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# SELF-IMPROVEMENT TIPS CAREER BUNDLE



**6 Powerful  
Lessons For  
Professionals**

# What Exactly is Motivation

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## What Exactly is Motivation?

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Motivation is directly related to your behavior and is directly connected to the why and how of doing a particular action or task. The easiest way to understand this is to understand why you want to achieve something and in knowing what route you will take to get there.

It is so easy to want to change or improve something in your life. The hard part comes shortly after you have started your particular journey. It is so easy to waiver and wander off track, you get sidetracked with other things and your goal becomes nothing but a distant memory.

One of the best ways to describe motivation is to get you to think about those urges and desires that you have. You know, the ones where you want to change your life for the better! So just how do you get the motivation to change and how do you stay motivated over the long term?

If you are unhappy with some area of your life then you no doubt want to make changes. This could include losing weight, changing careers or just learning a new skill. In order to do this you will want to set goals that are within your grasp. A great example of this is suddenly deciding that you are going to run in a marathon. While this is a great goal, if you focus on nothing but running 26 miles, those miles will stretch further into the distance.

Instead what you want to do is break down the 26 miles into smaller parts. Why not focus on running a 5K instead? This will seem much more manageable to you and you can reach your goal faster.

By having a certain goal within your grasp you will stay motivated longer. As you picture yourself reaching that goal you can feel proud of your accomplishment. Once there you can then concentrate on running a half marathon and before you know your goal of running a full marathon will become a reality.

There are many words that can be associated with motivation and these include desire, wants, dreams, wishes, needs, goals and more. Anything that you desire strongly can often be enough motivation in itself. When you feel that your motivation is lacking you may want to refocus and set smaller goals. Sometimes sharing your dreams with someone else can help you stay focused for the long term too.

## Are Your Basic Needs Classified as Motivational Ones?

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Motivation is a hot topic that covers a wide range of activities and words ranging from goals and desires to needs. What you may not realize is that some basic needs actually fall into the category of motivation.

This can be seen by the behavior you exhibit when providing for your family. You don't deny that you need to provide shelter, food, warmth and safety for your family. You do these things without even thinking.

Yet those basic needs are your motivation and you are so in tune with your motivation that you don't hesitate to do what you have to. This might mean working longer hours or even taking on a second job if necessary.

So why is it that when you want to achieve something new you have such a hard time with it? The importance that you associate with it may be your reason why.

If you don't feel as driven then your motivation automatically begins to lag. So the simple answer would be to attach much more importance to your new goal. There is no reason why a dream or desire shouldn't become a reality. You just have to start seeing it as one and your motivation will increase.

Let's get back to basic motivation for a minute. When you start thinking about basic requirements every living thing has to be motivated to survive. These basic survival instincts include breathing, drinking, eating and keeping warm. All living things have to eat and drink water to survive. The desire to stay alive is motivation enough, for humans we have to add in keeping warm in order to survive.

This motivation is something which automatically gets handed down generation to generation. You teach your children what they need to do to survive in this world. They have to learn to find food and water for themselves, and to have a shelter to stay warm. There is no questioning about how to stay motivated in order to accomplish this. They are just tasks that must be completed on a daily basis.

Your own body knows what it needs to survive and will let you know when something is lacking. Without water you will certainly die within days, but you can live without food for a longer period of time.

When it comes down to understanding what motivation is then this explanation on basic necessities should be great example for you.

## Changing Your Life

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Most people will tell you that they have at least one wish or desire to change something about their life. What may be strange is the number of people who don't make any type of move to change this one thing. The number one reason for not attaining a certain goal is often put down to lack of motivation.

There are some people who would say this is a lack of effort as opposed to a lack of motivation. Let's take a look at some reasons why people don't put the effort into making a lifestyle change.

1. In order to make any type of change in your life you need to have a good reason to do so. Having a goal is wonderful but the reason you have to reach that goal is probably more important. If you want to change your job then you need to have a reason for doing so, reasons could include; wanting more money, to move to a new location or for more opportunities.

2. Setting too large of a goal. Weight loss is a perfect example here. If you need to lose 70 pounds don't focus on this amount. Instead if you set smaller goals of 7 pounds per month you will find that you can stay on track better. If you meet this goal faster than one month that is great then just keep on going. If you are struggling or lose a little less then don't give up, just refocus and set your next monthly goal at 5 pounds.

3. Having a vision of what you want is a great way to stay motivated. This is why many people recommend keeping track of your goals. This can be done in various ways depending upon your goal. If your goal is to lose weight then keep photos and images of your progress. If it is another type of goal then keep a journal or blog of your journey. This way you can see what you are struggling with and what you are accomplishing.

4. No support network is another reason why many people don't make the effort to change their lives. Getting the support from family and friends can really make a world of difference to your goals.

If you put these four factors into practice you will find that you have both the drive and commitment to finally make those lifestyle changes you have dreamed about.

## How to Stay Motivated when Studying

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Learning is a two way street it requires a teacher and a student who must work together to get an end result. While this may sound simple enough this process is not always an easy one for teacher or student. Many students encounter learning problems and get left behind in class. This can lead to other issues including lack of confidence and missing school.

To stay motivated when studying there are several things that can be done by both teacher and student. For teachers they can hopefully recognize when a student is struggling. When this happens they can try to find another way to deliver the lesson if possible. Sometimes just getting another student to help them is enough, a different type of explanation can make the topic easier to understand.

Teachers can sometimes just change the classroom environment when they see students struggling or just not paying enough attention. Everyone can get bored by being in the same environment day after day. So moving the class outside can be a smart move indeed.

Different teaching materials such as video or audio can also make a huge difference for some students. Computer based learning is huge these days and all school aged children pretty much have access to some type of computer. So why not make use of technology?

Students can stay motivated and take action in various ways. The first is to have a place at home where homework can be done without any interruptions. This could be a room in the basement or a section of one of the quieter rooms in the house. When someone is in this area then they are not to be disturbed. This allows the child to study quickly and efficiently.

Most parents embrace technology and are happy to encourage their children to make use of it while learning new subjects. There are lots of online tools that allow everyone to study effectively. This includes using things like online or downloadable calendars and planning tools. This way homework time can be scheduled along with afterschool activities and weekend family activities.

There are also tons of learning resources online with practice tests, spelling and math games that can encourage your children to want to spend more time learning. If your child is having a hard time learning something new then try turning it into more of a game to take away the school aspect of it.

## Keeping Motivated with Your Family

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Providing for your family is a basic motivation that you probably do without thinking. You don't question the need to provide a home, food, warmth and safety to your spouse and children. These survival instincts are taught to you as a child and you pass them on to your children.

When it comes to making changes or improvements outside of these basic needs things can become a little complicated. This is very true when you have the desire to make a change that will affect your entire family. Will they be supportive or not is usually a big deciding factor on how motivated you will actually be.

Each family member has the right and ability to make their own lifestyle changes and getting support from each other is crucial. It is so much easier to have someone to talk to and discuss things with when you aren't feeling as motivated as you should. So it just makes sense to include your family right from the beginning.

Some lifestyle changes will not be welcomed by every family member. If the lifestyle change includes a family move to a new town, you could be faced with resistance from your children. This is why it is important to sit down with them and discuss any upcoming changes as soon as possible. No-one likes to be faced with a complete surprise of suddenly moving across country. By letting your children know months ahead of time they can become accustomed to the idea by the moving date.

Even if your spouse or children will not be directly impacted by your change it still helps to let them know what you are doing. Support in any form can be extremely helpful and comfortable at the right time.

Your goal may be to learn a new skill or take up a brand new sport. Just being able to share your achievements is often motivation enough to keep on going. Plus today it is really easy to share things with your family and friends.

If you are learning a new sport you can download plenty of apps that allow you to set goals and share your progress on Facebook and Twitter. You can even get rewards and trophies as you reach your milestones.

By incorporating your family you are also teaching them that it is possible to reach your dreams and that you are never too old or young to set goals.

## Motivation for Sports

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It doesn't matter whether you are a professional athlete or you just enjoy a particular sport you can still have goals and dreams that you want to achieve. Using motivation to reach those goals is possible but not always easy. Let's take a look and see how you can stay focused and motivated when it comes to the topic of sports and exercise.

Some professional athlete's use coaches to inspire them with words of motivation. This method works well to some extent but each player or athlete must still perform. So how do you make yourself step up to the plate and take action on a consistent basis?

As with any goal, dream or desire you must have an underlying reason of why you want to reach your goal. This could be a financial goal, or the desire to hold that trophy or sports cup in your hands. If your reason is strong it will fuel your motivation on a daily basis.

If you are trying to discover your motivation then understand that this is the desire or reason of why you are attempting to achieve this particular goal. Quite often if a goal is too large or too far off in the distance it can be very hard to stay focused.

This is why it is recommended for any athlete to set smaller, attainable goals. These goals should be ones that you can almost grasp in your hands, you just have to go that extra mile before grabbing it.

The reasons that you have are connected to your emotional state and can include reasons of fear and not just desire. You may be scared that you won't make the team and this can be enough of a driving force to make you step up your motivation.

While fear can be a great motivator it is much better for athletes to focus on an end result such as winning the Stanley Cup or crossing the finishing line of a marathon.

Setting performance goals can be extremely helpful and are good to use in your regular training schedule. Attempting to improve your time for example, would be a good short term goal to set. As you reach this level then your next goal can be to go even faster until you shorten your time to the desired level.

All athletes have a reason why they are willing to get up early and train, once you discover what yours is you will have no trouble joining their ranks.

## Staying Focused and Motivated

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It is so easy to tell yourself that you are going to accomplish something new, but what happens when this task takes longer than you had allowed for? Your motivation starts to disappear and quite often you give up on the idea altogether.

It definitely can be hard to stay focused on certain things. Weight loss is a fine example of this. If you have ever tried to lose weight you know your enthusiasm is so high for the first week or two. As you make lifestyle changes the pounds drop off quickly and you are feeling great about your efforts.

A few weeks into your diet you plateau and don't lose any weight. You start to eat a little more or stop exercising as much and then before you know it you have abandoned your goal and have gone back to your old habits.

There are several reasons for this. First you may not have recognized that plateauing is a perfectly normal occurrence when it comes to losing weight. Secondly did you use not losing any weight as an excuse to have that extra treat or to miss a workout? Your mind can do wonderful things and is capable of coming up with hundreds of reasons to not do something.

To stay motivated and focus you can do a number of things including:

- Set smaller goals
- Keep a calendar, food tracker or exercise planner
- Share your goals with someone else
- Join a group of people with the same goals

By creating smaller goals you won't feel as overwhelmed when your results start to dwindle or slow down. If you break this down further into weekly targets you can easily stay focused longer. It isn't as hard to do something new from a Monday to Friday as it is to think about doing it for months at a time.

Next you really need to be honest with yourself. If you have lost 15 pounds before you hit that plateau then congratulate yourself on that achievement. Focus on what you have done and not where you have to go! This is why it is often a good reason to keep photos of your weight loss journey. When you are feeling down take a look at them and remember what you did look like.

By changing your mindset to be more positive you can stay focused with your goals.

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## Staying Motivated with Work

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Whether you love your job or hate it you still need to stay motivated and do a good job. Otherwise you risk losing your job altogether and this may not be something you are prepared to risk at the moment.

Motivation at work is often a two way street and your employer should take steps to keep you motivated as an employee. This can be done in several ways along with you putting in your own efforts to stay motivated.

Every employee likes to be acknowledged that they are doing a good job. This is a superb motivational tool which sometimes, unfortunately, gets overlooked. If you view yourself as a leader you may want to take on the role of acknowledging when someone has helped you at work. This could be working on a project together and achieving good results. Just take a few minutes to thank your co-worker for their efforts, it doesn't take long but makes a person feel appreciated.

Employers can do things like conduct surveys and provide incentives when it comes to output and performance. At the same time as an employee you can provide good feedback when asked and make the effort to improve your job performance. This is important if you are looking at getting promoted in the near future.

People will stay motivated when they are given the right job. If an employer sees that a certain person is under performing a job change may be all it takes to increase their productivity.

A good employer will also provide the opportunities to allow their employees to grow. This can be done by providing training programs either during work hours or as an after hour program.

When a person strives to improve themselves you want to appreciate their efforts and reward them if necessary. If they have taken the time and effort to learn a new skill allow them to use this at work if and when possible.

Always remember that your performance at work is a direct consequence of your efforts and your motivation. At the same time you should expect and get feedback from your employer on a regular basis.

So no matter which side of the coin you are on employee or employer you can still do your best to stay motivated to do a good job, and to provide motivation and incentives to your fellow co-workers.

## Using Motivational Tools to Meet Your Goals

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Many people think that they have to rely on themselves to stay motivated when striving to reach new goals. This is actually not true and there are many tools that you can use to make reaching goals much easier.

Some of the most popular motivational tools you can use include simple things like using blogs, journals, online calendars and planners. All of these things can really help you stay on track and achieve your goals.

A blog or journal can really help you plan out your steps to reach your goal. You can keep a daily or weekly journal whatever works best for you. Many people start off by using a weekly journal and then switching to a daily one. As they find that writing down accomplishments and struggles is really helpful, plus it acts as a reference incase the situation happens again.

Calendars and planners in all forms are available online. You can even download apps to your iPhone, iPad or other mobile device. This makes sure you can access your planner regardless of your location.

There are even apps that allow you to share your progress on places like Facebook and Twitter. You can even challenge your friends and family to friendly competitions. Plus this helps you set and achieve weekly goals, by incorporating a little bit of fun into them.

What motivational tool you use will depend upon your goal and your personality. You may enjoy writing and are automatically drawn to using a blog to stay motivated. Or you may be more of a private person and prefer the idea of using a planner or app for motivation.

You don't necessarily have to make any of your writing or blogs public you can make them private and can only share with people you choose. Don't forget that you can just use an online notepad or word processing software and create your own personal motivational book on your own computer.

Another idea is to record videos if this is something that appeals to you. You can record a video about your goals, achievements and ups and downs. Again you can make your videos private or public.

Other great tools to use include using motivational tapes and quotes. Tapes or DVD's are great to take with you as you can listen to them while driving. Quotes are fantastic for placing on your mirror or fridge so you can read them every day. Quotes are good for reinforcing your goals and abilities on a daily basis, so don't overlook using them.

## Using Picture Boards for Motivation

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Pictures speak a thousand words and while this is so true you can also use it to your advantage when it comes to motivation. If you have a goal such as weight loss do you ever look in the mirror and are disappointed by what you see? This often gives you enough motivation to start a new diet but it may not be enough to keep you on track for months at a time.

This is where using a picture board comes in extremely handy. By having a visual story board you can track your progress by looking backwards.

When it comes to motivation you tend to always be focused on the end goal. While this is good it can also be a factor for losing your motivation. If your goal was to lose 100 pounds and you have only lost 30 you may feel as though things aren't working any more. You start to feel like giving up.

When this happens you want to look backwards instead of forward, this way you can now focus on your accomplishments and successes. This is the perfect strategy for long term goals that could require a year or more of motivation and focus.

As your body changes you can't always remember what you looked like 2 or 3 months ago. If you have images then you do have a reminder of this. This is why creating your own story board of your motivational journey is so important.

You can create your own visual story board in many different ways. You can actually have a physical story board in your home where you can add photos each week or month.

Another way to do this is online by uploading your photos and creating a story board. One of the best places to do this is on Pinterest. You can create a weight loss, exercise board or any board dedicated to your new goal.

When you begin you add your starting photos and then add photos on a regular basis. Once you start doing this you will no doubt enjoy adding photos each week. Plus you can share them with your friends and family as well.

As soon as you feel as though you are losing your motivation you can easily refer back to your board and take a good look at how far you have come. Even upload photos about how you are feeling at that moment so if it happens again you can see how you dealt with it. Try it and see if it doesn't help you stay on track.