

# WORKPLACE MOTIVATION: EXTRINSIC & INTRINSIC

BY JOELLE MONACO

While 2020 has left the workforce questioning many of our once-through unchangeable operations, it's a great time to explore the topic of motivation. Motivation is the driver for everything we do, don't do, or choose not to do. In its most basic form is the enthusiasm, level of energy, commitment, and creativity that individuals bring to their organization. But, more importantly, it is a choice impacted by our emotional state.

It was once thought that workplace motivation could be influenced by introducing foosball tables, free food, comfortable chairs, and who could forget the bottomless coffee? However, as a millennial, I have yet to learn where the foosball table idea came from, and based on the other millennials, I ask; they, too, seem to be perplexed and, quite frankly, could care less about a foosball table.

Okay, back to the topic of conversation, people motivation.

However, we know motivation is much more complex and an organizational challenge requiring continuous assessment and customization based on individual needs and wants.

The good news, according to Gallup,

**in 2020, employee motivation increased to 35-36% of the workplace reporting that they felt motivated in their current role.**

Why does this matter so much? Employee motivation is integral to many organizational operations, not to mention ties directly to organizational success.

So how do we better understand motivation and continue to grow the percentage of motivated individuals within our organization? First, challenge the mindset that individuals are either motivated or not; we can influence motivation through workplace initiatives and engagement. Additionally, recognize that most workplaces have at least five generations working alongside one another, with very different interests and values; we can assess how individuals have various influences that would impact their motivation.

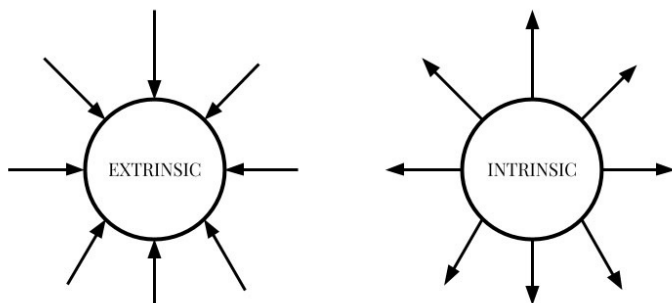
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Finally, understand that while we can't always anticipate every trend, we can begin to meet each individual by considering extrinsic and intrinsic motivators and incorporating both into the workplace.

Let's start by considering extrinsic motivation; this is when external or tangible rewards stimulate motivation. Rewards that drive extrinsic motivation are things like praise, recognition, financial gain, or fear of consequences. This type of motivation can be beneficial in reward-based initiatives; however, it can lose its effect, or its impact can become expected.

**Workplace Examples:**

- Salary and raises
- Benefits; retirement, tuition reimbursement, time off, etc.
- Bonuses
- Promotions and titles
- Rankings
- Workplace environment; office space, parking spots, etc.



Opposed to extrinsic, intrinsic motivation is when an individual is driven by inspiration. Intrinsic motivation is intangible, like satisfaction, feeling trusted, enjoyment, or appreciation. This type of motivation can also be beneficial; intrinsically motivated individuals report better moods and increase creativity, problem-solving skills, flexibility, overall enjoyment, and satisfaction.

**Workplace Examples:**

- Creating change or an impact
- Doing a good job
- Feeling recognized
- Autonomy and choices
- Flexibility
- Growth opportunities

There is no wrong or right when discussing motivation because, like most everything else, it's individualized from person to person and changes over time. However, as an organization or a leader, it is essential to integrate options of motivation that will provide both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation and continue to question what motivates individuals and react accordingly. More importantly, take the time to get to know each team member and build a relationship to understand what they need and recognize as those needs evolve when considering motivation.

**Keep up the great work motivating individuals and teams of tomorrow,  
Joelle M. Monaco**

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