

# Importance of Motivation in Goal Setting

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**Abstract:** this paper illustrates the importance of motivation in goal setting and presents some theories and facts from psychologists and scientists. It is widely known that motivation plays a crucial role in various fields and has a huge impact on achieving a success and targets. Moreover, the types of motivation and ways to set goals are also be mentioned in this article.

**Keywords:** motivation, goal setting, willingness, theory, Activation, Persistence, Intensity

**Literature review:** It is generally accepted that motivation is vital for setting goals and achieving success. Many people feel that if they are motivated enough, all the impossible things turn out to be possible for themselves. If payed close attention we can observe motivation anywhere, such as students encouraging each other to take the exam with high marks or a mother believing his son that he could perform well in his job interview and so on. Even animals motivate each other to do something that's vital for their lives. What is motivation itself? Motivation is the process that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviors. It is what causes you to act, whether it is getting a glass of water to reduce thirst or reading a book to gain knowledge. Motivation involves the biological, emotional, social, and cognitive forces that activate behavior. In everyday usage, the term "motivation" is frequently used to describe why a person does something. It is the driving force behind human actions. Motivation doesn't just refer to the factors that activate behaviors; it also involves the factors that direct and maintain these goal-directed actions (though such motives are rarely directly observable). As a result, we often have to infer the reasons why people do the things that they do based on observable behaviors. What exactly lies behind the motivations for why we act? Psychologists have proposed different theories of motivation, including drive theory, instinct theory, and humanistic theory (such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs). The reality is that there are many different forces that guide and direct our motivations. Admittedly, there are some types of motivation that we use in our daily life and different types of motivation are frequently described as being either extrinsic or intrinsic:

Extrinsic motivations are those that arise from outside of the individual and often involve rewards such as trophies, money, social recognition, or praise.

Intrinsic motivations are those that arise from within the individual, such as doing a complicated crossword puzzle purely for the personal gratification of solving a problem.

There are many different uses for motivation. It serves as a guiding force for all human behavior, but understanding how it works and the factors that may impact it can be important in a number of ways.

**Methods:** Understanding motivation can:

- Help improve the efficiency of people as they work toward goals
- Help people take action
- Encourage people to engage in health-oriented behaviors
- Help people avoid unhealthy or maladaptive behaviors such as risk-taking and addiction
- Help people feel more in control of their lives

Improve overall well-being and happiness Anyone who has ever had a goal (like wanting to learn languages within several years or run a marathon) probably immediately realizes that simply having the desire to accomplish something is not enough. Achieving such a goal requires the ability to persist through obstacles and endurance to keep going in spite of difficulties.

**Results:** There are three major components of motivation: activation, persistence, and intensity.

- **Activation** involves the decision to initiate a behavior, such as enrolling in a psychology class.
- **Persistence** is the continued effort toward a goal even though obstacles may exist. An example of persistence would be taking more psychology courses in order to earn a degree although it requires a significant investment of time, energy, and resources.
- **Intensity** can be seen in the concentration and vigor that goes into pursuing a goal. For example, one student might coast by without much effort, while another student will study regularly, participate in discussions, and take advantage of research opportunities outside of class. The first student lacks intensity, while the second pursues their educational goals with greater intensity.

Furthermore, some scientists and psychologists also suggested their theories in goal setting and motivation. For example, in 1960's, Edwin Locke put forward the Goal-setting theory of motivation. This theory states that goal setting is essentially linked to

task performance. It states that specific and challenging goals along with appropriate feedback contribute to higher and better task performance.

In simple words, goals indicate and give direction to an employee about what needs to be done and how much efforts are required to be put in.

The important features of goal-setting theory are as follows:

- The willingness to work towards attainment of goal is main source of job motivation. Clear, particular and difficult goals are greater motivating factors than easy, general and vague goals.
- Specific and clear goals lead to greater output and better performance. Unambiguous, measurable and clear goals accompanied by a deadline for completion avoids misunderstanding.
- Goals should be realistic and challenging. This gives an individual a feeling of pride and triumph when he attains them, and sets him up for attainment of next goal. The more challenging the goal, the greater is the reward generally and the more is the passion for achieving it.
- Better and appropriate feedback of results directs the employee behaviour and contributes to higher performance than absence of feedback. Feedback is a means of gaining reputation, making clarifications and regulating goal difficulties. It helps employees to work with more involvement and leads to greater job satisfaction.
- Employees' participation in goal is not always desirable.
- Participation of setting goal, however, makes goal more acceptable and leads to more involvement.

Goal-setting theory is summarized regarding the effectiveness of specific, difficult goals; the relationship of goals to affect; the mediators of goal effects; the relation of goals to self-efficacy; the moderators of goal effects; and the generality of goal effects across people, tasks, countries, time spans, experimental designs, goal sources (i.e., self-set, set jointly with others, or assigned), and dependent variables. Points out Edwin Locke and his goal-setting theory argues that for goal-setting to be successful with desired outcomes, they must contain the following specific points (Lunenburg & Samaras, 2011):

- Clarity: goals need to be specific;
- Challenging: goals must be difficult yet attainable;
- Goals must be accepted;
- Feedback must be provided on goal attainment;
- Goals are more effective when they are used to evaluate the performance;
- Deadlines improve the effectiveness of goals;
- A learning goal orientation leads to higher performance than a performance goal orientation;
- Group goal-setting is as important as individual goal-setting.

Many studies analyzed by other psychologists and scientists on goal-setting reveal that the habit of making goals is strong, cross-culturally; however, the rate of attaining those goals via small, manageable changes is weak.

**Conclusion:** The following findings summarize the last 90 years of goal-setting:

- Cecil Alec Mace conducted the first study on goal-setting in 1935;
- People who write their goals are more likely to achieve their goal than those who don't by 50%;
- Motivation experts agree that goals should be written down, and carried with oneself, if possible;
- 92% of New Year resolutions fail by the 15th of January;
- Carefully outlined goals, which can be measured and set within specific timeframes, are more effective;
- Explaining your goals to someone you are close to, or making the commitment public, substantially increases your chances of reaching your goal;
- By contrast, goals that are kept to oneself are more likely to be mixed up with the 1,500 thoughts that the average person experiences by the minute;

- Often, achieving a goal means sacrificing something or putting aside certain habits, or beliefs about yourself—it may even result in an emotional or physical toll;
- Harvard research documents that 83% of the population of the United States do not have goals.
- Goal-setting typically yields a success rate of 90%;
- Goals have an energizing function. The higher the goal, the greater the effort invested.

To conclude, by looking all the illustrated information above, we can definitely say that motivation is primary need for achieving success and setting goals.

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