

Self-motivation

01 Introduction – how is the exercise used?

The exercise aims to allow the individual to reflect on what motivates them at work and in their personal lives. So, what are the factors in motivation?

- What drives or motivates us as individuals?
- How do we motivate others?
- Do we understand what sits within the construct of motivation?
- Sometimes having some theory and context behind us helps us.
- Evidence-based psychology research sits with the motivation that is grounded in Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Motivation has three constructs.

- **Competence:** Learning and development – am I developing?
- **Autonomy:** “I’ve got this!” My career, development and destiny are in my hands.
- **Relatedness:** Am I part of something? Am I connected to others?

02 Factors in self-motivation

Self-motivation is complex. It's linked to your level of initiative in setting challenging goals for yourself, your belief that you have the skills and abilities needed to achieve those goals and your expectation that, if you put in enough hard work, you will succeed (or at least be in the running, if it's a competitive situation).

Four factors are necessary to build the strongest levels of self-motivation:

- Self-confidence and self-efficacy.
- Positive thinking and positive thinking about the future.
- Focus and strong goals.
- A motivating environment.

By working on all these together, you should quickly improve your self-motivation. Do the simple exercise and then let's look at each of these factors individually. (Showing question grouping from the exercise below)

THE EXERCISE

03 Self-motivation

For each statement, score in the column that best describes you. Please answer questions as you are (rather than how you think you should be), and don't worry if some questions seem to score in the wrong direction.

1	2	3	4	5
NOT AT ALL	RARELY	SOMETIMES	OFTEN	VERY OFTEN

NB** Please remember to reverse the scores on the following questions: 1, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. (i.e., 1 = 5, 2 = 4, 3 = 3, 4 = 2, 5 = 1)

1.** I am unsure of my ability to achieve the goals I set for myself

2. When working on my goals, I put in maximum effort and work even harder if I've suffered a setback

3. I regularly set goals and objectives to achieve my vision for my life

4. I think positively about setting goals and making sure my needs are met

5. I use rewards (and consequences) to keep myself focused. For example, if I finish my report on time, I allow myself a break

6. I believe that if I work hard and apply my abilities and talents, I will be successful

7.** I worry about deadlines and getting things done, which causes stress and anxiety

8.** When an unexpected event threatens or jeopardises my goal, I tend to walk away, set a different goal, and move in a new direction

9.** When I come up with a really good idea, I am surprised by my creativity. I figure it is my lucky day and caution myself not to get used to the feeling.

10.** I tend to do the minimum amount of work necessary to keep my boss and my team satisfied

11.** I tend to worry about why I won't reach my goals, and often focus on why something probably won't work

12. I create a vivid and powerful vision of my future success before embarking on a new goal

YOUR RESULT

04 Scoring your results

CONSTRUCT (SUBSCALE) · TOTAL

Self-confidence and self-efficacy (Question 1,2,6,8)



Positive thinking (Questions 4,9,11,12)



Focus and strong goals (Questions 3,7)



Motivating environment (Questions 5,10)



Total



05 Score bands

SCORE

COMMENT

12- 27

You allow your personal doubts and fears to keep you from succeeding. You've probably had a few incomplete goals in the past, so you may have convinced yourself that you're not self-motivated- and then you have made that come true. Break this harmful pattern now, and start believing in yourself

28- 43

You're doing OK on self-motivation. You're certainly not failing- however, you could achieve much more. To achieve what you want, try to increase the motivation factors in all areas of your life.

44-60

Wonderful! You get things done, and you don't let anything stand in your way. You make a conscious effort to stay self-motivated, and you spend significant time and effort on setting goals and acting to achieve those goals. You attract and inspire others with your success - Be aware not everyone is self-motivated as you are

06 Self-confidence and self-efficacy

(Questions 1, 2, 6, 8)

Part of being self-motivated has good self-assurance, self-confidence, and self-efficacy.

Being highly self-assured means you will set challenging goals for yourself, and this goal-setting is a helpful factor in building resilience when you encounter setbacks. If you don't believe in yourself, you'll be much more likely to think, "I knew I couldn't do this", instead of "This one failure isn't going to stop me!"

By developing a general level of self-confidence in yourself, you will not only believe you can succeed, but you'll also recognise and enjoy the successes you've already had. This, in turn, will inspire you to build on those successes. The momentum created by self-confidence is hard to beat.

To help improve self-confidence and self-efficacy, consider some of these steps:

- Think about the achievements in your life.
- Examine your strengths to understand what you can build on.
- Determine what other people see as your strengths and key capabilities.
- Set achievable goals for yourself, work to achieve them and enjoy those achievements.
- Seek mentors and others with the competencies, skills, and attributes you desire.

As you recognise how much you've already achieved and understand your potential, you will be confident to set goals and accomplish what you desire. The more you look for reasons to believe in yourself, the easier it will be to find ways to motivate yourself.

07 Positive Thinking

(Questions 4, 9, 11, 12)

Positive thinking is closely related to self-confidence as a factor in self-motivation. Looking at things positively is essential, especially when things aren't going as planned and you're ready to give up.

If you think that things are going to go wrong or that you won't succeed, this may influence things so that your predictions will come true. This is particularly the case if you need to work hard to achieve success or if you need to persuade others to support you to succeed. Your thoughts can significantly influence whether you succeed or fail, so make sure those thoughts are "on your side."

Positive thinking also helps you think about an attractive future you want. When you expect positive results, your choices will be more positive, and you'll be less likely to leave outcomes to fate or chance. A vivid picture of success and positive thinking helps you bridge the gap between wanting something and going out to get it.

To apply "the power of positive thinking", do the following:

- Become aware of your thoughts and write them down throughout the day.
- Challenge your negative thoughts and replace them with positive ones.
- Create a strong and vivid picture of what it will be like to achieve your goals.
- Develop affirmations or statements that you can repeat to yourself throughout the day. These should remind you of what you want to achieve and why you will achieve it.
- Practice positive thinking until you automatically think about yourself and the world positively every day.

08 Focus and Strong Goals

(Questions 3, 7)

As we've said above, setting strong goals is key to building self-motivation. These give you focus, a clear sense of direction, and self-confidence from recognising your achievement.

First, determine your direction through effective goal setting. When you set a goal, you make a promise to yourself. Part of the strength of this is that it gives you a clear direction. Part is that you've made this promise to yourself, and you'll want to keep this promise. And the part is that it's a challenge, and trying to meet it is fun!

But don't set just any goal. According to [Locke's goal-setting theory](#), your goals should have the following characteristics:

- **Clarity** - Effective goals are clear, measurable, specific, and based on behaviour, not outcomes.
- **Challenge** - Goals should be difficult enough to be exciting but not so difficult that you can't reach them.
- **Commitment** - Goals should be attainable and should be relevant. They should contribute significantly to the primary objectives you're trying to achieve.
- **Regularity of feedback** - Monitor your progress towards your goals regularly to maintain your sense of momentum and enthusiasm and enjoy your progress towards those goals.
- **Sufficient respect for complexity** - If the goal involves complex work, ensure you don't over-commit yourself. Complex work can take an unpredictably long time to complete, particularly if you have to learn how to do the task "on the job".

09 Motivating Environment

(Questions 5, 10)

The final thing to focus on is surrounding yourself with people and resources that will remind you of your goals and help you with your internal motivation. These external factors will help you get motivated from the outside, which differs from the internal motivation we've discussed. However, the more factors you have working for you, the better.

You can't rely on these "environmental" or outside elements alone to motivate you; you can use them for extra support. Try the following:

- Look for teamwork opportunities; teamwork makes you accountable to others.
- Ask your boss for specific targets and objectives to help you measure your success.
- Ask for exciting assignments.
- Set up some goals that you can easily achieve. Quick wins are great for getting you motivated.
- Buddy up with people whom you trust to be supportive and ask them to help keep you accountable.
- Try to work by yourself sparingly. Balance the time you work from home with time spent working with others.