

The Puzzle of Motivation

I watched the Ted Talk "The Puzzle of Motivation" by Dan Pink, as I was interested in learning more about effective ways to motivate a team. Dan Pink makes valid points about leadership and human behavior, and he presents an evidence-based case with a thought experiment. The candle problem is an experiment where people are given tools to prevent a candle from dripping wax. After multiple attempts and numerous different methods, Dan reveals that the answer was simple, but required thinking outside of the box. The key was to overcome functional fixedness. Two different groups were tested, where one group was incentivized with money to solve the problem faster. Surprisingly, this monetary enticement dulled and even slowed down the group incentivized by money. This extrinsic motivation failed to encourage productivity and criticized the mechanistic reward and punishment approach often used in businesses. Having a reward can actually narrow the process and restrict efficiency.

Dan Pink argues that traditional approaches to motivation, such as offering financial rewards, are not effective in driving high performance and creativity. Instead, he suggests that three key factors - autonomy, mastery, and purpose - are the most effective motivators. Autonomy gives employees control over their work environment and processes, mastery involves providing opportunities for skill development and growth, and purpose involves connecting the work to a larger mission or personal values.

I believe that my emphasis on collaboration and communication would contribute to optimal motivation of my team. I like to involve team members in decision-making processes and provide opportunities to round table ideas. Within a group, I strive to foster a sense of autonomy and purpose. While I can give someone the answer to a problem, I'd rather they come

to the answer on their own terms. I promote growth and encourage mistakes because they are paramount to learning. By providing opportunities for development and growth, I can help team members develop their skillset and achieve their professional goals.

Getting to Yes emphasizes the importance of understanding and addressing the interests of all parties involved in a negotiation. This can be utilized in motivating a team by involving team members in the decision-making process and understanding their individual goals and interests. By working collaboratively to develop solutions that meet everyone's needs, team members are more likely to feel invested in the work and motivated to achieve shared goals. Dan also emphasizes the importance of treating team members as autonomous individuals with their own goals and interests. Violations of dignity can occur when leaders impose rigid rules and structures that limit autonomy or fail to consider the unique perspectives and needs of team members. By fostering a sense of autonomy and purpose, leaders can help team members feel valued and respected, which can in turn lead to greater creativity and productivity. The secret to high performance is the unseen intrinsic drive, the drive to do things because they matter.