Motivating middle and high school students to improve communication skills

Megan Mahowald, Ph.D. CCC-SLP
Indiana University
mcmahowa@indiana.edu

Motivation Self-Assessment

How do you define motivation? What does motivation consist of?

What does experience tell us about what motivates students?

What does experience tell us about what does not motivate students?

Case Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviors</th>
<th>High Motivation</th>
<th>Low Motivation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>– what do they do that makes you believe HM or LM?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>– why are they HM or LM?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| What are the goals/objectives for each? |
| What does therapy look like? |

Motivation defined

- Energizing or activating behavior
- Directing behavior
- Regulating persistence
**Self-perception**

- Development
  - Young children tend to overestimate likelihood of success
  - Self-perceptions decline with age

- Children as young as 8 can differentiate abilities among the domains of cognitive or academic competence, physical competence in sports, social competence with peers and general competence.

**Self-efficacy**

- Beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required to produce given attainments

- Judgment statements about students’ abilities to accomplish a specific future task is a *strong predictor of student learning regardless of the skills they possess.*

**Goal Setting**

To be successful at *goal setting:*

1. Direct attention and action toward an intended target. Focus on task at hand and organize knowledge and strategies toward the accomplishment of a goal
2. Mobilize effort in proportion to the difficulty of the task to be accomplished
3. Prompt persistence and effort overtime for complex tasks – this provides a reason to continue to work hard even if the task is not going well
4. Promote the development of creative plans and strategies to reach them
5. Provide a reference point that provides information about one's performance

**Self-regulation**

- Students are metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally *active* participants in their own learning process.
  - Monitoring
  - Adjusting
  - Reflecting
Causal Attribution

- **Ability:** how we rate aptitude, skill or knowledge
- **Effort:** how hard we tried, including mental and physical work and time spent on a goal
- **Task difficulty:** how difficult or easy we believe a task to be.

What is going on?

- **Self perception**
- **Self-efficacy**
- **Approaching tasks**
- **Following tasks**
- **Self-regulation**
- **Goal Setting**

What is important to your student?

- **Digital** – Facebook, texting, internet, gaming
- **Success** – social, physical, or financial
- **Testing** – high stakes testing, ACT’s, military testing, GED

What are your biases?

Self – Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The importance you give</th>
<th>The importance your students give</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Digital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Processing information

- Information rich
- Multi-tasking, finding information quickly and accurately is becoming a valued skill.
- Short quips of information

Reliance on Standardized Assessments

- One score that proves whether or not pass grade, can graduate, get into college
- Standards
- High stake environments

Academic Standards

Comprehension and Collaboration:
1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
3. Evaluate a speaker’s point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas
4. Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
5. Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.
6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.
Increasing Motivation

Step 1: Establish Relationship
- Examine your biases – look for potential areas to connect (or avoid)
- Be consistent
- Be respectful
- Talk at student’s level
- Ask about the student’s opinions and show that you interested

Step 2: Analyze and gather information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Context</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What motivational constructs are present?</td>
<td>What is important to this student?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interviews and surveys

Step 3: Design Intervention
- **Meaningful** contexts: Literacy-Based Intervention
  - Plan intervention based on thematic units, research, or embed into classroom based activities
- **Routine** based
  - Every session designed to have a specific routine
- **High expectations**
- **Explicit** understanding of goal. Student should be able to answer the following:
  - What are you working on?
  - Why is this important?

Step 4: Engineer a motivation rich environment
- **Effective Praise**
- **Task Motivation**
- **Strategies**
### Guidelines for Effective Praise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Effective Praise</strong></th>
<th><strong>Ineffective Praise</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is delivered contingently</td>
<td>Is delivered randomly or unsystematically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Specifies the particulars of the accomplishment</td>
<td>Is restricted to global positive reactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Shows spontaneity, variety, and other signs of credibility; suggests clear attention to the students' accomplishments</td>
<td>Shows a bland uniformity, which suggests a conditional response made with minimal attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Rewards attainment of specified performance criteria (which can include effort criteria)</td>
<td>Rewards mere participation without consideration of performance processes or outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Provides information to students about their competence or the value of their accomplishments</td>
<td>Provides no information at all or gives students information about their status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Orient students toward better appreciation of their own task related behavior and thinking about problem solving</td>
<td>Orient students toward comparing themselves with others and thinking about competing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Uses students own prior accomplishments as the context for describing present accomplishments</td>
<td>Uses the accomplishments of peers as the context for describing students' present accomplishments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Is given in recognition of noteworthy effort or success at difficult (for this student) tasks</td>
<td>Is give without regard to the effort expended or the meaning of the accomplishment (for this student)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Attributes success to effort and ability, implying that similar successes can be expected in the future</td>
<td>Attributes success to ability alone or to external factors such as luck or easy task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Fosters endogenous attributions (students believe they expend effort on the task because they enjoy the task and/or want to develop task-relevant skills)</td>
<td>Fosters exogenous attributions (students believe they expend effort on the task for external reasons—to please the teacher, win a competition or reward)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategies for Increasing Task Motivation

- Opportunities for students to develop an increased sense of **competence** – target selection important! Highlight and build successes.
- Opportunity for **self-directed learning**
- Use a variety of types of tasks and task structures that are appropriate for the particular goal.


- **CHOICE**: provide students with authentic choices and purposes for therapy.
- **CHALLENGE**: allow students to modify tasks so the difficulty and interest levels are challenging.
- **CONTROL**: show students how they can control their learning.
- **COLLABORATION**: emphasize the positive aspects of giving and seeking help.
- **CONSTRUCTING MEANING**: emphasize strategies and metacognition for constructing meaning.
- **CONSEQUENCES**: use the consequences of tasks to build responsibility, ownership, and self-regulation.
## Motivation Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client Name/Grade/Disability designation:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Goals/objective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interests:</th>
<th>Goals for future:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-perception of abilities/needs:</th>
<th>Teacher/parent perception of abilities/needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SLP perception of abilities/needs:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation concepts employed in ‘retraining’ (within student):</th>
<th>Motivation concepts employed in ‘retraining’ (context):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Intervention Plan:

Notes: