

FAST TRACK GUIDE:

*Understanding Your
Motivational Blocks and
Getting Past Them*



Fast Track Guide Understanding Your Motivational Blocks and Getting Past Them

You know that person. You know the one. They've got their stuff together. They're out there making waves, breaking glass ceilings, and are doers. They simply get stuff done and make no bones about what's important to them. They are successful.

But, do you understand how they find their motivation? Do you know why they're motivated to implement and succeed while you're not? Do you know what they went through to get to where they are?

Let's look at potential motivational blocks the average person experiences, and then we'll discover ways to get through them. But first, let's consider the study of motivation and motivational theory.

Old School Motivational Theory

It can help to look at some research from the study of motivational theory. We can look at the work of several scientists from the past that chose to study human motivational theory. Understanding the research on motivation can help you to understand your life and actions better. When you understand this scientific work and relate it to yourself, you'll create a situation where you understand how motivation works for you and how to get motivated any time you need it.

There are essentially four basic thoughts regarding motivation.

- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
- Herzberg's Dual-Factor Theory
- McClelland's "The Need for Achievement"
- Vroom's Expectancy Theory of Motivation

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow created a motivation model that states individuals are motivated by different types of needs depending on how pressing they are. For example, before one can worry about their self-esteem or do what they love they must first satisfy the basic needs of hunger, safety, and affection.

In other words, if you're struggling to live safely, and keep food on the table, it's going to be very hard for you to feel successful or reach for more because you're just scrapping at the bottom. 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 were 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. But, not everyone has the right skills, resources, or support in life to experience these things. Therefore, the ability to identify what is missing and can fill that missing piece of the puzzle will create more success and thus more motivation.

The lesson is that you must know 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 the roadblocks, you set up for yourself, or that another person has placed in your path, and how to overcome them will set you up for the success you desire.

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

Know Your Personality Type

A great way to get motivated is to find out what type of personality you have. One way to do that is to take a personality test such as the one you can find on [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, they are very accurate, and useful tools that can help you make changes.

The key to this test is to give answers that are true and accurate, rather than what you wish was true. There are no “correct” answers. You don’t need to try to beat the test. Be truthful, and you’ll find out what your personality is like 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 and reading the results.

You can purchase an in-depth analysis or you can get a lot from the free test. The important thing is to answer the questions as truthfully as your subconscious 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 others who are willing to share to help you work better together in a supportive environment.

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 things you’ll be more motivated and thus experience more success.

- **Create a Supportive Environment** – The people, tools, and atmosphere around you need to be supportive in your perception. It doesn’t matter if your boss thinks they’re supportive, but you feel that they’re 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 life.
- **Decide When and Where You’ll “DO”** – Whatever it is, you need to know the when, what, why, and how of what you’ll do. If you have all that decided it’s going to be a lot easier to commit and follow through with your plan.
- **Commit to a Plan** – 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. You can be completely unmotivated but follow through with your plan anyway. 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 achieved.
- **Start Sooner Rather Than Later** – For example, let’s say you want to lose weight and get healthy. Don’t wait until Friday or Monday to start. Instead, start now. The sooner you start the sooner your brain will catch up with your actions and accept that this is your new way of doing things.

Learn to ignore the tricks your brain plays on you when it comes to acting on your plans toward achieving your goals. Before doing anything new, or anything at all sometimes, your brain will determine due to pre-programmed information whether it’s pleasure or pain. It’s also often wrong since it seeks 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're training your brain to re-associate some "painful" actions as "pleasurable." This works with everything including exercise and eating right.

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. The way to do that is to recognize the motivational blocks that you're experiencing and then work on ways to overcome them.

- **Glass Half Full or Half Empty?** – Are you the type of 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 you can refill your glass whenever you want. The important thing is that you know 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 if you are able to motivate yourself with your thoughts. So, 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 have a problem. It's like that saying -- "Whether you think you can or can't, you're right." Focus on "can" and finding a path to success. The way some things happen in life you may feel like you take two steps forward and then one step back. Keep in mind 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 everything 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 somewhere in the middle, but successful people 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 failing. Some people fear success. That fear can be so strong that it paralyzes you and keeps you from trying something new. Because your mind reasons that if you don't do it, you won't feel bad about yourself if you fail. But if you do it and fail, you'll feel bad about yourself. Fear of failure is just a trick. More than likely you will experience both success and failure in your life, but more often than not, it's a feeling of regret for not trying that makes you suffer the most. Therefore, act despite the fear. You will have 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. 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 set a strict schedule until you achieve the results you want. You might consider working with a coach or finding an accountability partner to help you.
- **Not Enough Perceived Support** – Often, if you're the type of person who is motivated by other people you might let the lack of support around you 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 lack of support is perception and not reality. Instead, 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 what type of personality you have, there will be times when you feel a lack of motivation. Everyone has difficulty getting or staying motivated from time to time. When

you find yourself experiencing motivational blocks such as the ones described above, there are ways to get through them and come out on the other side successful.

- **Write it Down** – If you experience problems with motivation, it's a good idea to write it down. Include what is causing your lack of motivation as well as how you feel. Then, go back through it. Rewrite everything that is negative, turning it into a positive so that you can see what you thought and felt in the beginning and how you turned at least part of it around to be more positive.
- **Chunk It** – Sometimes a motivational block is caused by being overwhelmed. If you chunk up what you need to do into small tasks that you can easily accomplish, you'll experience small bursts of success that will motivate you to keep going. You'll get done faster and do a better job.
- **Change Your Environment** – Sometimes you can get your motivation back simply by changing your environment. Go for a brisk walk, go work in the library or a coffee shop, move to a different room. Whatever you can do to change up your environment will help motivate you in a new way.
- **Stimulate Your Brain** – Sometimes, you may lack motivation because you don't know enough about the situation. Once you research it, you'll stimulate your brain in a way that will help you get to work. When things seem too hard, due to a lack of knowledge, it can be overwhelming and even frightening. But, if you research the issue, you'll soon know more and be able to find motivation.
- **Remember What Success Feels Like** – One way to get through your motivational blocks is to remember what success feels like. Close your eyes and envision a time when you experienced success. Imagine how it felt. Imagine what you'll feel like if you're successful with this new project.
- **Connect with Successful People** -- When you surround yourself with other successful people it forces you to move to look at the world differently. You see success is possible. You see how they're achieving success and you're more likely to emulate it and experience it for yourself.
- **Do Your Homework** – Before you start something new or when you have a problem to solve, do your research. Identify the “go to” person on that topic and follow them. Ask questions if you don't understand and above all, keep learning. When you research topics, you often learn what to expect, how to accomplish things, and where to go for help. The knowledge and resources you gain can help you maintain your forward momentum, squelch fear of the unknown, and more. Do your homework.
- **Know What You Want** – If you don't know what you want to accomplish, it will be very difficult to start. Sometimes you don't really lack motivation, you just lack the understanding of what needs to be done due to not knowing the destination. If you know what you want, you can start with step one.
- **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 you must set a schedule for yourself and stick to it instead of just going with the flow and procrastinating and thinking that thought without action will really change anything.
- **Tackle One Thing 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. The only way to experience success is to act, but acting involves grasping those first steps.
 - **Pick the Right Team** – One thing that can be overwhelming and cause people to lose motivation for a project 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 do the same for them.
 - **Understand Failure is Part of Life** – No one has experienced success without also experiencing failure. Imagine you're a salesperson making sales calls. Not everyone will say yes. 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 steps to achieve your goals, it's important that you take care of yourself. Like flight attendants say, if you have kids, you must put the oxygen mask on yourself first. Put your wellbeing first, in terms of your basic needs. You are worth caring for. Continually ignoring your own needs puts you at risk to become run down or resentful, neither of which will help you care for others.
 - **Know What Success Means to You** – It's important that you define success for yourself. For some people, success means to living 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 modify your definition.

When you remove the things that block your success, you'll start to experience real change in your life, allowing you realize that success is within your grasp. Once you can envision yourself succeeding, you can plan the route you want to take, and then 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 be that you can overcome any setbacks or obstacles on your road to success.