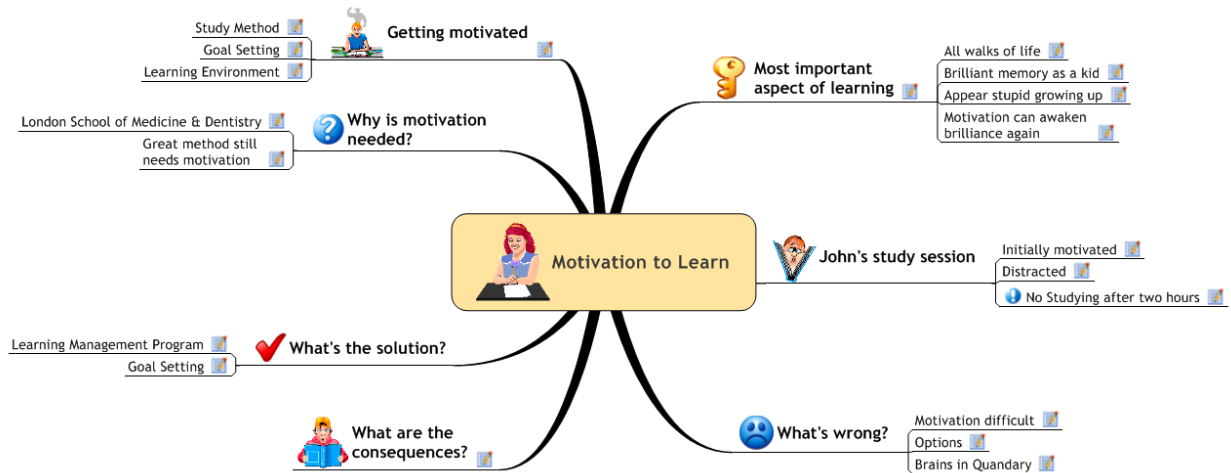


Motivation to Learn



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1 Most important aspect of learning

Motivation is almost the most important, if not the most important, quality needed for success.

All walks of life

This bold statement does not only apply to studying, but all walks of life, whether it be at school, in sport or in the workplace.

Brilliant memory as a kid

Recently, I chatted to a colleague at work about her son, who is now a young adult. She stated that he simply is not motivated to learn. He is scoring way below average results, yet she said that he is not stupid.

As a kid he knew the name of every single dinosaur. He was virtually a **walking encyclopedia** on dinosaurs.

Appear stupid growing up

Yet, today, he says that he **understands** the work in class, but **cannot remember** it.

This is the same kid that could tell the difference between a brachiosaurus and a brontosaurus, or a tyrannosaurus and an ankylosaurus. These are not easy words. Most educated adults will struggle!

Motivation can awaken brilliance again

The big difference between now and then is his **motivation to learn**.

Yes, study techniques can help, but without him getting motivated again, there is simply no hope.

With the correct motivation to learn **the brilliance can be awoken again!**

2 John's study session

Initially motivated

It's seven o'clock and John is very keen to study. He means well and lays out his work neatly on his desk. **He carefully readjusts everything again.** His books are piled, neatly, one upon the other. He starts to read.

Distracted

As he reads, he starts to yawn. Feeling a bit tired, he thinks he has to get some fresh air and perhaps something to drink.

As he walks to the kitchen, something catches his eye on the T.V. He tells himself that he would just watch until the next commercial break. It's half an hour later and he is still not sitting with his books. His mother questions him about when he is going to study. He complains that she should stop nagging.

It's now an hour later and still no studying has been done. After some more 'nagging', he decides to get back to his room and start working.

He's back at his desk, still staring blankly at his books, when the cell phone beeps. It's an SMS from his best friend. Eventually they get into a 'chat' that lasts longer than he imagined it would...

Once more he attempts to start, but remembers the drink he had forgotten when he initially went to the kitchen.

After a fight with his little sister, some more T.V., a snack, which turned into a feast, and few more SMS's, he is eventually back at his desk.

! No Studying after two hours

Two hours have passed and still no studying has been done.

He starts reading again, but the weight in his stomach from the feast he had seems to be pulling his eyelids closed. He puts his head on the desk and tells himself: 'Only five minutes...'

And so on, And so on...

3 What's wrong?

Motivation difficult

The above examples highlight two factors:

- Motivation is difficult
- Reading difficult text books are not fun

Could it be that reading difficult textbooks can kill any motivation that may have been there to start with?

Options

John only has two options. He either **studies as he has been doing** and **does poorly**, or he **doesn't study and still does poorly**.

In the first case he could prove himself to be stupid, incapable and a failure.

If he doesn't study, he would still be a failure, but at least he'll have an excuse. He might even get respect from certain pupils for being 'brave enough' not to study.

Either way, he is still a failure.

Brains in Quandary

Tony Buzan calls this 'Brains in quandary' in the Mind Map book. It highlights the fact that normal linear notes in one colour have the following shortcomings:

- They obscure key words
- They make it difficult to remember
- They waste time
- They fail to stimulate the brain creatively

Note taking should be colourful, stimulating and most of all, **fun** to look at!

4 What are the consequences?

- We lose our powers of concentration
- We start making notes on notes
- We experience loss of confidence in our abilities
- We lose the love of learning, that was so evident as children
- We suffer from boredom and frustration
- The harder we work, the less we progress

5 What's the solution?

Learning Management Program

As stated before, the problem lies in the very learning methods themselves.

Better study methods are a part of the solution, but not the only part.

This is why we have a **Learning Management Program**.

By having a program to learn just about anything, you will stay focused and motivated.

Remember, learning should be **colourful, stimulating and fun!**

Goal Setting

When it comes to goal setting, Stephen Covey in 'The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People' states that one should '**Begin with the End in Mind.**'

In the learning context, this means you should know the marks that you realistically think you could attain.

How high you set them is up to you! Our section on **SMART Goals** will help you with the goal setting process.

6 Why is motivation needed?

London School of Medicine & Dentistry

Researchers at the London school of Medicine and Dentistry conducted a research on the Efficacy (effectiveness) of the **Mind Map Study method**.

They concluded:

"Mind maps provide an **effective study technique** when applied to written material. However before mind maps are generally adopted as a study technique, **consideration has to be given towards ways of improving motivation amongst users**." (Farrand P, Hussain F, Hennessy E.)

Great method still needs motivation

This shows that even with a great study method, such as mind mapping, motivation is still needed to achieve the desired results.

7 Getting motivated

Getting motivated to learn involves two actions:

- Goal Setting
- Applying studying methods that are colourful, fun and effective

Study Method

What would you say to a method that can cut your study time by more than half, be fun and give you better results?

Sounds unbelievable?

For this you have to wait until we come to the Study Methods section though.

Goal Setting

You are now ready for our next section on Goal Setting and Smart Goals.

Learning Environment

Before you move on to our next section, there is one other aspect that is often ignored:

- Creating a learning environment

Studying in front of the T.V. or with the radio blaring may work for some, but research has shown that it is mostly poor students that adopt this approach.

The correct environment prepares the brain for learning.

If you are fortunate enough to have your own room, or a desk to work at, use it!

If not, try to find a regular spot as far away from distractions as possible. Your brain will get used to it being a 'learning zone' and adapt accordingly.

By all means play some soft, preferably classic music in the background, if you feel it will stimulate you to learn the material and not distract you.

Only YOU will know...