

**Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us**

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Pink has, at the end of the book, summaries- of the whole book, and of each chapter. If you get in a pinch, go to the library and read these summaries. The one called “Cocktail Party Summary” is as follows:

When it comes to motivation, there’s a gap between what science knows and what business does. Our current business operating system- which is built around external, carrot-and-stick motivators- doesn’t work and often does harm. We need an upgrade. And the science shows the way. This new approach has three essential elements: (1) Autonomy—the desire to direct our own lives; (2) Mastery—the urge to make progress and get better at something that matters; and (3) Purpose—the yearning to do what we do in the service of something larger than ourselves.

That’s pretty good, with the rest of the book going into more depth and detail, and also providing examples. My underlinings and notes are as follows.

Human beings, Deci said, have an “inherent tendency to seek out novelty and challenges, to extend and exercise their capacities, to explore, and to learn.” But this third drive was more fragile than the other two; it needed the right environment to survive. “One who is interested in developing and enhancing intrinsic motivation in children, employees, students, etc., should not concentrate on external-control systems

our third drive—our innate need to direct our own lives, to learn and create new things, and to do better by ourselves and our world.

In our very early days—I mean very early days, say, fifty thousand years ago—the underlying assumption about human behavior was simple and true. We were trying to survive. From roaming the savannah to gather food to scrambling for the bushes when a saber-toothed tiger approached, that drive guided most of our behavior. Call this early operating system Motivation 1.0.

Humans are more than the sum of our biological urges. That first drive still mattered—no doubt about that—but it didn’t fully account for who we are. We also had a second drive—to seek reward and avoid punishment more broadly. And it was from this insight that a new operating system—call it Motivation 2.0—arose.

“...motivation is of great importance for all economic activities. It is inconceivable that people are motivated solely or even mainly by external incentives.”

Behavioral scientists often divide what we do on the job or learn in school into two categories: “algorithmic” and “heuristic.” An algorithmic task is one in which you follow a set of established instructions down a single pathway to one conclusion. That is, there’s an algorithm for solving it. A heuristic task is the opposite. Precisely because no algorithm exists for it, you have to experiment with possibilities and devise a novel solution. Working as a grocery checkout clerk is mostly algorithmic. You do pretty much the same thing over and over in a certain way. Creating an ad campaign is mostly heuristic. You have to come up with something new.

In other words, the central tenets of Motivation 2.0 may actually impair performance of the heuristic, right-brain work

adding certain kinds of extrinsic rewards on top of inherently interesting tasks can often dampen motivation and diminish performance.

Routine, not-so-interesting jobs require direction; nonroutine, more interesting work depends on self-direction.

The best use of money as a motivator is to pay people enough to take the issue of money off the table.

“...tangible rewards tend to have a substantially negative effect on intrinsic motivation,”

For artists, scientists, inventors, schoolchildren, and the rest of us, intrinsic motivation—the drive to do something because it is interesting, challenging, and absorbing—is essential for high levels of creativity.

When used in these situations, “if-then” rewards usually do more harm than good. By neglecting the ingredients of genuine motivation—autonomy, mastery, and purpose—they limit what each of us can achieve.

Like all extrinsic motivators, goals narrow our focus. That’s one reason they can be effective; they concentrate the mind. But as we’ve seen, a narrowed focus exacts a cost. For complex or conceptual tasks, offering a reward can blinker the wide-ranging thinking necessary to come up with an innovative solution.

The problem with making an extrinsic reward the only destination that matters is that some people will choose the quickest route there, even if it means taking the low road.

In fact, the business school professors suggest they should come with their own warning label: “Goals may cause systematic problems for organizations due to narrowed focus, unethical behavior, increased risk taking, decreased cooperation, and decreased intrinsic motivation. Use care when applying goals in your organization.”

By offering a reward, a principal signals to the agent that the task is undesirable. (If the task were desirable, the agent wouldn’t need a prod.)

Rewards, we’ve seen, can limit the breadth of our thinking. But extrinsic motivators—especially tangible, “if-then” ones—can also reduce the depth of our thinking. They can focus our sights on only what’s immediately before us rather than what’s off in the distance.

the elements of genuine motivation that we’ll explore later, by their very nature, defy a short-term view.

Take mastery. The objective itself is inherently long-term because complete mastery, in a sense, is unattainable.

The starting point, of course, is to ensure that the baseline rewards—wages, salaries, benefits, and so on—are adequate and fair. Without a healthy baseline, motivation of any sort is difficult and often impossible.

Glucksberg’s experiment provides the first question you should ask when contemplating external motivators: Is the task at hand routine? That is, does accomplishing it require following a prescribed set of rules to a specified end?

“Rewards do not undermine people’s intrinsic motivation for dull tasks because there is little or no intrinsic motivation to be undermined.”

you’ll increase your chances of success by supplementing the poster-packing rewards with three important practices:

- Offer a rationale for why the task is necessary.
- Acknowledge that the task is boring.
- Allow people to complete the task their own way.

emphasize the elements of deeper motivation—autonomy, mastery, and purpose

Your best approach is to have already established the conditions of a genuinely motivating environment. The baseline rewards must be sufficient. That is, the team’s basic compensation must be adequate and fair—particularly compared with people doing similar work for similar organizations. Your nonprofit must be a congenial place to work. And the people on your team must have autonomy, they must have ample opportunity to pursue mastery, and their daily duties must relate to a larger purpose. If these elements are in place, the best strategy is to provide a sense of urgency and significance—and then get out of the talent’s way.

The essential requirement: Any extrinsic reward should be unexpected and offered only after the task is complete.

In other words, where “if-then” rewards are a mistake, shift to “now that” rewards

Repeated “now that” bonuses can quickly become expected “if-then” entitlements—which can ultimately crater effective performance.

But you'll do even better if you follow two more guidelines.  
First, consider nontangible rewards..  
Second, provide useful information.

“self-determination theory (SDT).”

SDT, by contrast, begins with a notion of universal human needs. It argues that we have three innate psychological needs—competence, autonomy, and relatedness. When those needs are satisfied, we're motivated, productive, and happy. When they're thwarted, our motivation, productivity, and happiness plummet.

Human beings have an innate inner drive to be autonomous, self-determined, and connected to one another. And when that drive is liberated, people achieve more and live richer lives.

Type I behavior is fueled more by intrinsic desires than extrinsic ones. It concerns itself less with the external rewards to which an activity leads and more with the inherent satisfaction of the activity itself. At the center of Type X behavior is the second drive. At the center of Type I behavior is the third drive.

Note: OK. But is there a moral or ethical component to this? What if what motivates me does not advance the human condition?

But for Type X's, the main motivator is external rewards; any deeper satisfaction is welcome, but secondary. For Type I's, the main motivator is the freedom, challenge, and purpose of the undertaking itself; any other gains are welcome, but mainly as a bonus.

Note: Is it possible to teach someone to become Type I?

Type I behavior is both born and made.  
Type I behavior does not disdain money or recognition.  
Type I behavior is a renewable resource.  
Type I behavior promotes greater physical and mental well-being.

Ultimately, Type I behavior depends on three nutrients: autonomy, mastery, and purpose. Type I behavior is self-directed. It is devoted to becoming better and better at something that matters. And it connects that quest for excellence to a larger purpose.

### **Autonomy**

“... isn't about walking around and seeing if people are in their offices,” he told me. It's about creating conditions for people to do their best work.

I'm convinced it's the latter—that our basic nature is to be curious and self-directed.

doing everything we can to reawaken their deep-seated sense of autonomy. This innate capacity for self-direction is at the heart of Motivation 3.0 and Type I behavior.

Autonomy, as they see it, is different from independence. It's not the rugged, go-it-alone, rely-on-nobody individualism of the American cowboy. It means acting with choice—which means we can be both autonomous and happily interdependent with others.

A sense of autonomy has a powerful effect on individual performance and attitude. According to a cluster of recent behavioral science studies, autonomous motivation promotes greater conceptual understanding, better grades, enhanced persistence at school and in sporting activities, higher productivity, less burnout, and greater levels of psychological well-being.

But like any good entrepreneur, Cannon-Brookes walks through life beneath a cloud of perpetual dissatisfaction.

“FedEx Days”—because people have to deliver something overnight.

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autonomy—in particular, autonomy over four aspects of work: what people do, when they do it, how they do it, and whom they do it with.

As Atlassian’s experience shows, Type I behavior emerges when people have autonomy over the four T’s: their task, their time, their technique, and their team.

### Task

“Hire good people, and leave them alone.”  
bootlegging and experimental doodling.

### Time

Without sovereignty over our time, it’s nearly impossible to have autonomy over our lives.

### Technique

### Team

the virtues of offering people some amount of freedom over those with whom they work.  
Ample research has shown that people working in self-organized teams are more satisfied than those working in inherited teams.

encouraging autonomy doesn’t mean discouraging accountability.

“Studies have shown that perceived control is an important component of one’s happiness. However, what people feel like they want control over really varies, so I don’t think there’s one aspect of autonomy that’s universally the most important. Different individuals have different desires, so the best strategy for an employer would be to figure out what’s important to each individual employee.”

### Mastery

mastery—the desire to get better and better at something that matters.

Solving complex problems requires an inquiring mind and the willingness to experiment one’s way to a fresh solution.

Where Motivation 2.0 sought compliance, Motivation 3.0 seeks engagement. Only engagement can produce mastery.

in our offices and our classrooms we have way too much compliance and way too little engagement.

In flow, goals are clear.

Feedback is immediate.

in flow, the relationship between what a person had to do and what he could do was perfect. The challenge wasn’t too easy. Nor was it too difficult.

the desire for intellectual challenge—that is, the urge to master something new and engaging—was the best predictor of productivity.

First, they provide employees with what I call “Goldilocks tasks”—challenges that are not too hot and not too cold, neither overly difficult nor overly simple.

The second tactic the shrewdest enterprises afford employees the freedom to sculpt their jobs in ways that bring a little bit of flow to otherwise mundane duties.

their findings suggest that mastery abides by three, somewhat peculiar, laws.

### Mastery Is a Mindset

Dweck’s signature insight is that what people believe shapes what people achieve. Our beliefs about ourselves and the nature of our abilities—what she calls our “self-theories”—determine how we interpret our experiences and can set the boundaries on what we accomplish.

Mastery Is a Pain

Mastery Is an Asymptote

This is the nature of mastery: Mastery is an asymptote. You can approach it. You can home in on it. You can get really, really, really close to it. But like Cézanne, you can never touch it. Mastery is impossible to realize fully.

In the end, mastery attracts precisely because mastery eludes.

people are much more likely to reach that flow state at work than in leisure.

Left to their own devices, children seek out flow with the inevitability of a natural law.

Purpose

The first two legs of the Type I tripod, autonomy and mastery, are essential. But for proper balance we need a third leg—purpose, which provides a context for its two mates.

“I think that evolution has had a hand in selecting people who had a sense of doing something beyond themselves.”  
Note: Why?

People at work are thirsting for context, yearning to know that what they do contributes to a larger whole. And a powerful way to provide that context is to spend a little less time telling how and a little more time showing why.

Between the words businesses use and the goals they seek sit the policies they implement to turn the former into the latter.

“The value of a life can be measured by one’s ability to affect the destiny of one less advantaged. Since death is an absolute certainty for everyone, the important variable is the quality of life one leads between the times of birth and death.” BILL STRICKLAND

Or as Deci put it, “The typical notion is this: You value something. You attain it. Then you’re better off as a function of it. But what we find is that there are certain things that if you value and if you attain them, you’re worse off as a result of it, not better off.”

The science shows that the secret to high performance isn’t our biological drive or our reward-and-punishment drive, but our third drive—our deep-seated desire to direct our own lives, to extend and expand our abilities, and to make a contribution.

We know—if we’ve spent time with young children or remember ourselves at our best—that we’re not destined to be passive and compliant. We’re designed to be active and engaged. And we know that the richest experiences in our lives aren’t when we’re clamoring for validation from others, but when we’re listening to our own voice—doing something that matters, doing it well, and doing it in the service of a cause larger than ourselves.

Here’s something you can do to keep yourself motivated. At the end of each day, ask yourself whether you were better today than you were yesterday.

“to don’t” list—an inventory of behaviors and practices that sap his energy, divert his focus, and ought be avoided.

“What you decide not to do is probably more important than what you decide to do.”

“**Deliberate practice**”—a “lifelong period of . . . effort to improve performance in a specific domain.”

Remember that deliberate practice has one objective: to improve performance.

Repeat, repeat, repeat.

Seek constant, critical feedback.

Focus ruthlessly on where you need help.

Prepare for the process to be mentally and physically exhausting.

Real challenges are far more invigorating than controlled leisure.

giving employees a way to acknowledge a coworker “puts the feedback control in the hands of the folks who are closest to the activity.”

Set aside an entire school day (or a family vacation day) and ask kids to come up with a problem to solve or a project to tackle. In advance, help them collect the tools, information, and supplies they might need. Then let them have at it. The next morning, ask them to deliver—by reporting back to the class or the family on their discoveries and experiences.

Carol Dweck, as well as others in the field, offers a how-to list for offering praise in a way that promotes Type I behavior:

- Praise effort and strategy, not intelligence.

- Make praise specific.

- Praise in private.

- Offer praise only when there’s a good reason for it.

“If you set a goal of becoming an expert in your business, you would immediately start doing all kinds of things you don’t do now.”

If he could conquer the weakness, the cowardice in himself, he would not worry about the rest; it would come.”

as Socrates demonstrated long ago, that the truly free individual is free only to the extent of his own self-mastery.

How do you manage in such a way as not to de-motivate people?”

This new approach has three essential elements: (1) Autonomy—the desire to direct our own lives; (2) Mastery—the urge to make progress and get better at something that matters; and (3) Purpose—the yearning to do what we do in the service of something larger than ourselves.