

Motivational Intelligence

Some guys are smart with figures: math holds no worries for them. Some may be a whiz with machines. You know the kind of guy - show him a broken engine and some tools, and he'll have it purring again in no time. Scientists, doctors, financial traders, architects. They all have it in spades: intelligence.

You might find yourself thinking you don't measure up to these guys. Maybe you haven't got that string of qualifications, or the experience that tempting job advert is asking for. Maybe you never excelled at high school, and you've settled into accepting yourself as one of life's also rans. If you're reading this book, then you have taken an important step towards turning this situation around. In this chapter, I will tell you about an important class that you can enroll in. This class is available in every town, in every state. You can't be too young, or too old to enroll in this class. Whatever your educational background, or your work experience, there's a place for you.

The class I'm talking about is the Motivational Intelligence Primer. There are different levels, to suit all abilities, from the timid beginner to the brimful-of-confidence expert. Where is this class taught? The good news is, you are already in the right place. Look around you. Look at the challenges and opportunities that present themselves to you every day. Your daily life is your laboratory. Your daily challenges are your experiments. Anyone can raise their Motivational Intelligence, and this chapter will show you how.

What are *you* waiting for?

But first, what *is* Motivational Intelligence, and why do you need it? Let me share with you the story of *Leon*. Leon worked as a salesman in an office supplies business, making pretty good money. He shared a cubicle and a job title with a colleague who started at the company at around the same time. Both men were of average intelligence, with similar market experience, and both worked a near identical sales territory. Both men scored within a few percentage points of each other on the company psychometric tests. And yet, despite all their similarities, the two men only shared their cubicle for a matter of two years before Leon's colleague was promoted on and up into his own office, with his own parking spot, washroom key and window desk. Was Leon a failure? Absolutely not. At the end of every month, Leon made his target to the nickel. He was a steady and conscientious worker: reliable and hard working, possessed of an easy manner with customers. If by the middle of the month he was falling a little off target, he might stay late for a couple of hours to nudge his sales back on track. In those

luckier months, when he found himself a little ahead, he might reward himself with a Friday afternoon sales call, and then an early finish, without returning to the office. Leon was well regarded by his superiors, and well liked by his customers. And yet, when the office was reorganized, it was not Leon who was promoted to Divisional Associate Vice-President, but his near identical colleague, Geoff.

So what was it that got Geoff promoted ahead of Leon? The answer is straightforward to us, but it took Leon a little longer to grasp. The quality that Geoff possessed in spades was *motivational intelligence*. When times were tough, just like Leon, he would put in an extra few hours to pull a few more sales out of his territory. But it wasn't just that. He'd ring back any cancelled or reduced orders that month and offer a new, exclusive deal. He'd scour the local enterprise pages, and drive around his territory at weekends, checking for newly opened businesses that hadn't made it onto his call list. He'd keep pushing ahead, even after he'd gotten himself back on track. Why stop at a flat, on target sales month, when a bumper month was within his grasp? In good months, Geoff pushed himself even further, determined to cash in on the momentum. Funnily enough, with Geoff's sheer determination, the bad months just never seemed to materialize. I had the opportunity to meet with both men at a motivational sales symposium in Delaware that I was leading. During the afternoon recess, the three of us took coffee. "Dr Elastine," Geoff began, "I've got such a lot of valuable material out of your symposium - I just can't wait to put it into practice Monday morning. But you know, my motivation wasn't always as high as it is now. When I started out with Leon, I thought he had the better territory, and he had a few more weeks in the business than I did. Those first few months, I was happy just to keep up with him and make my target. But then, after reading an article you wrote one time in Forbes Magazine, I started to look at things a little differently. I realized that I could actually *grow* my motivation. So every day, in the car park, I would take a good, hard look at myself in the rear view mirror. I would tell myself that I was going to be a success that day. I would rehearse any difficult conversations that I was anticipating later on, and I would make sure that they always had a good outcome. I would set myself miniature targets that I could check off. By 10am, make ten calls. By 11am, secure a two hundred dollar order from Kwiky Kut. And the funny thing was, the more I forced myself to exercise my motivation, the stronger it became. I gained this new ability to keep motivated, come rain or shine, strong sales month or slump. And that's what allowed me to pull ahead of Leon, start thinking and acting bigger, and make Divisional Associate Vice-President, while Leon was still serving out his time in that cubicle."

Geoff's appreciation was gratifying, but it also got me to thinking there might be a new area of motivational thinking that I could develop. What Geoff unwittingly hit upon, but could not articulate, were the principles of motivational intelligence.

When you want to develop a bicep, you curl some weights.

When you want to improve your math, you study at night school and take a qualification.

When you want to improve your motivation, you run through a series of attitude exercises to build your motivational intelligence.

I run a full weekend retreat on this topic for busy executives, but there are some simple exercises you can build into your own daily attitude routine.

Mind on Your Money. Close your eyes. Imagine a pile of money. It could be dollar bills, or a stack of coins. Fix the image in your head, and hold it for as long as you can. Allow no other thoughts or images into your head: just you and the money. Now imagine *your* face on the bills. When you have held it for as long as possible, breathe out slowly and open your eyes.

Word of the Day. Attach a photo of yourself to the inside lid of your glove box. Write a positive message to yourself on a post-it note. Stuck for ideas? Try any of the following: *winner, sticker not quitter, employee of the month, high roller.* Stick the note underneath your picture. Just the thought of it will give your day a boost.

I'd Like to Thank... Imagine your acceptance speech at the daily success awards ceremony. Tell your fellow workers how you achieved your goals, and how you're going to go beyond them tomorrow. Feels pretty good, doesn't it?

Thanks To Me. Take the time to thank yourself for all the hard work you've been putting in lately. Tell yourself that it hasn't gone unnoticed, that you're appreciated. Praise is the food of motivation, and it's all the more sincere when you give it to yourself.

The Feelgood Mantra. Pick yourself a motivational mantra: a positive, feelgood message. Why not try some of the following? *I can be all that I want to be. To start is to succeed. Success is just round the corner. I deserve it because I'm confident.* Before you leave the car in the office parking lot, repeat it to yourself twenty-five times.

And the Winner Is... Engrave your name on a medal: most good key cutters or sports trophy shops will do this for you. A good message would be 'First place in the Killer Motivation event.' At the end of the day, get a work colleague to award it to you. You could turn this into a daily or weekly event. As a useful by-product, you will generate office kudos, and help spread the motivating buzz of success.

Remember Who You Work For. That's right, never forget the really important person in all of this. Sure, you've got a boss, but ultimately it's *you* that you work for.

Treat your boss like your most respected customer. When he asks you to do something, smile like you would to your best customer and say, 'Sure, I'll see to that straight away!' Take pleasure in keeping him happy.

Hello Daddy! Many people who have children keep a picture of their loved ones in their wallet. Instead, stick their pictures at the top of a sheet of blank paper. Underneath, make out an invoice for the expenses you will incur over the next ten to fifteen years. College fund, \$40,000. Wedding, \$35,000. Clothing, \$10,000. Now that's a motivator!

Watch it Grow. Write down your dreams and ambitions for the next five years on a piece of paper. It might be to put down a payment on that new condo, or to have that sports coupe you promised yourself. It could be a career goal, like making Divisional Associate Vice-President. Dig a hole and bury the paper in the ground together with a fast-growing perennial. As you watch that plant grow, it will be like watching your dreams emerging from the ground.

Dear You. Keep a set of blank, stamped addressed post cards. Every time you help out at work, or submit a report on time, ask your colleague to jot down a quick note of thanks and put it in the mail. It'll take them next to no time, and it'll make *them* feel good too. As for you, it feels great to start the day with a thank you card in the mail!

Act on these ten simple ideas, and watch your motivational intelligence grow.

And what about Leon and Geoff now? When I was working on this book, I decided to look them up. Geoff is now a Vice President of Conquest Sales at a new firm. He's making better money than ever, and still has that same great attitude. Last month, his team pulled in a ten percent increase in year on year revenue, and a fourfold decrease in customer attrition. His office is now on a corner of the eighth floor, and takes in views of the city on two sides. Finally, you'll be pleased to hear that Leon took some of my lessons on board, and tried out the simple routines that I have outlined for you above. What do you know? Within two months, he made Divisional Associate Vice-President, and he now occupies the office and parking spot vacated by his former colleague. "I always thought Geoff was kind of a kiss ass," admitted Leon. "But after reading your book *Excuses of the Lazy Man (How to Avoid Them)*, I realize that I was just projecting my own professional jealousies. Geoff was just motivated to work harder and smarter than me, that's all. Now I've got his old office, and I've made a few improvements of my own. These days, I have guys coming up to me all the time and saying how much better things are now *I'm* running things."

Armed with the same knowledge, how far could you grow *your* motivational intelligence?