

Chapter 7 Connections between Motivation, Emotions and Learning

1. The author cites three important levers that impact student motivation:

- Value: How important do I find this goal?
- Nature of the environment: Do I feel supported or unsupported?
- Belief in the ability to succeed.

Do you feel there are other important levers? Which of these levers do you feel you are most able to exercise?

2. The author claim many students may not appear motivated to learn, but they are motivated to engage in many other activities. In your observation, what activities are students most motivated to engage in?

3. The author mentioned some simple techniques like deep breathing or guided relaxation that can help students decrease stress and anxiety. What techniques have you explored to help students relax?

4. Figure 7.3 (page 76) listed student-related obstacles to high motivation: student may have to work long hours; they may have an attention-deficit disorder or related diagnoses; they may be primarily interested in credentials; they may feel good grades are their just rewards for their constant attendance; they may not know how to manage their time; they may have few learning skills.

In your experience, what are the biggest obstacles to student motivation? And how to address them?

The author mentioned an increasing proportion of students have attention-deficit disorder or learning disabilities. What is your experience with this?

5. Figure 7.4 (page 77) listed faculty-related obstacles to student motivation: classroom environment daunting or unsupportive; faculty expectations unclear; students are paralyzed by a sink-or-swim course structure.

The author claimed if the faculty held the attitude that all could learn and excel, then the students were highly motivated. Syndie's story also showed the power of encouragement. What techniques have you ever tried to boost your students' confidence in themselves?

Chapter 8 What Faculty Can Do to Boost Motivation, Positive Emotions, and Learning?

The author listed 4 strategies to get started and 21 strategies organized by 5 bases of intrinsic motivation (Figure 8.8, page 94) to boost student learning.

- Tell students how their brain works and about emotions and mindset
- Share stories let them see you are human
- Make your expectation crystal clear, give students many opportunities to earn points
- have metacognitive get-acquainted activities on the first day of class: make students think about what they need to do to succeed in the course

Do you find some activities you have on the first day of class in particular effective?

Strategies for enhancing **autonomy**:

- Allow students to choose paper, project or discussion topics
- Do weekly goal-setting exercise with students:
- Discussion attribution with students

Do you find any of these strategies in particular useful? In your observation, when students get bad grades, do they tend to blame others or themselves?

Strategies for enhancing **Competence**:

- Give clear expectations
- Provide early opportunities for success
- Test early and often
- Use one class to present metacognitive learning strategies
- Do a 1-2 minutes interaction activity for every 10-15 minutes of class
- Provide targeted feedback, rubrics and exemplars

How early do you give your first test? The author mentioned human attention span is about 10 minutes. How do you manage to keep students' attention in class? Do you show your students the criteria for grading?

Strategies for enhancing **belongings**:

- Use metacognitive get-acquainted activities
- Assign real world projects
- Promote cooperative (group) learning

Do all students equally benefit from group learning?

Strategies for enhancing **self-esteem**:

- Discuss mindset and emotions with students
- Let students know you are human: reveal your struggles
- Provide early opportunities for success
- Do reflection activities with students: how they have previously achieved mastery

Some students may practice a lot without learning much. How to change their “just get it done” habit?

Strategies for enhancing **involvement and enjoyment**:

- Connect to students’ interests
- Introduce “Switch days” when students teach
- play learning games
- Give students a question or task at the beginning of class that they need to finish at the end of class

Did you ever try “switch days?” How long did you let the student teach? What kind of learning games are attractive to students? Do you find letting students “give a one sentence summary of today’s lecture” a very effective strategy?