

Self-motivation: The route to success

DRIVING FORCE V Pradeep Kumar talks about discovering the power within you through self-motivation

Last week when I met Rahul, a teenager, I happened to ask him what his dream career was. He said, "I want to become a pilot and join NASA."

I asked him how he planned to achieve that. He answered confidently, "I intend to do Aeronautical Engineering in IIT or in USA."

Zig Ziglar, author and best-known speaker on motivation describes the word, 'want to' as the motivation and the 'how to' as education and training'. The word 'motivation' is derived from the word 'motive' which means a reason, purpose, intention, inspiration, desire, etc.

Motivation is therefore, a desirable and positive response or action, to move ahead in pursuit of your goals. Various tools such as money, praise, or a sense of achievement can stimulate motivation. External motivation can be through parents, teachers, and friends. External and self-motivation are powerful tools and can work, depending on the situation and your mindset.

Translate dream into action

While translating dreams into action, you form several goals with deadlines. The obstacles and challenges you face can cause disappointment, and sometimes irritations. This can stall your progress temporarily, but if you permit these small issues to remain for long, it has the potential to set you off-course permanently. However, motivation can keep you focused to make vigorous efforts, with continued determination.

As a student what can cause disappointments and de-motivate you? The most common causes are exam results, admissions to higher courses, classroom issues, financial prob-

lems, personal tragedies, etc. If you carefully analyse, you will find most of these are temporary setbacks.

How to motivate yourself

Motivation drives your behaviour and action. As a student, do not depend on external motivation. Believe in the power of self-motivation, which is tougher but works best in the long run. Therefore, self-motivation is required on a day-to-day basis, to sustain efforts in the right direction. The following is the process to discover the power within you:

Strong desire: Choose your career and have a desire to succeed in life. Think of a role model to emulate and have faith in your ability.

Goal focus: Make short-term, medium-term and long-term goals to achieve success. For example, achieving a certain percentage in your 12th, undergraduate degree, or various competitive exams. With clearly defined goals, you are in the right direction and plans begin to take shape.

Anticipate challenges: Remember challenges are part of the success process. Recognising that challenges can come as surprises helps you to anticipate and prepare through contingency plans.

Positive attitude: The difference between what is possible and impossible depends on your attitude. Be determined, and have a positive attitude.

Finding solutions: If you are determined to succeed, then what can stop you? Further, having anticipated challenges, you are mentally prepared, which facilitates creative thinking to find solutions.

The environment: Think of positive influencing factors in your environment, which includes friends and family. Re-



member, your best friend is one who brings out the best in you. Be in the right company and share your problems fearlessly with parents and teachers. Develop interest in films, books, TV shows, which are entertaining and educating.

Reward yourself: A good way to continue the self-motivation process is to reward yourself, whenever you reach a milestone. Relax for a short while

to introspect and understand that a failure or a milestone is part of the process.

Learn from success stories

Read and understand the success stories of great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, inventors like Thomas Edison and industrialists like Henry Ford. Behind these stories is a burning desire to take every failure as a step towards success. Remem-

ber, Mahatma Gandhi said, "Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will."

Most success stories of life are scripted to rise from a crisis. In fact, the word crisis in Chinese has two symbols, one meaning challenge and the other opportunity. Everyone has dreams but many continue to be in a dream world. Develop yourself to turn dreams

and challenges into reality, with hard work and determination.

A strong motivation is what separates ordinary people and extraordinary achievers. It was Swami Vivekananda, who said, 'We are responsible for what we are, and whatever we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves'. (The writer is a management and career consultant.)