using four characters, Sniff and Scurry, two mice and Hem and Haw, two little people the size of Sniff and Scurry in the face of change. In a nutshell, it tells the story of finding cheese, what makes me happy in life and then losing the cheese. Sniff and Scurry adapt well and move on, Hem and Haw do not. Hem and Haw had become complacent that the cheese would always be there. Hem and Haw found the cheese once, but now Hem has lost all confidence in finding it again. Haw wanted to move on, but Hem convinced him to stay. Finally, Haw regained his focus on what was really important and moved on, to find the large Cheese Station.

Lesson Material

- a. Handouts
 - i. Fordyce Emotions Questionnaire
 - ii. If You Think You Can (poem)
 - iii. Optimists' Club Creed
 - iv. Signature Strengths (definitions)

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- v. Signature Strengths (worksheet)
- vi. Motivational Stories
- b. PowerPoint
- c. Evaluation

Suggestions for Teaching

- a. Study the PowerPoint and look for exercises built into the PowerPoint. Read the Motivational stories and be prepared to tell the stories related to the slide.
- b. Copy handouts you want the group to have
- c. Have participants complete the evaluation

References

Seligman, Martin E. P. 2002. *Authentic Happiness*. Simon and Schuster, Inc., New York, New York

Covey, Stephen R. Covey, 1989. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. Simon & Schuster, Inc., New York, New York

Johnson, Spencer 2002. *Who Moved My Cheese*. G. P. Putnam's & Sons. New York, New York