

Winter Session Intrinsic Motivation Series

2.3 January 27 | What motivates my coworker? What motivates me?

Thank you for watching the conclusion to the Notre Dame Research Winter Session Series on Intrinsic Motivation. This week's questions are: What motivates my coworker? What motivates me?

We asked. And you delivered. In this video, I will share some of the wonderful contributions that you and your coworkers in the division shared to augment our conversation on intrinsic motivation.

First, I will share the results of our poll about the essential elements of intrinsic motivation. The question: **What essential element of intrinsic motivation drives you most greatly at work?**

The most popular answer was **Purpose** chosen by 40% of respondents, followed by **Relationships** at 30%, **Mastery** at 20%, and Autonomy at 10%. It was not surprising that Purpose and Relationships came out on top here at Notre Dame where we are well-known for the people who work here and the hospitality and goodwill they show. Moreover, due to remote work thanks to the pandemic, most have us have our need for autonomy pretty well met.

Especially interesting was part two of the poll: What is your go-to method for kickstarting your motivation when you need a boost? I'm going to share a sampling of answers with you. If one strikes you, pause the video and copy it down for the future!

I've grouped these tips under Mastery, Purpose, and Relationships. First, Mastery:

- Start a new project.
- Find small victories to restart inertia.

And my personal favorite:

- I imagine what it feels like when I have completed a particular task and have done a good job at it.

Next, Purpose:

- I think back on all the good we've done in the past and building a new generation.
- I connect with nature and reflect on what gives me purpose and meaning in life. Also, journaling about things I am grateful for is helpful.

Finally, Relationships:

- I am most motivated when working with others, so I try to devise a way to interact with others on projects that look like brick walls or on days that I'm struggling... This overlaps with purpose if the people I choose to work with are the ones benefitting from my expertise/effort.
- (*I'm motivated by*) Conversations with colleagues, especially my teammates. Hearing about what they are working on, their accomplishments, and how I may be able to help is a great motivator for me. I love being a part of a team where we help one another be successful.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the poll!

The theme that comes through to me in these comments is the EFFORT it takes to focus on what's important and the WORK each of us must do to find what motivates us. Practice is ESSENTIAL because

evolutionarily speaking our brains are wired to focus on the *negative*. This is advantageous when there could be a scary predator around the corner, but not so much when we're working on complex, multi-step projects from the comfort of our office chairs. The wisdom I glean from these contributions is to practice and be intentional about cultivating your intrinsic motivation.

We also received some wonderful submissions for our exercise from Daniel Pink's book *Drive* that answer the question: "What Gets You Out of Bed in the Morning?" I'm going to share four with you now. A very special thanks to Patrick Deegan from Notre Dame Research, Carolyn Sherman from the Notre Dame Institute for Advanced Study, Andrew Brown from Notre Dame Research, and Sarah Chapman from the Notre Dame Integrated Imaging Facility.

VIDEO SUBMISSIONS

At the risk of ruining the end to this video by tacking on to Sarah's inspiring quote that perfectly encapsulates Purpose, I want to express my gratitude to you for following along with these videos and activities.

I hope you got a good grasp of the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and why it matters in the workplace and at home. I hope you have taken time to reflect on which of Daniel Pink's components of intrinsic motivation resonates with you the most—Autonomy, Mastery, Purpose or maybe Relationships—and I hope you have identified when you have experienced "flow" either in the workplace or at home.

I hope you got at least one actionable tip that you've implanted or plan to implement that can increase your intrinsic motivation: like being vulnerable in a conversation with a trustworthy coworker; figuring out what new habit you want to "be bad at" during 2021; or discerning which of your tasks falls into the Covey-matrix Quadrant 2/Quality Time category that can help you meet your goals and give your day-to-day purpose!

When we all work at increasing our intrinsic motivation and our satisfaction in the workplace, we can't help but make Notre Dame Research an *even* better "Great Place to Work."

I'm going to close with short, less-cited quote from Fr. Jenkins's inaugural speech in 2005:

"If we are clear in our purpose, we will excel in our ideals."