



Tips 4 Growth

HOW TO KEEP MOTIVATED IN DIFFICULT TIMES

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“When we are committed to personal development and growth in a company, how do we deal with colleagues who are unwilling to make changes to improve their own working activities? They are always complaining, but unwilling to make any change. It is emotionally draining and we can’t completely avoid them because they are part of the company and we have to interact with them”.

I guess every one of us has been asking himself this kind of question in the past, or even in the present. It’s not always easy to keep focused, motivated and positive while other colleagues seems to refuse taking part to the common journey. Sometimes it seems like everybody is trying to slow down activities with useless complaints and unsolvable problems. As someone stated, they literally “have a problem for every solution”.

The following points of reflection have been proposed by Darren Hardy, well-known coach and motivator (<https://go.darrenhardy.com/darrendaily/>). I took the challenge to comment and fill his points and add some quotes. I believe there are some good hints for everyone in order to see things in perspective and keep motivation high again.

Enjoy your reading

Luigi

1. KNOW AND ACCEPT THE FACT THAT YOU ARE THE DIFFERENT ONE, THE EXCEPTION. LET THAT BE OK.

Being exceptional. When talking about exceptions, few people possess by nature such a steady positive attitude considering themselves “exceptional” and being ok with that. Generally we tend to lower the target and dismiss this feeling because we rarely felt “exceptional”, or we simply have a too high concept of this word. But actually we are all “exceptional”, since we have intelligence, abilities, emotions, knowledge and goals which make us unique and different, and as such “exceptional”. As Forrest Gump would say it: “Stupid is as stupid does”, as to say that we can chose - and we chose every day - what we are going to do next, stupid or not stupid, and we can always change it for the better and improve.

“No, not me.” Again, while listening to commencement speeches, like the famous ones of Steve Jobs or Admiral Raven, people have mainly two kind of reactions: the most diffused is one of disbelief (“no, not me”), the other one is of possibility (“yeah, maybe ...”). Most disbelief lies in the incorrect assumption that we are “not authorized”, not “good enough” to become those kind of “exceptional” persons. The good news is that we are already exceptional, in facts. Just take note of it and start experimenting: change only one thing you don't like in your daily activity, and in one week time you will see the difference.

“Failing forward”. Being exceptional is something connected to our personality, that can be modified and enhanced: becoming able to take a new step forward, switch on the “new mode” and move, staying with decisions and going on unceasingly - even when failure hits our good intentions. Failing is ok, but “exceptional” people likes failing “forward”, getting the positive out of it and keeping consistent. They do not fail “backward” – recriminating, blaming and leaving, because they know it's useless and time consuming. It has nothing to do with our job, our role or the social level we are in. We would do the same in any circumstance, both in life as in our career.

No heroes. How do we know that we are an exception? Simply because we asked ourself these question: what should I do now? Instead of choosing the easy alternative, you look for a qualitative different solution. We want to become a proactive, purposeful kind of persons, we want to fit another model, not the easy one. We are running a different race from those of others, no need for comparing sizes. Being an exception doesn't make us heroes, but we will discover that our decisions will be long lasting, because they become

progressively part of our beliefs, of our living routine. We are the one in charge for our life. No others are.

“For some time I have realized that entrepreneurs, traders, the best scientists, the people who create hospitals, research centers, recovery communities are never whiny or lazy. They are optimistic, they know how to enjoy the things that life offers them and they are able to see the opportunities that present themselves. They act, they build”.

(F. Alberoni)

2. DON'T CRITICIZE SOMEONE ELSE'S MOVIE/LIFE. WATCH WITH FASCINATION.

We don't know. We only see people and actions from outside, surfing the appearance, we do not actually know why other people do what they do and how they are feeling. We don't know what battles every other person is fighting inside, in the family, at work, in their personal struggling or whatever. Criticizing will rarely help us to understand other people's actions and behaviors, but surely will tell a lot about ourselves and our negative state of mind to everyone around us. When we criticize, we become like the ones we criticize, nobody from outside will see any difference.

Patience wins. Sharing comments or critics can be momentarily good for releasing pressure, but it does not solve problems and – worst of all – becomes easily a habit. It's a negative trait and a boomerang at the same time. Avoiding doing it requires self-control and education, being always conscious of what we say, but it represents the best choice. Every one of us is trying to play his own movie, wants to bounce his ball, has hopes and dreams as we all have. Being patient is much more a rewarding attitude, brings more happiness in our life and even from outside we look quite more interesting, wise and reliable. Let things go.

Take a step back and watch. If you do not like (t)his movie, take a step backward and don't fall into the trap of judging. Instead of criticizing, objectively confront in your mind your solutions with those of others and ask yourself what would be good for you, and if you find something valuable in theirs solutions... take it! Instead of getting sucked into the narration and their special effects (hates, likes, fears etc.) and falling into

the same actor's patterns trap - choosing the same solutions – we better sit in our sofa and look at those different lives from a distance without critics: it will help us to better evaluate.

Inspiration & network. Watching other's people "life movies" from outside can be very inspiring, because we can clearly see different options and we can learn a lot from these simulations. In the very end, what others do is not our business – only what can help us growing is worth. By the way, it allows us also to know better the persons we like to work with and can help us creating our best network.

"Become the change you want to see.

You create your opportunities by asking for them".

(M. Gandhi)



3. JUST BE A GREAT STAR IN YOUR MOVIE.

A better experience. Keeping the same example of the movie, let's focus on our personal role in the play, which is by far the most important. What are we doing to make it a good movie? What are our plans for today, for the future? What do we dream for ourselves? Even if we are not programming incredible careers, or we cannot change our current situation due to any reasons, what could make it a better experience? Do we need any other skill, knowledge, mindset to make the present feel better, to regain trust in ourselves, something to re- motivate us? Focusing on the things we are doing - or want to do – is the best way to invest time and energy.

Keep away from negativity. Do not lose time investigating into negative issues. The more time we spend thinking about something, the more those negative impressions are graved in our memory and in our feelings. Chose the good ones, those which nourish our good wolf inside. When we feel that there is something wrong with someone's behavior - or words or acts - simply turn your attention to something more valuable and positive. Smile and detach yourself, find a good excuse and move away.

Break negative loops. Some years ago a good friend was complaining with me, maybe a little bit too long. After listening to him for some minutes, I decided to tell him a little bit harshly: "I'm your friend, not of your guilt feelings!" and I left. This shocking behavior got his target, because he realized that I wanted him to be a warrior, not a "worrior", and things went much better after. If we lose too much energy along the road scattering our attention around into harmful emotions, there'll be few energy left and no mind clarity to do a good job.

Make your line longer. Another good lesson I've learned in the past: instead of trying to cut other's lines shorter, it's actually much more efficient to focus on our line and make it longer. According to an old story, once a manager drew a line on the wall and asked his colleagues to make the line shorter without touching or removing any part of the line. None of them thought it was possible. The manager took up the challenge and drew a longer line parallel to the first line. This automatically made the old line appear shorter, and he did this without touching or removing any part of it. It is a good lesson to follow for business, work, and life. We'll be able to derive success from the line we draw for our business endeavors, and more often than not, it will be bigger and better than our closest competitors or colleagues.

Modeling excellence. To be a great star in our movie, we need to individuate what are the values we want to embody. "Modeling excellence" for instance is a great attitude of great people, of those who daily improve themselves in order to reach their goals, to get their achievements, to apply skills from other persons and make them work. Being able to change, adapt and flourish in doing it, this is called being "anti-fragile", not only resilient. Take example from how your "myths" (singers, musicians, artists, you name it) behave and you will succeed following them. Reading biographies of great personalities, motivational books and quotes are all good excuses to train the brain focusing and working on good stuff.

*“You cannot dream yourself into a character;
you must hammer and forge yourself one”.*
(J.A. Frounde)

4. YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIKE TO STILL ACCEPT.

Keep you final destination in mind. Inside a company we find all kind of personalities and experiences. With some people we may be able to naturally develop solid relationships and even cultivate some good friendships. With some others people it won't be the case at all. At a working level, we have to interrelate with both categories and find a way, sometimes a compromise, to connect and collaborate. The magic recipe? 1. Accept persons as they are, we don't have to like them to work with them. 2. We are working for the best result, keeping always our final destination in mind, that's what we are paid for. 3. Not letting things go too personal, avoid becoming frustrated and getting demotivated.

Active acceptance. Being able to manage the complex side of communication and a balanced interrelationship with our colleagues while doing our job, understanding also their points, setting goals and never losing our good mood is something we should strive for. Acceptance is not a passive state or attitude, it requires us to be very proactive and give feedback, but also capable of letting things go, when needed. Of course we still don't like certain behaviors, but we'll find a way to manage it and create an automatic response to that. Then our motivation will be back to high levels, for we won't lose energy in those matters any longer.

Working together. As Henry Ford said: “Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, working together is success”. The sequence reflects difficulty levels: coming together is simply the starting point; keeping together shows commitment in solving “cohabitation” and cooperation problems, we are a step further; but working all together in a smooth, efficient way, as part of the same whole team, requires motivation and patience. The real achievement behind all success stories is the capacity to motivate, being motivated and keeping doing it.

*“Small opportunities are often
the beginning of great enterprises”.*
(Demostenes)

5. “SON, ALWAYS DO MORE THAN WHAT YOU ARE PAID FOR, AS AN INVESTMENT INTO YOUR FUTURE” (E. ROHN)

A generous mindset. Doing something more, almost for free, with no other purpose in mind than to make it as an investment for ourselves (and for our future), is a highly effective attitude that all great personalities own. It is not about the effect we want to obtain on others (“see how good I am”) or to get advantages of any kind: it’s an internal, personal satisfaction feeling: we have done more than we could or should, and we are simply happy, filled by that. This mind-opening feeling of generosity is the basis of a healthy motivation: I did everything I had to do and I added one more step, with a smile. A generous mindset is the base for personal satisfaction, even when nobody around is looking at us.

“Why should I?” On the other end we have a quite common approach: “Why should I?”, “What do I get from that?”. This is a “quid pro quo” reasoning modality (“I give, so that you may give”), where the exchange rules are clear: we do what we are paid for, nothing more. Yes, it’s an easy play: action and reaction, no “intelligence” involved, basically a lose-lose game. From these approach no motivation can ever arise, since there are no winners. We have lost our motivation and our passion about working, but sure it will bring us nowhere in terms of evolution and pleasure at doing things.

Going the extra mile. Again, attitude is of paramount importance. The way we behave in the company will not be far away from our personal life approach, and we can decide to make it worth or to throw it away, day by day. Doing more than we are paid for is synonymous of “going the extra mile” that since long now has become the trademark of exceptional people we talked about in previous chapters. Being exceptional is made of investments, of putting value and effort in what we believe and want to achieve. Everything we do from there, is well invested money. But let’s go back to business for a second.

User-generated content. Nowadays excellent customer service – for instance - is considered the highest badge of merit that a company can earn. It is an attribute that many people value more than low pricing or even product quality. This is why entrepreneurs who focus on their clients’ needs and seek opportunities that take their customer service to the next level are gaining competitive advantage on the market. Social media users love to share their stories. User-generated content is a huge opportunity for companies to promote

their services. Internet is full of outstanding gestures that brands have made for individual clients. Even if you haven't personally experienced customer service like this, you'd still pick companies going the extra mile for a customer. Do you want an example?

Shane designed a dragon for Samsung. A 26-year old loyal fan of Samsung messaged the company via Facebook, telling them that he enjoyed many Samsung products and asked for a free Galaxy S III to replace his old one. He even drew a picture of a dragon, just for Samsung. The company appreciated his effort and sent Shane a kangaroo drawing in return, dedicated to their loyal client. The delighted customer could not resist sharing the story on the Internet. As it went viral and gained much publicity, the company decided to gift him with the requested smartphone with the very same dragon he drew, etched right onto the body of the phone itself as well as the box it arrived in.

Thought for the day:

**A person who feels
appreciated will always
do more than is
expected.**

6. Action:

- Tell yourself how you are going to do MORE than you are paid for, as an investment into your future.
- Now
- And do it
