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What Can We Do To Increase The Mot■vat■on In The Workplace?

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None of the living beings show a behavioral difference if the motivation is low.

I experienced one of the best examples of this during my safari trip to Africa. I thought the huge lion is benumbed since it didn't pay attention to us when we got a few meters next to it. Then, our tour guide Frank explained to us the reality: Animals start to hunt with the dawn during the migration season. When they get full, they return to their own zones. Since the guides are aware of this, they take the safari participants close to the lions that are not hungry. If you don't disturb or frighten the animal, they seem and sit like a cat and don't even move their hair.

We learned its scientific reason thanks to the neuroscience. An animal must be hungry in order to move around and attack another for food. Hunger is a sentiment we feel when our body produces hormones in response to the decrease in pH rate below 7.5 in our blood sugar. The well-behaved huge animal stands up and moves when it aims to fulfill the lacking energy. **This is the first rule.**

The second rule is that the potential energy gain from the hunt must be equal to or more than the lacking energy amount. We name this mechanism of behavioral change for fulfilling the lacking energy as motivation and we call the triggers of motivation, such as hormones or similar chemicals as motivators. When they eat and feel full, the hormones reaching the brain create a feeling of satisfaction and pleasure, so lions relax and lazily lay down.

Antonia Damasio, a significant name of neuroscience, argues that people not only sort of copy the same mechanism for their biological behaviors, but also for their cultural behaviors. [1] Still, it is a debatable approach, but observations and new researches are supporting this view.

If we comment on Damasio's thesis, **there are values for people which maintain the cultural dynamic balance.**



Just like the pH 7.5. Crossing a border for any of these values sets people in motion and pulls people back to the previous settings, such as the widely used **"restoring factory settings"** phrase. For instance, when we feel there is a problem in our romantic relationship, a feeling of anxiety emerges. We desire to talk and come back to the tranquility balance. This feeling of anxiety leads us to move and do something. If there is enough anxiety, we take an action. Remember the rule number one.

There is a required effort for full gratification, for turning back to our peaceful relationship. Waiting for it to pass by itself might not be efficient. But we make this effort only when we believe it is going to make a difference in a

positive manner. According to the second rule, we can use the same amount of effort for someone else if we believe there is no possibility of success.

If this process makes us feel serenity instead of uneasiness, we try to maintain the situation. Let's remember the times we sit close together with our loved ones, hand to hand, and eyes to eyes. The times when the time and place are lost in the high energy flow. The times we always find our beloved one everywhere and in everything. Whether it is a biological or a Sufi love, we all want to stay in this emotional flow.

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi [2], (I know it is hard to read) call the same thing but while on business as **“Flow”**.

We are in the flow at work when the time and place lose their importance when we are able to stay at the maximum level of motivation. I think the reason is that motivation has two different mechanisms. The first one is the increasing value cycle and the second is the decreasing value or vicious cycle. When all our behaviors affect the next ones negatively, there is a vicious cycle. We move towards an unsolvable situation and sometimes this can happen acceleratingly. In the increasing value cycle, all we have done result in positive outcomes and this might also have an increasing momentum.

If we describe the increasing value cycle as continuous motivation, for us to be like that at work, the trigger motivators must be consistent, not just for one time.



It can be claimed this is the reason for the recent research or especially the arguments of academics such as Daniel Pink’s which argues that non-material incentives are more beneficial than material ones. My research is also

in parallel with this argument.

Material incentives become deserved and lose their meaning at the moment they are given. In other words, they are consumed. Whether you relate it with performance or give them as a surprise, the result doesn't change much. The important thing for these incentives is FAIRNESS. Fairness is the most important motivator for material incentives to be efficient. Fair material incentives have two important dimensions: the market average of the absolute value and the employee's relative value when compared to equals. In other words, a fair base and a just performance system.

However, even the fairest material incentive system can't take us -the cultural beings- to the level of consistently high performance.

> The only way for a person to show high performance continuously is to get in the increasing value cycle, which means being in the flow. Nowadays, there are two known methods for someone to be in the flow. The first method is the chemicals. The numbers of medicines which make a doping impact, create consistent happiness increase significantly. While cannabis is being legalized in many countries, opium -known as hashish- also become one of the most favorite happiness medicines.
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> For the ones who don't choose this method, there is only one way left: Loving your job. For someone to love the job, meaning has to be found in it. Time and place should be twisted.

I will explain how to do this in my next article.

Stay in the flow.

[1] A. Damasio The Strange order of things.

[2] https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/mihaly-csikszentmihalyi-father-of-flow/

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