Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire  
(Duncan & McKeachie, 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating score 1= not true at all to 7= very true of me</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I prefer class work that is challenging so I can learn new things.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Compared with other students in this class I expect to do well</td>
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<td>3. I am so nervous during a test that I cannot remember facts I have learned</td>
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<td>4. It is important for me to learn what is being taught in this class</td>
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<td>5. I like what I am learning in this class</td>
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<td>6. I’m certain I can understand the ideas taught in this course</td>
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<td>7. I think I will be able to use what I learn in this class in other classes</td>
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<td>8. I expect to do very well in this class</td>
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<td>9. Compared with others in this class, I think I’m a good student</td>
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<td>10. I often choose paper topics I will learn something from even if they require more work</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. I am sure I can do an excellent job on the problems and tasks assigned for this class</td>
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<td>12. I have an uneasy, upset feeling when I take a test</td>
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<td>13. I think I will receive a good grade in this class</td>
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<td>14. Even when I do poorly on a test I try to learn from my mistakes</td>
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<td>15. I think that what I am learning in this class is useful for me to know</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. My study skills are excellent compared with others in this class</td>
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<td>17. I think that what we are learning in this class is interesting</td>
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<td>18. Compared with other students in this class I think I know a great deal about the subject</td>
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<td>19. I know that I will be able to learn the material for this class</td>
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<td>20. I worry a great deal about tests</td>
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<td>21. Understanding this subject is important to me</td>
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<td>22. When I take a test I think about how poorly I am doing</td>
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<td>23. When I study for a test, I try to put together the information from class and from the book</td>
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<td>24. When I do homework, I try to remember what the teacher said in class so I can answer the questions correctly</td>
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<td>25. I ask myself questions to make sure I know the material I have been studying</td>
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<td>26. It is hard for me to decide what the main ideas are in what I read</td>
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<td>27. When work is hard I either give up or study only the easy parts</td>
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<tr>
<td>28. When I study I put important ideas into my own words</td>
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<tr>
<td>29. I always try to understand what the teacher is saying even if it doesn’t make sense.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30. When I study for a test I try to remember as many facts as I can</td>
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<tr>
<td>31. When studying, I copy my notes over to help me remember material</td>
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<tr>
<td>Category</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intrinsic Goal Orientation</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Task Value</td>
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<tr>
<td>Control of Learning Beliefs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Efficacy for Learning and Performance</td>
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<td>Test Anxiety</td>
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Motivated Strategies Learning Questionnaire Descriptions

(Pintrich, 1991)

Intrinsic Goal Orientation

The degree to which the student perceives themselves to be participating in a task for reasons such as challenge, curiosity, and mastery. Indicates the students’ participation in the task is an end to itself, rather than participation being a means to an end.

Extrinsic Goal Orientation

The degree to which the student perceives themselves to be participating in a task for reason such as grades, rewards, performance, evaluation by others, and competition. When one is high in EGO engaging in a learning task is the means to an end. The focus is not the task.

Task

Refers to the student’s evaluation of how interesting, how important, and how useful the task is. High task value should lead to more involvement in one’s learning.

Control of Learning

Refers to student’s beliefs that their efforts to learn will result in positive outcomes and are contingent on one’s own effort, in contrast to external factors such as the teacher. If they believe study will make a difference they will study more strategically and effectively and if they feel they can control their academic performance, they are more likely to put forth effort.

Expectancy for Success and Self-Efficacy

Expectancy refers to performance expectations and relates specifically to task performance. Self-efficacy is self-appraisal of one’s ability to accomplish and perform a task.

Test Anxiety

Test anxiety can be negatively related to expectancies as well as academic performance. There are 2 components cognitive and emotions. The cognitive component refers to student’s negative thoughts that disrupt performance, while emotions refers to affective and physiological arousal aspects of anxiety. Cognitive concern and preoccupation with performance have been found to the greatest sources of decreased performance.
Motivating Students

Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivators include fascination with the subject, a sense of its relevance to life and the world, a sense of accomplishment in mastering it, and a sense of calling to it.

Students who are intrinsically motivated might say things like the following.

“Literature interests me.”

“Learning math enables me to think clearly.”

“I feel good when I succeed in class.”

**Advantages:** Intrinsic motivation can be long-lasting and self-sustaining. Efforts to build this kind of motivation are also typically efforts at promoting student learning. Such efforts often focus on the subject rather than rewards or punishments.

**Disadvantages:** On the other hand, efforts at fostering intrinsic motivation can be slow to affect behavior and can require special and lengthy preparation. Students are individuals, so a variety of approaches may be needed to motivate different students. It is often helpful to know what interests one’s students in order to connect these interests with the subject matter. This requires getting to know one’s students. Also, it helps if the instructor is interested in the subject to begin with!


Extrinsic Motivation

Extrinsic motivators include parental expectations, expectations of other trusted role models, earning potential of a course of study, and grades (which keep scholarships coming).

Students who are extrinsically motivated might say things like the following.

“I need a B- in statistics to get into business school.”

“If I flunk chemistry, I will lose my scholarship.”

“Our instructor will bring us donuts if we do well on today’s quiz.”

**Advantages:** Extrinsic motivators more readily produce behavior changes and typically involve relatively little effort or preparation. Also, efforts at applying extrinsic motivators often do not require extensive knowledge of individual students.

**Disadvantages:** On the other hand, extrinsic motivators can often distract students from learning the subject at hand. It can be challenging to devise appropriate rewards and punishments for student behaviors. Often, one needs to escalate the rewards and punishments over time to maintain a certain effect level. Also, extrinsic motivators typically do not work over the long term. Once the rewards or punishments are removed, students lose their motivation.
Furthermore, research indicates that extrinsic rewards can have a negative impact on intrinsic motivation. In one series of experiments, psychologist Edward Deci had two groups of college students play with a puzzle called Soma. One group of students was paid for each puzzle they solved; the other wasn’t. He found that the group that was paid to solve puzzles stopped solving puzzles as soon as the experiment—and the payment—ended. However, the group that wasn’t paid kept solving the puzzles even after the experiment was over. They had found the puzzles intrinsically interesting. Deci argued that the group that had been paid to solve puzzles might have found the puzzles intrinsically interesting as well, but the extrinsic, monetary reward had reduced their intrinsic interest.


**Effects of Motivation on Learning Styles**

Deep learners respond well to the challenge of mastering a difficult and complex subject. These are intrinsically motivated students who are often a joy to teach!

Strategic learners are motivated primarily by rewards. They react well to competition and the opportunity to best others. They often make good grades but won’t engage deeply with a subject unless there is a clear reward for doing so. They are sometimes called “bulimic learners,” learning as much as they need to do well on a test or exam and then promptly forgetting the material once the assessment is over. Handle strategic learners by avoiding appeals to competition. Appeal to their intrinsic interest in the subject at hand. Design your assignments (tests, papers, projects, etc.) so that deep engagement with the subject is necessary for success on the assignments. Do so by requiring students to apply, synthesize, or evaluate material instead of merely comprehending or memorizing material.

Surface learners are often motivated by a desire to avoid failure. They typically avoid deep learning because it they see it as inherently risky behavior. They will often do what it takes to pass an exam or course, but they won’t choose to go beyond the minimum required for fear of failure. Handle surface learners by helping them gain confidence in their abilities to learn and perform. “Scaffold” course material and assignments by designing a series of activities or assignments that build on each other over time in complexity and challenge. Encourage these learners often and help them reflect on what they’ve learned and what they’ve accomplished.


**A Model of Intrinsic Motivation**

James Middleton, Joan Littlefield, and Rich Lehrer have proposed the following model of intrinsic academic motivation.

First, given the opportunity to engage in a learning activity, a student determines if the activity is one that is known to be interesting. If so, the student engages in the activity.
If not, then the student evaluates the activity on two factors—the stimulation (e.g. challenge, curiosity, fantasy) it provides and the personal control (e.g. free choice, not too difficult) it affords.

If the student perceives the activity as stimulating and controllable, then the student tentatively labels the activity as interesting and engages in it. If either condition becomes insufficient, then the student disengages from the activity—unless some extrinsic motivator influences the student to continue.

If the activity is repeatedly deemed stimulating and controllable, then the student may deem the activity interesting. Then the student will be more likely to engage in the activity in the future.

If over time activities that are deemed interesting provide little stimulation or control, then the student will remove the activity from his or her mental list of interesting activities.

The challenge, then, is to provide teaching and learning activities that are both stimulating and offer students a degree of personal control.


**Strategies for Motivating Students**

Following are some research-based strategies for motivating students to learn.

Become a role model for student interest. Deliver your presentations with energy and enthusiasm. As a display of your motivation, your passion motivates your students. Make the course personal, showing why you are interested in the material.

Get to know your students. You will be able to better tailor your instruction to the students’ concerns and backgrounds, and your personal interest in them will inspire their personal loyalty to you. Display a strong interest in students’ learning and a faith in their abilities.

Use examples freely. Many students want to be shown why a concept or technique is useful before they want to study it further. Inform students about how your course prepares students for future opportunities.

Use a variety of student-active teaching activities. These activities directly engage students in the material and give them opportunities to achieve a level of mastery.

Teach by discovery. Students find as satisfying as reasoning through a problem and discovering the underlying principle on their own.

Cooperative learning activities are particularly effective as they also provide positive social pressure.

Set realistic performance goals and help students achieve them by encouraging them to set their own reasonable goals. Design assignments that are appropriately challenging in view of the experience and aptitude of the class.
Place appropriate emphasis on testing and grading. Tests should be a means of showing what students have mastered, not what they have not. Avoid grading on the curve and give everyone the opportunity to achieve the highest standard and grades.

Be free with praise and constructive in criticism. Negative comments should pertain to particular performances, not the performer. Offer nonjudgmental feedback on students’ work, stress opportunities to improve, look for ways to stimulate advancement, and avoid dividing students into sheep and goats.

Give students as much control over their own education as possible. Let students choose paper and project topics that interest them. Assess them in a variety of ways (tests, papers, projects, presentations, etc.) to give students more control over how they show their understanding to you. Give students options for how these assignments are weighted.

Sources:

Showing Students the Appeal of the Subject

When encouraging students to find your subject matter interesting, use cues to show students the appeal of the subject matter.

Appeal Examples of Cues

Novelty  “I think that is really neat—I haven’t seen anything quite the same.”
Utility  “This next topic is something that we’ll use again and again. It contains valuable ideas that we’ll use throughout the later sections of the course.”
Applicability  “As you work through the next section, I think that you’ll be pleasantly surprised how relevant it is.”
Anticipation  “As you read through, ask yourself what this section of work is hinting at as the next logical step.”
Surprise  “We’ve used X in a lot of different ways. If you thought you’d seen them all, just wait for the next assignment.”
Challenge interesting.”
Feedback  “When you try this, you’ll find out whether you really understood yesterday’s lesson.”
Closure “A lot of you have asked me about X. Well, finally we’re going to find out why that’s so.”


**Motivating Today’s College Students**, AAC&U, Winter 2007 peerReview.

“When we discuss student motivation, what we are really talking about is whether or not students have made educational activities a true priority; whether they have chosen to fully invest their time and energy in their college experience.”

Today’s students see education as a commodity for convenience and consumption rather than a process you engage in. Students need to become intentional architects of their own learning.

- **Power of relationships** - helicopter parents, support and involvement expected from faculty
  - Frequent communication and engaged faculty
- They ask what to do before thinking through their own plans.
  - Ask questions that help them formulate their own ideas, this encourages them to make the educational experience their own
- **Achievement oriented** - very involved and often on a tight schedule and often schedule minimal time and effort to achieve the grades they want or think they should be getting
  - May need to help with study skills and give realistic time and methods needed to be successful
- **Actively involve them** - require students to interact as a part of their own learning will help maintain their interest. “Student engagement is often the first step on the path to student motivation.”


Excerpts from this book:

- Give frequent, early, positive feedback that supports students' beliefs that they can do well.
- Ensure opportunities for students' success by assigning tasks that are neither too easy nor too difficult.
- Help students find personal meaning and value in the material.
- Create an atmosphere that is open and positive.
- Help students feel that they are valued members of a learning community.
Motivating Students: Eight Simple Rules for Teachers

By: Lana Becker and Kent N. Schneider

Principles of Accounting has the reputation of being a “hard and boring” course. It is difficult to motivate students to invest the time and effort necessary to succeed in the course. To meet this challenge, we have assembled a list of eight simple rules for keeping students focused and motivated. These rules are not original, and they aren’t just for those of us who teach accounting classes. Indeed, most of these time-honored suggestions apply to any course students find hard and boring, and we think that makes them broadly applicable.

Rule 1: Emphasize the most critical concepts continuously. Reiterate these concepts in lectures and assignments throughout the course. Include questions relating to these critical subjects on every exam, thus rewarding students for learning, retaining, and, hopefully, applying this knowledge in a variety of contexts.

Rule 2: Provide students with a “visual aid” when possible to explain abstract concepts. A significant proportion of today’s students are visual learners. For these students, a simple diagram or flowchart truly can be more valuable than a thousand words in a text or a lecture.

Rule 3: Rely on logic when applicable. Point out to students which information is merely “fact” that must be memorized and which course material is based upon “logic.” Show students how to employ logical thinking to learn and retain new information.

Rule 4: Use in-class activities to reinforce newly presented material. After a new concept or subject has been presented via text reading, lecture, or class discussion, allow the students to put the concept into action by completing an in-class assignment. These assignments can be short, but they must be developed to ensure that the students understand the critical concepts underlying the new material.

Rule 5: Help students create a “link” when teaching something new. If the student can “link” the new material to something already learned, the odds of learning the new material are greatly increased. Examples of possible “links” include: prior material learned in this course (e.g., the critical concepts described in Rule 1), material learned in prerequisite courses, and “real-life” experiences of the students outside the classroom.

Rule 6: Recognize the importance of vocabulary in a course. Students often struggle with new vocabulary, especially introductory courses. As subjects are presented, new and/or confusing terms should be identified and introduced to the students. Present “real-world” definitions and alternative terminology, in addition to textbook definitions. One way to help students assimilate the course vocabulary is to create a “living” glossary on the instructor’s website where new terminology is added, explained, and illustrated throughout the course.

Rule 7: Treat students with respect. Patronizing behavior may be expected of primary school teachers, and “drill sergeant” strategies may be effective in military boot camps. However, most college students will not respond well to these techniques. Give students their dignity, and they will give you their best efforts.

Rule 8: Hold students to a high standard. If students are not required to maintain a specified level of learning and performance, only the most highly motivated students will devote the time and effort necessary to learn. In contrast, maintaining high standards not only will motivate student learning, it also will be the source of student feelings of accomplishment when those standards are met.

Each of these rules can help motivate even the most lethargic student, but Rules 7 and 8 are the most important. If students are not treated with respect and held to a high standard, scrupulously following the first six rules will have much less impact and might end up being an exercise in futility.

Excerpted from The Teaching Professor, Aug/Sept 2004.