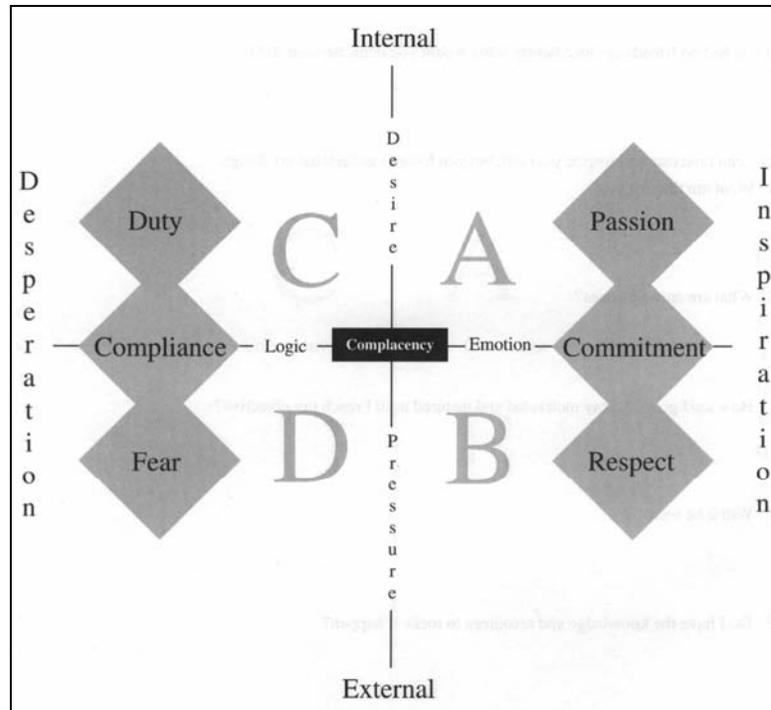


Motivation Equation

When we break motivation down to its most fundamental level, it's either inspiration-oriented or desperation-oriented. Whatever action we take, we are moving either toward something we favor or away from something we disfavor. The majority of the world uses desperation as a motivator. Desperation is like a cattle prod forcing you to move forward and take action. You can motivate anyone on your team with desperation. The problem is that motivation spurred by desperation does not last. When desperation is the motivator, sales reps are in an "away from" mentality. This kind of motivation is fleeting, arising only when threat, fear or discomfort is present. If you want motivation to last, you need to rely on inspiration. When your team is motivated by inspiration, they're moving of their own initiative because they *want* to and are *excited* to, rather than because they are being forced to. Motivation becomes long term when it taps into a person's inner recesses.

While the inspiration approach is certainly the more appealing of the two motivational methods, sometimes there has to be an element of "desperation." I don't mean that you want to cause your team members to feel despair, but sometimes things that push us away have to be present just as much as things that draw us near. The main reason for this recommendation is that if inspiration isn't quite enough, your prospects may just simply fall into inactivity. That is, they fall into a comfort zone. I've developed a grid that maps out the different motivators, their varying degrees and the effects they have on others. Notice that motivation does not exist in the middle of the grid. This central region is the comfort zone, where we experience complacency. How do you get someone on your team to move outside the middle? Let's start with the short-term, easy form of motivation, quadrant D, where we find external desperation. You apply an external pressure to force someone into action. In other words, your team members must do what you say or they're fired. "Hit these numbers or pack your bags." Sure, it will work temporarily, but long-term consequences will result.



The next area of the Motivation Equation is quadrant C, where we find internal desperation. Desperation motivation can be made internal if you can use your prospects' sense of duty or obligation to get them to move. Internal motivation works something like this: "I'm getting paid, so I guess I have to do this. If I don't do this, the team will miss its quota." You can see that in both of these examples, the person is acting of her/his own initiative but only out of obligation or to avoid a worse consequence.

So, is there a place for either of these latter two motivational approaches? Yes, but use them sparingly. Most teams will not put up with this treatment unless they know it is tough love. Every once in a while, when other things have failed, you can use these types of motivation. You have to let your team know not only that there are positive consequences for their actions, but if they don't perform, there may be negative consequences as well. There has to be a baseline or a standard from which to evaluate the situation. Your team members can't think that no matter what they will always have a job. Let's face it—sometimes we all need a kick in the pants. When we do resort to this approach, it's usually a negative circumstance based on desperation. Just don't go overboard or take it to the extreme. Make sure before you use any negative reinforcement

that your sales rep has the tools s/he needs to get the job done. Does s/he need more training? Does s/he know exactly what you expect and how to do it?

The next quadrant is quadrant B, where we find external inspiration. Here, it is still external factors that influence you, but this time in a positive way. You are inspired and energized rather than acting simply to avoid pain. External inspiration is getting on the right motivational track because it can grow into internal inspiration. Sometimes, this quadrant is referred to as “borrowed light.” It’s OK to be guided and inspired by borrowed light until you’ve lit your own flame. At least this kind of motivation keeps you progressing in a positive way. Even with external influences, this type of motivation can produce long-term effects because it is inspiring and thus begins to tap into your inner emotions.

The best type of motivation is internal motivation, as shown in quadrant A. This quadrant is what we call passion. There’s no stopping the person who has found inspiration that is purely internally driven. You can wind her/him up and s/he’ll go on forever.

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