

Fast Track Guide: Understanding Your Motivational Blocks and Getting Past Them

You know the person. Yea, that one. The one who's got her stuff together. She's out there making waves, breaking glass ceilings. She's a mover and a shaker. She simply gets things done and wastes no time finding out what's important to her. She's a huge success.

There are millions of people just like her. Those who know what they want and how to get it. But, have you ever wondered just how it is these certain individuals find their motivation? Do you know why they're motivated to implement and succeed while others are not?

Let's take a look at potential motivational blocks that most people experience to discover what exactly is needed to get through them. But before we do, let's first get a better understanding of the study of motivation and motivational theory.

Old School Motivational Theory

When we study the work of scientists from the past who studied motivational theory and when we see how it works, we will begin to understand the actions in our lives better. Understanding this scientific work and relating it to yourself, will create a situation where you'll come to understand how motivation works and how to get motivated any time you need it.

The four basic theories regarding motivation.

1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
2. Herzberg's Dual-Factor Theory

3. McClelland's "The Need for Achievement"
4. Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Abraham Maslow created a motivation model that states individuals are motivated by 5 different types of needs, some more pressing than others. For example, before one can reach the top of the pyramid of self-actualization he or she must first satisfy the basic needs of hunger, safety, and affection.

Maslow Chart:

1. Physical Needs - these needs are biological necessities for human survival such as clean air to breath, shelter, clothing, warmth, proper sleep, etc.
2. Safety - protection from chaos, the elements, freedom from fear, instability, etc.
3. Social Acceptance - the need for intimacy, trust, friendships, giving and receiving love. Interpersonal relationships motivate behavior.
4. Esteem - Maslow classified the esteem needs into two parts: esteem for oneself and the desire for adoration/respect from others.
5. Self-Actualization - here a person is seeking to be everything they can potentially become. Personal development is the main focus at this top tier.

Again, in order to get to 4 and 5, the needs of 1,2, and 3 will have to be met. For instance, if you are struggling just to get by, working long hours or two jobs just to keep food on the table, it's going to be difficult for you to reach for more because you're distracted by the struggling. It's not easy to save for a rainy day if every day there is a

storm. It's important to be able to differentiate needs vs. wants and to understand where you are on the spectrum.

Herzberg's Dual-Factor Theory

This theory says there are two factors in the workplace and life that cause you to be satisfied or dissatisfied and that each is completely independent of each other. For example, if you have a job that makes you feel useful, your employer is kind and appreciates you, but you aren't paid much, you can still be satisfied. However, you could make a ton of money, be treated poorly and be miserable. Money doesn't always equate to success, depending upon the situation. That's why it's important to define what success means to you.

McClelland's "The Need for Achievement"

According to McClelland, every individual has a unique need for achievement. The reward should be structured for the individual. Not everyone has a need to be publicly recognized, for example. For some, knowing that if they succeeded, they would be in the public eye (even just among co-workers) would lower their motivation to achieve.

He also believed that everyone had different needs and wants based on where they are in life, similar to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. However, McClelland believed that we all have three motivators in life: The need for achievement, the need for affiliation and the need for power. We are usually dominant in only one of these areas and that drives us. For example, if you are "affiliation" dominant, you want to belong to the group, be liked, prefer collaboration, and don't like uncertainty or high-risk situations.

Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation

Vroom believed that every human wants to minimize pain and maximize pleasure and that increased effort will lead to increased performance and thus more motivation because the more you experience success the more you want success.

Everyone, however, is not equipped with the right skills, resources, or have the necessary support in life to experience these things. Therefore, the ability to identify what is missing and what can fill that missing piece of the puzzle will create more success and thus, more motivation.

The key to progressing is knowing what works for you, why it works for you, and how to repeat it when you need it to build more motivation toward reaching your goals and experiencing success. Discovering these roadblocks that you've set up for yourself or that another person has placed in your path, and how to overcome them will set you up for the ultimate success that you desire.

You can read a lot more about these motivational theories here: [Lecture from Stuart-Kotze in the UK](#).

Know Your Personality Type

One of the best ways to build up motivation is to find out what type of personality you are. One way to do this is to take a personality test. There are many on the internet but here's one that is a classic and it's free: [16Personalities.com](#). This test is based on Myers-Briggs and is rooted in science. What's more is that, if you are honest with your answers, the results can be very accurate and useful tools that will help you make the changes needed to find out what your true personality type is.

The key is to give answers that are accurate rather than what you wish were true. There are no "correct" answers. You don't need to try to beat the test. Be truthful, and you will find out what your personality really is so that you can work with your strengths and improve your weaknesses. In addition, if you took the test before, don't expect to get the same answer every time. People change and grow over time so anytime you're experiencing issues with motivation, consider taking the test again to get the results you'll need.

You can purchase an in-depth analysis or you can get a lot from the free test, the choice is yours. The important thing is to answer the questions as honestly as your conscience will allow, and then to use the information to help you gain insight into your own personality. You can also use these tests to help you understand your co-workers, family, and friends. Anyone who is willing to share. Use the results to help create a more supportive environment for yourself and others.

Once you know your personality, make it a priority to set up an environment that encourages you to develop successfully. With or without the test, if you do these 5 things you'll be more motivated and thus experience more success.



- **Create a Conducive Environment** – people, tools, and the ambiance around you need to be supportive in your perception. It doesn't matter that your boss thinks your environment is supportive and you feel that it's not. If you feel unsupported, you're not going to be able to be as creative and successful as you could be otherwise.
- **Be Accountable for Your Actions** – hire someone or ask someone in your life now to hold you accountable for your actions. People who have accountability partners or coaches to help them see their plan through to fruition will experience a lot more success in their life.
- **Decide What It Is You Want** – Whatever the desire, it is always good to know EXACTLY what you're wanting to achieve. I can't stress the word "exactly" enough. Really, I can't. If you know what you want it will be much easier to commit and follow through with your plan.
- **Commit But Be Flexible** – When you decide to create a plan and commit to it, you'll see results a lot sooner than someone who is acting without a plan in place regardless of motivation. A great way to help your plan materialize is to create a checklist so that you can go through it each day and mark off what you've accomplished. Keep in mind, however, that to be committed doesn't mean that

you can't be flexible. Don't get caught up in so much the how's, where's and when's of your plan. Just keep the focus of your end result, do what you can then just trust the process.

- **Start Sooner Rather Than Later** – For example, let's say you want to lose weight and get healthy. Don't wait until after the holidays to get started. Start today even if it's just drawing up an exercise schedule or a grocery list of healthier, metabolism-boosting foods. The sooner you start the sooner your brain will catch up with your actions and accept that this will be the new way of doing things.

Work on ways to ignore the tricks your brain plays on you when it comes to acting on your plans toward achieving new goals. I call those tricks, "dream killers". Here, in a previous [article](#) that I've written, are some ways you can remove those pesky dream-killing thoughts to make it easier to stay focused on your goals. Often when doing something new the brain will determine whether it's pleasure or pain due to pre-programmed information which is often incorrect information since it will always seek immediate pleasure over immediate pain.

In fact, if it views the actions as painful it might try to stop you. This isn't just physical pain but mental too. For example, if you need to meet a work deadline but you lack the motivation to get it done, it's because your brain can't see past the present discomfort of having to miss out on things that bring pleasure even though it is pleasurable to keep your job.

If you learn to do it anyway, eventually your brain will realize that sometimes you must do things that aren't immediately pleasurable to experience success. When you do this repeatedly, your brain will start interpreting these actions as pleasurable, instead of painful. This is going to help you reach success faster. You are training your brain to re-associate some "painful" actions as "pleasurable." This works with everything including exercise and eating right. Soon your brain will begin to look forward to the changed behavior.

Motivational Blocks You May Experience

Almost everyone, no matter how successful they are, has motivational blocks at some point in time that they had to overcome. To overcome yours, you must first recognize the motivational blocks that you're experiencing then work on ways to overcome them.



- **Glass Half Full or Half Empty?** – Are you a person who sees the negative more than the positive? Maybe you're the type of person who doesn't care about that at all and knows that you can refill your glass whenever you want. The important thing is that you understand your personality type and how you view the world.
- **Outcomes or Purpose?** – When you work on a project are you the type of person who thinks about the results, deliverables, or outcomes of a project or do you need to understand the purpose or the reason you're doing it? When it comes to success, it doesn't matter how you view this. You want to be able to motivate yourself with your thoughts. For example, if you must do a project where you can't envision the purpose yet but you can deliver results, focus on that instead.
- **Can or Can't: You're Right** – Do you focus on your blocks as a sign that you cannot do "it," whatever it is? If you always focus on "can't," you're going to find yourself paralyzed. It's like that saying -- "Whether you think you can or can't, you're right." When you focus on "can" the path to success will begin to unfold for

you naturally. Even if you feel like you take two steps forward then one step back. Keep in mind that you're always ahead of where you started.

- **Leader or Follower?** – Neither is right or wrong but you need to know which you are. The reason is that if you want to succeed you need to understand your weaknesses so that you can fill them with team members, contractors, and others to round out your skills where you fall short. You don't need to know and be everything to be successful.
- **How Do You View the World?** – Some people view the world through rose-colored glasses and see people as wonderful, interesting, and fun. While others see the world as a dangerous place, full of people who are out to hurt them. The truth is solely what you believe to be true. Successful people, however, tend to focus on the good in the world, do their due diligence, and forge ahead.
- **Fear of Change** – While some change is good, it doesn't always feel good. Many people are change adverse. Change always has a cost but it also has a payoff. For example, if you need to lose 100 pounds you're going to have to make changes to your diet that might seem (at first) to cost you all your pleasure of eating. But, that change will have a pay off after a period that will motivate you to continue that change. So, instead of stopping cold at change due to fear, embrace it and give the changes you're making a chance to percolate into success.
- **Fear of Failure** – People often fear failure. But more people than realized fear success just as much. This fear can be so strong that it paralyzes people and keeps them from trying something new. Somehow our brain reasons that "if I don't do it, I won't feel bad about myself if I fail". But if you do it and fail, you'll feel terrible. Fear of failure is just a gimmick. More than likely you will experience both success and failure in your lifetime, but more often than not, it's a feeling of regret for not trying that will cause you to suffer the most. Therefore, act despite the fear. You will have at the very least succeeded at being brave.
- **Lack of Follow-Through** – Often you're not really lacking motivation, you're just lacking follow-through. The only way to achieve a goal is to create a plan of action and implement it. If you don't, you won't experience success. Again, this is when knowing what you want becomes extremely important, too. Your mind can be motivated to experience success while you still lack follow-through. To overcome this issue, it's important to buckle down and design a step by step schedule and work that schedule until you achieve the results you want. There may be some tweaking involved but nonetheless, work that schedule. You might consider working with a coach or finding an accountability partner to help you.

- **Not Enough Perceived Support** – If you're the type of person who only gets motivated by others, you might let the perception of a lack of support block your path to success. If you don't feel supported by your boss, your spouse, your friends or the world it may be difficult to move forward. However, it's important to remember that most of the time, perception isn't always honest. It's imperative that you put the onus on you and not others to provide the support you need to achieve.

Working your way through motivation blocks, one at a time is the best course of action. Many people have one or two but some people tend to have many blocks. It's not your fault. Some actions and reactions to situations and stress are unconscious. Study different personalities and determine which type you are. Also, look at the potential blocks and how to overcome them. Understanding yourself better will help you to overcome the hurdles or blocks more quickly.

Smart Ways to Unblock Yourself

No matter your personality type, there will always be times when you will feel a lack of motivation. Everyone has difficulty getting or staying motivated from time to time. However, when you find yourself experiencing motivational blocks such as the ones previously described, there are ways to get through them successfully.



- **Write it Down** – It is always a good thing to write things down when you are experiencing problems and in this case, write it down exactly what is causing your lack of motivation as well as how you feel. After you've finished writing that, go back through it. Rewrite everything that is a negative then turn it into a positive. When you do this, you will not only see how you thought and felt in the beginning but you will begin to see a change for the positive in your thinking and feeling, even if it's just a minimal shift.
- **Break It Down** – Often times a motivational block is caused by being overwhelmed. If you break down what you need to do into smaller tasks that can be easily accomplished, you'll experience small bursts of success that will motivate you to keep going. By doing it this way, you'll get done faster and you'll do a better job.
- **Change It Up** – Sometimes you can get your motivation back simply by just changing up your environment. If you find yourself needing a little inspiration, go for a brisk walk, or go work in the library or a coffee shop to change things up. Move to a different room to help with promoting some new ideas. Whatever you can do to change up your environment, do it. It will help to motivate you in a whole new way.

- **Learn New Things** – Sometimes, you may lack motivation because you've hit a wall in your learning. Start researching a wider range of topics. You'll be surprised at how one unrelated topic can give you a list of brand new ideas for your idea or niche. Learning new things stimulates the brain that will always motivate you to get to work. When things seem too hard or stifled, it's usually due to a lack of knowledge. We are beings of nature, and nature is all about growing.
- **Imagine The Feeling Of Success And Practice It** – This is a fun way to get through your motivational blocks. We've all had a moment or two of successful experiences in our lives and can remember what it felt like. Well, close your eyes and envision that time when you experienced success. Conjure up those feelings once again. Now imagine having that same feeling at the accomplishment of this new project.
- **Connect With People You Feel Are Successful** -- When you surround yourself with other successful people it forces you to look at the world differently. You'll start to see success as truly possible. You will also begin to see different tactics to achieving success, and when you see people in action you'll be more likely to emulate certain characteristics that are often portrayed in successful people.
- **Ask Questions** – When you run into a problem, do your research to identify the “go to” person on a particular subject and don't be afraid to ask questions. Always, for the sake of learning, do your own research and ask questions to keep learning. When you research topics and ask questions, you often learn what to expect, making accomplishing tasks highly successful. And the knowledge and resources you gain can help you maintain your forward momentum and help squelch fear of the unknown. Ask questions.
- **Know What You Want** – If you don't know what you want to accomplish, it will be very difficult to start. You'll just be spinning wheels. Sometimes you don't really lack motivation, you just lack the understanding of what exactly needs to be done due to not knowing the destination. If you know what you want, you can always begin by taking that first step.
- **Understand What Change Means** – You know the saying, “If you keep doing what you're doing, you'll keep getting what you're getting.” Real change will cause a series of events to occur that starts changing your life. For example, if you want to finish a project, set a schedule for yourself and do your best to stick to it. Don't overthink it but instead go with the flow, and allow more (inspired) action to guide your doing. Inspired action comes from a place of “calm” where you allow yourself to be guided by your intuition instead of external appearances.
- **Tackle One Thing On Your List At A Time** – Everything starts with a first step or action. As mentioned before, if you know the destination you can then start with the first action in a sequence of steps that will help you arrive at your goal. A

sure way to experience success is to act, of course, but again acting intuitively involves knowing yourself and where you are in correlation with your gut instincts.

- **Pick the Right Team** – One thing that can be overwhelming and cause people to lose motivation is choosing the wrong people to work with. Whether you are dealing with a team or you're a contractor working for a client, it's important that you choose the right type of people for your situation. The right people will support and motivate you, while you'd do the same for them.
- **Understand That Failure is A Part of Life** – No one has experienced success without also experiencing failure, no one. Imagine that you are a salesperson making sales calls. Not everyone that will answer your call will say "yes". As a matter of fact, not everyone will answer your call. But that's okay because every "no" gets you closer to that "yes". Life is like that, too. If you're not failing, you're not trying hard enough to succeed.
- **Take Care of Yourself** – As you take the necessary steps to achieve your goals, it is very important that you take care of yourself. Like flight attendants say to the passengers of an airplane, if you have kids, you must put the oxygen mask on yourself first. Always put your well-being first, in terms of your basic needs. You are worth caring for. Continually ignoring your own needs puts you at risk to become burned out and/or resentful, neither of which will ever help you care for others.
- **Know What Success Means to You** – Do you know what success means to you? It's important that you define success for yourself and not from the standpoint of another. For some people, success means to live in a tiny-house in the middle of the Arizona desert. For someone else, it might mean saving enough to retire early. Don't let other people tell you what success means to you. You will need to define that for yourself and don't be surprised if your definition changes over time. Just simply modify your definition.

When you remove the things that block your success, you'll start to experience a real change in your life, allowing you to realize the success within your grasp. Once you can envision yourself succeeding, you can begin to plan the route you want to take, and begin working towards your goals.

Getting to this level will give you a feeling of accomplishment. This success will encourage and motivate you to continue. Since one success is often built on the foundation of a previous success, the more you do and try, the more confident you'll become to overcome any setbacks or obstacles that may get in your way.

