

Intrinsic & Extrinsic Motivation

Source: Coach Training EDU - www.academiclifecoaching.com

Intrinsic motivation (Mastery) is being motivated to do something because the action itself is the reward. It is when someone thinks, “I want to do this because it’s fun.” Or it could be, “I enjoy the challenge.” Or even, “I want to see what happens when I follow through with...” Intrinsic motivation is about enjoying the process as much as the result.

Extrinsic motivation (Performance) is being motivated to do something for the sake of an external benefit. It is when people think, “If I do this, then I get this reward.” Or it could be “If I don’t do this, this won’t happen.” Anytime someone uses a conditional sentence—a pair of if-then clauses—he or she is using conditional motivation.

While extrinsic motivation works well in the short-term, to be successful in school without all the stress, it is important to find a way to be intrinsically motivated. In other words, you must find a way to balance doing your schoolwork for the sake of the grade, with doing your schoolwork because learning and doing the work is enjoyable.

Finding that place where learning is fun allows you to take more control of your motivation so you can switch at-will between extrinsic (for short bursts of energy) and intrinsic (your main engine).

The biggest key in shifting to intrinsic motivation, which will be more useful in the long-run, is simply being aware of which motivation style you are using. Self-awareness goes a long way to determining which style you use. Once you find the joy of tapping into an intrinsic style of motivation, it quickly becomes a positive habit.

Answer the following questions:

Which activities do you naturally use intrinsic motivation/mastery approach?

When do you find yourself using the extrinsic motivation/performance approach?

In your career and/or school work, how do you balance between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation?

What could you do to shift that balance slightly more in the direction of intrinsic motivation?