

Motivation, What's Yours?



StrengthsGenius™

PREFACE

Like all our online resources, the StrengthsGenius Blueprint for Success™ is intended to support you reaching your most fulfilling potential. You see, only when you know yourself – inside and out – can you not only find your passion, but have the courage to act upon it.

“We have all a better guide in ourselves, if we would attend to it, than any other person can be.” — Jane Austen, Mansfield Park

Also, when you know yourself – when you know “why” you do certain things, why you have certain feelings, why you are drawn to “x” as opposed to “y,” – it’s easier to make decisions about not only which opportunities to pursue; but which ones to turn down (even if it seems like a “crazy” thing to do to everyone else).

This type of self-knowledge; self-awareness is not only useful in your professional life, it is absolutely critical to your personal happiness as well. And the reason is, we are who we are – in business or in our interpersonal relationships.

Many of us fool ourselves into thinking that we operate one way at work and one way in our personal lives. And we well may – on the surface. But, who we intrinsically are as people shows up in all kinds of ways in our professional and personal lives.

And that’s the crux of this – to help you learn what really makes you tick – in essence to explain the real reasons you do what you do. Assuming you have taken the Clifton StrengthsFinder© assessment as a first step, the next step is understanding how you are motivated. Once you understand this, we can practically guarantee you’ll see your life with different eyes. You may even *really “see” your life for the first time.*

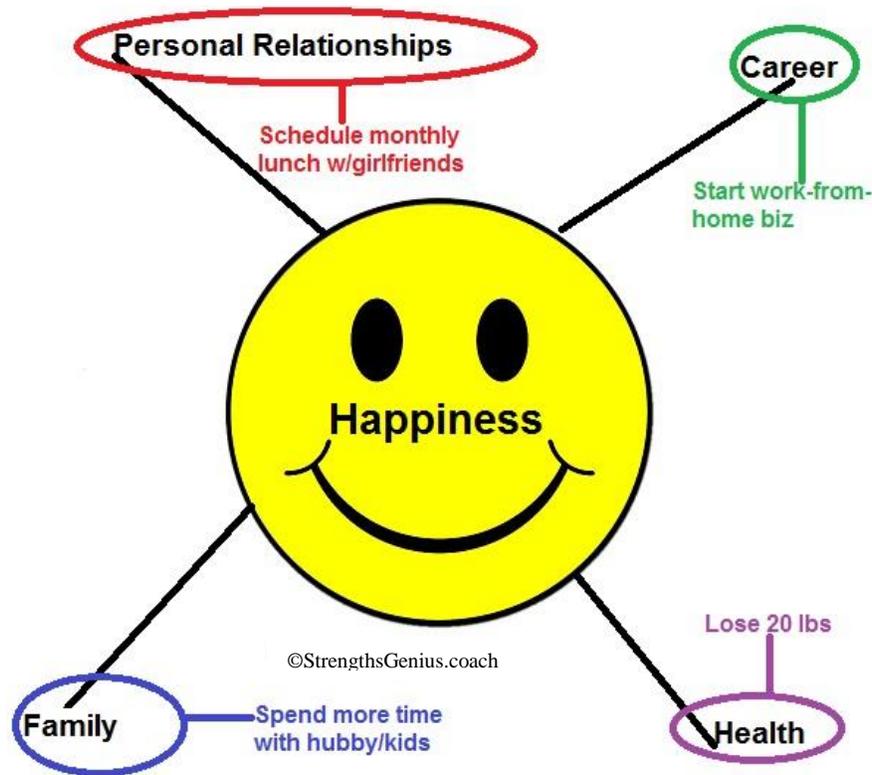
What We’ll Discuss Within

In this resource, we’ll discuss seven (7) motivators that help to explain why most humans do what they do. Once you understand what your motives are, if you wish, you can then create a mind map (I like to call it a “life map”) with full knowledge of who you are and what you want out of life.

What Is a Mind Map?

In case you don’t know, mind maps are basically a diagram used to visually outline information. They’re often crafted around a single word or piece of text which is placed in the center of a piece of paper. Then, categories are created that radiate out from this word.

These categories can represent everything from simple words and ideas, to actual tasks. Following is a diagram of what a mind map looks like.



Mind maps can be used for many purposes, e.g., as study aids, to organize information visually, to brainstorm ideas, to help make decisions, etc.

Remember the idiomatic expression that a picture is worth a thousand words? In this case, your mind map may be worth 10 million words. Creating a mind map is not essential for our purposes here. The reason we discuss them briefly here is two-fold: (i) to help you actually see your hope and dreams; and (ii) to help you fill in the gaps. There's nothing like seeing to provide more clarity.

Creating a mind map is fun and feel free to do so if you wish. If you do, be sure to keep it front and center so you'll always be aware -- with every decision you make -- if you're getting closer to, or further away, from your dreams.

Who Can Benefit from This Info

Broadly speaking, the information here is for anyone who wants to gain a better understanding of who they are and why they do the things they do. Specifically speaking, the insights here are for those between 30 and 60, been in their career 3-10 years and . . .

- (i) who have an internal stirring; a feeling that there's "got" to be something else to life, but are unsure how to figure out what it is and pursue it;
- (ii) who on the surface have "everything," but still feel unhappy or dissatisfied and are not sure why; and/or
- (iii) who want to make a career and/or life change to pursue their true passion.

I. WHAT IS THE STRENGTHSGENIUS SUCCESS BLUEPRINT™ ?

One of the things we've noticed, through the years, is that success depends, to a large degree, on how we make decisions. And, this is different for each of us because we each view the world through our own "map" of the world.

Two people can have the exact same experience, but react completely different. This is because how we feel about something – and make decisions based on those feelings – is grounded in our own beliefs, experiences, perceptions and interactions.

This is one of the reasons we created StrengthsGenius™ Success Blueprint.

By focusing on how we make decisions and all the factors that influence them, StrengthsGenius™ Success Blueprint™ identifies four steps that, when simply acknowledged, will accelerate your ability to reach your potential.

StrengthsGenius™ Success Blueprint

The StrengthsGenius™ Success Blueprint is an individualized self-development plan that assists you in identifying your strengths, weaknesses and talents. It has helped professionals, entrepreneurs and small business owners enjoy success and a more fulfilling personal life. It helps to explain what your real motivators are.

Motivators allow us to grow psychologically, socially and emotionally. They are closely related to the concept of self-actualization (which we'll discuss more of within) and give us the

opportunity to expand our horizons so we can make decisions from a place of extreme honesty and self-awareness, which leads long-lasting happiness.

The steps are as follow:

Step 1: Define It

Defining what we want out of any project, relationship, or goal is the hardest thing to do. That is why people have gaps in their success journey. Every time they reach a goal they need to Re-Define what they want.

Step 2: Decide It

Making a decision is close to the hardest thing to do, when achieving success. Willingness to risk let go, accept, and commit. Until a decision is made, success is just a dream.

Step 3: Design It

Once you define what you want and make a commitment to it, then it's planning time.

Step 4: Do It

If the first three steps are given the time and thought needed, the DO-ing IT, is actually the easiest step.

Now, we'll focus on determining what your *Real* motivators are. Following is a brief overview of the seven motivators. They will be discussed in greater detail in successive sections.

The 7 Different Types of Motivation

(i) Social Motivation: This has to do with the need to belong and be accepted by others. The underlying drive comes from sociocultural influences that makes one want to achieve a goal.

(ii) Recognition Motivation: This particular type of motivation is based on the premise that we all want to be recognized for our work and/or contributions.

One thing to keep in mind about this form of motivation is that everyone doesn't like to be recognized in the same manner. For example, while one person may revel in being recognized at a fancy banquet thrown in their honor, another might quiver in nervous fear at the very thought of being rewarded so publicly.

(iii) Money Motivation: This motivator is pretty straightforward as far as understanding what it is. Money can and does motivate people; that's a fact. However, like recognition motivation, it's not as simple as it seems when you start digging into it.

For example, it would seem that "more" when it comes to money would be a big motivator; actually large bodies of evidence show that it actually isn't.

(iv) Influence Motivation: This has to do with being able to impact situations or people in such a way that it brings about change. This change can take many forms, e.g., a change in behavior, attitude, goals, values, organizational structure, etc.

One key factor to note here is that to be able to influence doesn't necessarily mean that you have power. Responsibility is another form of "influence" when it comes to this motivator.

(v) Achievement Motivation: The person motivated by achievement seeks to attain set goals. They usually like feedback/progress reports along the way in order to ensure that they are on track reach their goal(s).

One criticism of achievement-oriented individuals is that, because they assume that everyone is as driven as they are, they can be demanding of others.

(vi) Power Motivation: The type of person who's motivated by power has a strong need to be influential and make a noticeable impact. They like to take the lead and see their ideas/plans come to fruition. Personal recognition and prestige are some common rewards that inspire this type of personality.

(vii) Purpose Motivation: Many have called this the "Rolls Royce" of motivators because it goes to the very heart of why we all do what we do.

In *The Power of Purpose* by Richard Leider, he describes this motivator in the following manner:

Purpose is the conscious choice of what, where, and how to make a positive contribution to our world. It is the theme, quality, or passion we choose to center our lives around.
Once we discover our gifts and what moves us, the whole world takes on a new energy.
Our life becomes a thing of spiritual significance.

Of course, most of us have a mixture of these motivators. But there are some dominant ones we all possess, which cause us to make decisions the way we do – in every aspect of our lives. And that's the whole point of this resource, to help you figure out which of these motivators drive you.

Once you understand this, not only will it make it easier for you to find your passion in life, but be successful living it that much sooner.

II. THE SEVEN MOTIVATIONS

1.SOCIAL MOTIVATION

Some think that social motivation is stronger than, for example, money motivation. Following is a list of some social motivators, which helps to shed some light on why this may very well be true.

Belonging to social groups

Personal and professional relationships

Achievement in a public forum (e.g., winning the Nobel Prize)

Self-esteem (relating with yourself)

Celebrity and fame

Politics and political influence (e.g., being elected mayor)

As stated earlier, social motivation has to do with the need to belong and be accepted by others. This is a primal need that is within us from the time we're born. Proof?

Research* has shown that by the time babies are nine months old, not only do they recognize the fact that others are independent individuals with minds of their own, but they use other people's emotional reactions to judge how they, in turn, should react to situations.

Some experts tie this need to belong to survival as since time began, human beings have needed to rely on others in a group (tribe, culture) to survive. As time has evolved and we need to rely less on others for basics like food and shelter, this primal instinct shows up in other ways; e.g.:

The drive to be employee of the year (e.g., please and/or be recognized by an organization);

Gain entry into the million-dollar club (e.g., be part of an elite group of salespeople); and

Be accepted at a restricted club (eg, gain prestige in a community).

All of the above are examples of social motivation that illustrate the need to belong.

What Drives Social Motivation?

As the above examples illustrate, this can manifest itself in various ways. But the need to belong is the driving force. Following is some insight into how our conscious and unconscious affects social motivation and this need to belong.

Social Motivation: Understanding the Unconscious Mind

Freud theorized that most human behavior is result of a combination of desires, impulses and memories that have been repressed into an unconscious state. Even though they are repressed, they still control our conscious actions.

Freud also believed that there is a part of the mind that is always working consciously, and that we can tap into that this part to direct/control our unconscious thoughts and behaviors.

Mainly, it can make you act in ways that cause problems; problems that could be prevented if you realized what was going on (i.e., that your unconscious feelings are affecting your conscious behavior).

For example, let's say that you've been assigned by your boss to work on a project with a fellow co-worker. Of course, you want to do your best, because the project is as much a reflection on you as your co-worker. In spite of this, you find it really difficult to put your best foot forward on the project.

Later on, you discover it's because you've always felt that this co-worker was "favored" by the boss and always seems to land the plum assignments. You didn't even realize you felt this way until you started working closely with her. Hence, your *unconscious* feelings of resentment affected your work.

Why It's Important to Recognize the Unconscious

It's as necessary to recognize that you possess unconscious motives that affect behavior every bit as much as your conscious motives. By doing so, you can learn to control, change and/or manage them so they don't negatively affect your goal(s).

Social Motivation: Understanding the Conscious Mind

We all want to be loved and accepted, and the way most of us achieve this is to please others. This is why the conscious is a bit more straightforward than the unconscious when it comes to understanding social motivation because our conscious mind actively chooses the thoughts, behaviors and actions we need to achieve our goals.

For example, if your aim is to be employee of the year, there are specific actions you can consciously take to achieve this, eg, volunteering to take on extra projects, looking for innovative ways to save the company money, undergoing extra training to improve your skill set.

All of this socially and materially benefits the main group you want impress – your superiors. By consciously taking the actions above, you demonstrate that you are “in sync” with what they want and with the organization’s idea of what an “employee of the year” is all about.

But again, it’s in the recognition of your conscious -- and your unconscious – thoughts beliefs, actions and behavior that success is found. Never forget this.

How Social Motivation Can Help You Find Your Passion and Identify Your Strengths and Weaknesses

As we’ve discussed here, the desire to belong is a primitive need that is with us from the day we’re born. Hence, it’s no surprise that it’s such a powerful motivator.

In order to clarify what within the social motivation framework drives you, ask yourself the following questions.

- (i) What conscious and unconscious factors – e.g., behaviors, feelings, outside influences, past experiences – are at play here?
- (ii) Which of the above can I control/change/manage to reach my desired goal; and
- (iii) Is the desired social motivator worth it (e.g., prestige, recognition, fame, etc.).

Once you know the answers to these questions, you will be able to more clearly identify which actions you need to take, change and/or modify to realize your full potential. In essence, your “social motivation calendar” becomes clearer, which allow you to make better decisions.

Sources Cited in This Section

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2. INFLUENCE

Influence is to be measured, not by the extent of surface it covers, but by its kind.~William Ellery Channing

The word influence is a noun, which means to “*have the capacity or power of persons or things to be a compelling force on or produce effects on the actions, behavior, opinions, etc., of others.*”

There are two things to keep in mind about influence motivation as it relates to our discussion here:

- (i) Influence can cause change in many different ways, e.g., a change in behavior, attitude, goals, values, organizational structure, etc.; and
- (ii) A person who is motivated by influence doesn’t necessarily have power, at least not in the traditional sense one thinks of power. For example, responsibility -- as in a person who can handle responsibility -- this is a form of influence.

Types of Influence

There are many different types of influence. Following are five of the most common.

Reward: Of course, this is when you “influence” a person to do something by offering them a reward.

Expertise: If you’re considered an expert in something, you can “influence” others to comply simply because you have the knowledge and skills to support whatever opposition you may encounter from others.

Personal Charisma: This form of influence is something that you tend to either possess as an innate part of your personality, or not. It’s not that you can’t develop it though.

One of the traits of a charismatic person is that they tend to be sensitive and aware of the needs of others. Hence, they’re able to hone in on what makes people tick. And this is why they’re able to “influence” others more easily than, for example, someone who’s not charismatic.

Relationship: Almost every successful business person will tell you that it’s not what you know, but “who” you know. And that’s what makes this type of influence so powerful.

The network of relationships you cultivate with people can be a powerful weapon when it comes to using your influence to achieve goals.

Power: This is perhaps what most think of when they think of influence. If you're a person of power (eg, a boss; a parent; head of a committee; etc.), it can be pretty easy to influence others.

However, power and in of itself can be an ineffective influence factor if not used correctly. For example, if you're the president of a company with a board of advisors, you could be stripped of your power if it's deemed that you're an ineffective leader. This is why you don't necessarily need to be powerful to be influential.

What Happens When You Exert Influence

Experts state that there are generally three things that can happen when you exert influence:

(i) *Compliance:* This can be done begrudgingly, or happily. It depends on a number of factors, e.g., which form of influence you used, what your objective was/is; and how it affects those who gave their compliance.

Good leaders, of course, are aware of this and adjust their influence tactics to achieve the best possible outcome for all concerned.

(ii) *Resistance:* This can take many forms, from outright refusal to passive resistance (as in, yes, I'll do it, but when I get around to it and/or if I feel like it).

(iii) *Commitment:* This is the best possible outcome because not only does the person(s) you're trying to influence agree with you, they become committed to your objective wholeheartedly.

Which Type(s) of Influence Do You Wield?

Those motivated by influence tend to use several of the various types listed above to achieve their goals. This is because some goals require certain types of influence, while other objective need different tactics.

For example, as a parent, you're probably more likely to use "reward influence" when trying to get your teenager to do something. If you're a team leader at work "expertise influence" may be more effective.

How Influence Can Help You Find Your Passion

Knowing which type of influence motivates you is very helpful in finding your purpose in life. How? Why? Because mastering the art of influence is a key leadership component and here we're talking about *leadership of self*, for you are your first subject (employee/student/child).

Once you know what your “influence motivation” style is, it’s much easier to: (i) assess a situation; (ii) figure out what’s needed to reach your desired goal; and (iii) most importantly, avoid/minimize situations where you decrease your chances of success.

And make no mistake, this is not about avoidance. It’s about putting yourself in situations where you increase your chance of success. Too often, many of us keep doing the same thing hoping for different results because we literally don’t know what we’re doing wrong.

If you want to be able to impact situations or people in such a way that it brings about change, then you must really learn the art of influence – and which type(s) suit you.

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Influence: The Essence of Leadership, Anita Hall, Extension Educator and Leverne Barrett, Extension Leadership Specialist, The Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska on behalf of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension.

3. RECOGNITION

As stated previously, this particular type of motivation is based on the premise that we all want to be recognized for our work and/or contributions.

The 5 Levels of Recognition

Many recognition motivation-based theories are grounded in Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs, which has five levels and looks like this . . .



Let's take a look at each level to help you better understand which of these motivate you.

Physiological: These are basic needs like food, water, sleep, shelter and clothing. We all do things to be recognized to ensure that these needs are met.

Safety: After basic needs are met, Maslow believed that many of us seek security. This can take many forms, e.g., a good job, a loving family, a nice home in a good neighborhood, etc.

Social: This need centers around the desire to belong. As we discussed in the social motivation section, this can be to a group; it can involve interpersonal relationships like friends and family; or it can be external, e.g., being recognized because you're famous.

Esteem: As human beings, we all want to be accepted and respected. This is the foundation of this need. If a person feels valued by others, they tend to have higher self-esteem and more self-confidence.

Self-Actualization: It is no accident that this sits atop Maslow's pyramid, for it means that you've – in some form – mastered some things in life, e.g., how to effectively solve problems, how to let go of harmful feelings like prejudice, how to channel your creativity, etc. Maslow describes this level as the point at which a person reaches their full potential.

Which Type of Recognition Motivates You?

At certain points in our lives, we're all driven by some parts of each level. What I've seen in my practice as a success coach is that many never fully reach the self-actualization level.

In my opinion, it's because society tells us that if you have the basics like food and shelter covered (physiological needs); you're lucky enough to be secure (safety needs); and you have friends and family (social needs); then life should be good, right?

Know thy self.~Socrates

The two top tiers of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, self-esteem and self-actualization, are complete afterthoughts. And again, in my opinion, it's no coincidence that these two levels start with "self." Most of us are simply not taught to "*know thyself*" as Socrates said.

But it's impossible to find your purpose in life without knowing yourself. In fact, it's downright impossible!

How Knowing Which Type of Recognition Motivates You Can You Find Your Passion

As we discussed in the beginning of this resource, when we outlined the seven types of motivation, everyone doesn't like to be recognized in the same manner.

To find your passion, it's important to know which type of recognition you're comfortable with. For example, if your passion is to be an artist yet you hate public displays, then selling your work online may be a better option than opening a gallery. Or, you could sell via other galleries.

While some may say you're "*missing prime opportunities*" by being so invisible as an artist, you know which type of recognition you're comfortable with – and you design your life as an artist around that, instead of what everybody else "thinks" you should be doing.

Conclusion

One thing we want to point out right quick is that I hope you're realizing – as we work our way through these seven different types of motivation – is that they're all designed to help you learn more about yourself and what makes you tick, so you can make decisions based on that and nothing else. For, this is where true happiness is found.

4. MONEY

Money is only a tool. It will take you wherever you wish, but it will not replace you as the driver.~Ayn Rand

Money motivates; that's a simple fact. However, like most of the motivators we've discussed here, it's not a simple as it seems when you start digging into the "whys" of it. Following is an interesting finding about money as a motivator.

An Unexpected Finding about Money as a Motivator

A growing number of studies in psychology and economics show that increasing financial rewards may not lead to better performance, which is often the incentive for offering money as a motivator. Proof?

Pioneering work in the field was carried out in the early 1970s by Edward Deci, a psychologist at Rochester University in New York. He found that students offered cash prizes to solve puzzles were less likely to continue working on them after payments had been made, compared to students who were offered no money.

Deci's work helped clarify the relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation - doing things because you like doing them in their own right or doing them because you want a reward that has been offered.

About Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation refers to an internal motivation; one that comes from doing something because you want to, rather than for a reward like money.

When a person is intrinsically motivated, it doesn't mean that they don't want or need a reward. It just means that the reward might be something as simple as the satisfaction received from sticking with – and completing – a task.

About Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivation refers to a person who is driven by external factors like money. It is one of the oldest and most common forms of motivation in the world.

Which is Better: Intrinsic or Extrinsic Motivation?

Experts seem to generally agree that intrinsic motivation is better, even when money is the primary motivator. Why? Because an over-emphasis on being given a reward can undermine the natural forces present when a person is intrinsically motivated.

However, Steven Reiss, a professor of psychology at Ohio State University may be on to something when he suggests that we shouldn't even make the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. His reasoning is that human motivations can't be forced into two simple categories.

Reiss sums up the disagreements between professionals on the subject of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, saying:

Individuals differ enormously in what makes them happy – for some competition, winning and wealth are the greatest sources of happiness, but for others, feeling competent or socializing may be more satisfying. The point is that you can't say some motivations, like money, are inherently inferior.

We believe that there is no judgment that should be attached to either one. The real value lies in figuring out why money motivates you – and harnessing that knowledge to achieve your goals.

How Does Money Motivate You?

As you can see, many of us can have a complicated relationship with money. But knowledge is power. Now that you have some clarity about money and how it can work for or against you as a motivational factor, it makes it easier to figure out how to navigate the “money waters.”

How “The Money Factor” Can Help You Find Your Passion

Why does Bill Gates get up and go to work every day?

Why did Steve Jobs work almost until the day he died?

Why is Oprah running her own network?

All of these individuals have/had the financial means to never have to work another day in their lives. And, what most successful people will tell you is that their primary motivation is to build something – something they're passionate about.

Their motivation is *not* to make a lot of money. But, if that's not true for you, that's okay too.

We all need money to survive; that's a simple fact of life. But many of us are given the conflicting advice of "*follow your passion and the money will follow.*"

In our opinion – and experience – it's a nice sentiment, but it's a bit more involved than that.

While we believe wholeheartedly that you can make money doing what you love (ie, pursuing your passion), the "money motivator" will force you to get extremely focused on exactly "how" you're going to go about doing it.

And, knowing your relationship with money – and what it means to you (eg, security, prestige, etc.) – is part of that equation.

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Does money really motivate people? by Carinne Piekema for BBC.com.

5. ACHIEVEMENT

When your desires are strong enough, you will appear to possess superhuman powers to achieve. ~Napoleon Hill

Achievement motivation can best be defined as an individual's desire for substantial accomplishment and/or the mastering of skills. It is different from other forms of motivation in that the goal of achievement behavior is to be or feel competent. Hence, the most gratifying reward for this type of personality is to be recognized for their accomplishment(s).

This may be why those who are motivated by achievement usually seek feedback and/or progress reports to ensure that they're on track when they're working towards a goal.

The Two Driving Factors behind Achievement Motivation

This type of person is often described as being passionate setting high goals, and meeting them. Experts state that achievement-motivated individuals are internally and externally driven, which are the twin driving forces.

The internal drive (i.e., intrinsic motivation) comes from an inner need to succeed. The external drive (i.e., extrinsic motivation) stems from the need to live up to the expectation of others.

Characteristics of a Person Who Is Achievement Motivated

Following are six of the most common character traits found in this type of person.

Ability to Set Goals: This is one of the defining skills of achievement-oriented individuals.

Focused: After a goal has been set, this type of person stays focused until they've succeeded.

Likes to be Challenged: Because they want to feel competent, this type of personality thrives on having their abilities challenged – and overcoming those challenges.

Resilient: Even when they fail at something, they pick themselves up, dust themselves off and look for other ways to reach their goal.

Pragmatic: This type of personality focuses on what works and they're quick to either tweak an existing method or start all over again with a different approach if what they're doing is not working. The focus is always on achieving their desired outcome.

Demanding: One criticism of achievement-oriented individuals is that, because they assume that everyone is as driven as they are, they can be demanding on others.

Which Factors Drive Your Achievement?

While achievement-motivated individuals are driving by internal and external factors, realize that in some cases, one may be more dominant than the other.

For example, if you're working on a project that you're sure will result in a promotion, you might be more extrinsically driven (i.e., to go over and beyond what is expected to please your boss). Conversely, if your hobby is restoring old cars, you're likely to be more intrinsically driven – the idea of bringing a classic back to life is what's driving you.

The thing to remember about achievement motivation is that it varies from person to person, and from goal to goal. The key is to figure out what's motivating you *when you set a particular goal*.

It's ok to be extrinsically motivated when "x" is your goal; and intrinsically motivated when "y" is your objective.

How to Use Achievement Motivation to Find Your Passion

To paraphrase the quote by Napoleon Hill at the beginning of this section, when you really, really want to do something, you will move heaven and earth to achieve it. So make a list of what you would use “superhuman powers” – if you had them – to achieve.

Therein probably lies your passion; your purpose in life.

6. POWER

Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.~Abraham Lincoln

What Usually Drives Those Motivated by Power

People who are motivated by power have a strong desire to have an impact on others; to be influential; to bring about change and to be effective at achieving set goals.

Character Traits of Those Motivated by Power

People motivated by power tend to be excellent communicators; competitive; focused; responsible; inquisitive; perceptive; and analytical. Some of the criticisms leveled at this type of personality is that they can be critical, impatient, status seekers and conniving.

It should be noted that power-motivated people tend to enjoy going after their goals, which may explain why they invest so much time in the pursuit of them.

Another thing we want to point out is that just because a person is motivated by power, it doesn't necessarily mean that they want to dominate others. Rather, it means that they want to have whatever means of influence they use to exert their power completely in their control.

This is a subtle, but important, difference that's often overlooked in the discussion on power motivation.

How to Use the Motivation of Power to Find Your Passion

No matter what your passion is, you need to know what motivates you personally. If you know that power is a dominant motivator for you, then your purpose in life will most likely be found in

something that allows you to be influential and make an impact. For example, you may decide to enter politics. This will allow you to influence the lives of many on many different levels.

Many who struggle to succeed do so because they're stuck in jobs, careers and/or a lifestyle that doesn't motivate them. In fact, many find themselves in situations that are the anti-thesis of what motivates them as human beings.

So, until you figure out what motivates you – and why – success will likely remain elusive. And happiness almost certainly will.

7. PURPOSE

*Your purpose in life is to find your purpose and give your whole heart and soul to it.
~Gautama Buddha*

Why You MUST Act on Purpose to Be Successful – at Anything!

We purposely (pardon the pun) left this section for last because, in my opinion, it is the most powerful motivator. Many may dismiss being motivated by a purpose as psychobabble mumbo jumbo.

In my opinion, we're inundated with messages day in and day out that focus on things like money and power. And, there's nothing wrong with these motivators in and of themselves. It's when the pursuit of them leaves you empty that it's a problem.

And this is why it's important to figure out what your real, true purpose is in life. You see, when you live "on purpose" all of these things that most consider important (e.g., money, fame, power) will usually come as a matter of course.

But the enlightening thing is, even if they don't, BECAUSE you're living on purpose, it's not important to you.

Are You "Living Your Priorities?"

Here's a story told to Shari, by a business associate. It resonated with us and we thought it a brilliant example of *living on purpose*.

This associate said a friend of hers had recently relocated from New York to Atlanta. They've been friends for over 20 years and she attended a dinner party at his apartment to welcome him

to his new city --- a city she'd lived in for close to a decade. Of course, she said she went shopping and bought him a nice house-warming gift.

At the end of the night, as all the guests were preparing to leave, she said her friend brought out a tray of gift baskets for all attendees.

For a second, she said she they were all confused and started to mildly rebuke him for spending money on gifts because they knew how expensive his move had been and also because it was HIS housewarming party and he was supposed to be the recipient of gifts. And then he said:

Sweethearts, I wanted to do this. Giving all of you guy gifts makes me happy. I'm simply living my priorities – and showing my friends how much I love them is one of them.

As this story illustrates, when you live your priorities – which is just another way of saying “live on purpose” – you find joy in the simplest things.

How to Identify Your Purpose

There are two exercises there. One is straightforward and for those who already know what their dream/passion is, but just haven't "claimed" it by saying it, writing it down and owning it.

The other is for those who struggle a bit and have to dig a little deeper.

Why Your Purpose Is Inherently a Strength

When we are moved by something, many things previously felt to be important fade in significance. If our purpose is genuine enough, it involves us deeply and orders all areas of our life. We begin to eliminate what is irrelevant and what is so much clutter. A simplification takes place, and we achieve a clarity as to what we're about. We don't need to pretend to be what we're not. What is of real importance stands out more clearly.
[Source: *The Power of Purpose* by Richard Leider]

Piggybacking on what Leider said, your purpose is a strength simply because it allows you to become very clear about what you want out of life. Of course, in my line of work, I meet a lot of people. Following is one story that was passed along to me that illustrates Leider's point about clarity.

How One Successful Entrepreneur Found Her Purpose – and Drastically Changed Her Life

This entrepreneur owned a successful real estate business. But, she wasn't happy because she really wanted to be a writer. Ever since she was a little girl, she said she'd known this was her passion. She also wanted to live near the ocean and be able to travel for months at a time.

But her reality was that she lived in a land-locked city with no water in sight and owned investment properties, which left her with very little time to escape to some place near the water and write, let alone travel for months at a time.

She said one day she sat down and wrote out her life plan. Once she saw in black and white what she wanted, she realized that she was working against herself on almost every level. So, over the next few years, she made drastic changes. She sold her real estate holdings – one of which was a huge house that was her personal residence -- and started an online business that would allow her to work from anywhere there was an internet connection.

Her friends and family thought she'd gone cuckoo, but with every change she made, she said she felt freer and happier. Not even trying to, she said she lost 30 pounds and was giddier than ever living a much more scaled-down life, one that allowed her to do exactly as she wanted when she got up every day for the most part.

She also went on to self-publish several novels. None have been best sellers, but she said she's had a modicum of success and writes for the sheer joy of it.

And this is what Leider meant when he said when you know your purpose -- a simplification takes place . . . what is of real importance stands out more clearly.

And I might add, success becomes that much more likely – because you're fueled by your very spirit, your heart, your soul, your being. Because of this, you have the energy you need to do what you may have thought was impossible.

This is the power of being motivated by purpose.

What will finding your purpose mean for you and your family?

How will it change your life?

Are you ready to take the plunge and find out?

I sincerely hope the stories I've shared here make you want to.

CONCLUSION

We trust that the information dispensed here has caused all kinds of light bulbs to go off for you. It wasn't until we did this type of internal work that we found our path in life.

We desperately want the same for you. It's why we became strengths coaches.

We were all put here for a reason. And happiness lies in finding that reason. Part of that is knowing what motivates us – and why.

Unfortunately, all too often we're thwarted, usually by well-meaning friends and family. And it's all because most of us have never been given what I like to call "the keys of life." The motivators discussed here are part of that ring of keys.

We hope you see how knowing what your motivators are can help you make better decisions – in every part of your life, so you can live the full, rich life you so deserve.

We'd love to help you on your journey. Following are all the ways you can reach us. All the best!

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P.S.: Are you ready to find out what your strengths are? Go to www.RelationshipArchitects.coach and request a Strengths Assessment.

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