

EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

– JERRY MULENBURG 5 MINUTE OPENING STATEMENT

EXTRINSIC OR INTRINSIC MOTIVATION?

I specifically use these two words, Extrinsic and Intrinsic, because they exemplify the two concepts presented here today:

Extrinsic motivators– real or tangible things like bonuses and promotion

Intrinsic motivators – intangible things

I will convince you that extrinsic motivators are more important, while my colleague will try and fail, to make you believe that intrinsic motivators are more important.

By the way, the loser of the debate buys the winner a drink tonight. How's that for a motivating extrinsic reward?

The main point of the debate is for you to decide, which of the two types of motivation is better. – better being more appropriate or more effective toward achieving the goal of motivation.

So, what *is* the goal? Why do we, or do we want to, motivate people?

The classical reason usually given is because we want to continue, or to develop, a behavior. The follow-on then is, if we do motivate someone, how do we do it - Extrinsically or Intrinsically? I will present the rationale for Extrinsic motivators over Intrinsic motivators.

Famed psychologist Abraham Maslow stated that humans have a set of five inherent needs including physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-fulfillment, prioritized in that order. And, he says, that only after one need is filled will we be concerned about the next. So, if you have enough to eat, adequate shelter, etc. then you focus on being safe, then on being loved, and so on.

Equally famed psychologist Frederick Herzberg built on this idea, and found that people at work have things that satisfy them, and things that motivate them. The satisfiers, or as Herzberg called them “satisficers,” are *necessary-but-not-sufficient* requirements that must be met. These include things like working conditions, pay, status, etc. However, to motivate someone, Herzberg said that you need to provide something more.

Another renowned psychologist, B.F. Skinner, performed experiments in his now famous “Skinner Box.” He found that tangible or extrinsic rewards motivate actions. He had rats push a pedal and birds peck a plate to receive a pellet of food. The inference is the apparent application to humans. Without the pellet available, nothing happened.

So what do these findings have to do with extrinsic-intrinsic motivation?

My position is that extrinsic motivators are critically important to affect behavior, and that intrinsic motivators are nice-to-haves. Let me give you a brief project management example.

There are two identical projects and project teams (lets say that the team members are all from sets of identical twins, one twin on each team), and each team has the same goal—to build a Mars rover—and they each have the same requirements, resources and schedule.

The success of one project is to meet the requirements within the resources and schedule. Their motivation is the project's success and knowing they did a good job, and being on NOVA or national TV with the NASA Administrator.

The success of the other project is also to meet the requirements within the resources and schedule, but they get to keep any unspent resources from the project to divide up among the team members as bonuses, only if the project is 100% successful. (They also get to be on NOVA, & on TV with the Administrator.) Now, which project team will be more motivated to perform? I say it will be the second.

In conclusion, I have shown you with a brief example, and from some great minds in psychology, that extrinsic motivators are more effective than intrinsic motivators.