

**Some Key Points From “Drive”¹ By Daniel Pink and
Possible Implications For CHW Motivation**
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In his book (Drive), Dan Pink writes of three drives, deduced from psychological experimentation, that motivate animal/human behavior:

- 1) Biological-hunger, thirst and copulation (*Motivation 1.0*)
- 2) Extrinsic reward. Reward and punishment delivered by the environment for behaving in certain ways (*Motivation 2.0*)
- 3) Intrinsic reward. The joy/satisfaction of completing a task motivates its completion. (*Motivation 3.0*)

In practice, the second motivation has been applied in human organizations for centuries based on the idea that “*the way to improve performance, increase productivity, and encourage excellence is to reward the good and punish the bad*”. Modern psychological experimentation and examination of human productivity has found that utilizing this source of motivation is useful for unrelenting, routine, mechanical or boring tasks, but it is not as useful when creativity, maximization of performance, quality and commitment are desired. In fact, scientific studies have shown that for tasks that call for even rudimentary cognitive skills, the larger the reward (e.g., monetary incentives), the poorer the performance on the task. If the task requires more than just mechanical skill, it behooves us to tap into intrinsic motivations

Dan Pink summarizes the finding of modern psychological experimentation and literature about the extrinsic reward approach (or *Carrots and Sticks*) as having seven deadly flaws:

- a) *They can extinguish intrinsic motivation.*
- b) *They can diminish performance.*
- c) *They can crush creativity.*
- d) *They can crowd out good behavior.*
- e) *They can encourage cheating, shortcuts, and unethical behavior.*
- f) *They can become addictive.*
- f) *They can foster short-term thinking.* (Pink, p. 57)

In summary, extrinsic rewards often become the focus of action and thinking and increased extrinsic rewards do not lead to better performance.

However, in special circumstances a *Carrots and Sticks* approach is useful. First without a healthy baseline – adequate and fair wages, salaries and benefits (for the given task, and from the point of view of the workers) – motivation of any sort is difficult and sometimes impossible (Pink, p. 58). Examples such as Wikipedia, Linux, other open-sourced products and Care Groups, however, show that volunteers can accomplish a lot more than we think *if* certain principles are respected. This healthy baseline **must** include the basic training, supplies, consumables and supervision that are essential for completion of common and important tasks. Carrots and Sticks approaches are useful when the task is more mechanical and when very little creative job thinking is needed. If you wish to boost quality of performance using extrinsic rewards for better-than-average performance (rather than minimal completion) – and not undermine any intrinsic motivation – then the extrinsic reward should be unexpected and offered only after the task is completed. It should be seen as an unexpected thank-you gift rather than a carrot dangling in front of the worker on a daily basis. (Pink, p. 61-64) Also, consider using intangible rewards such as praise and positive feedback, and give the workers specific, positive, and useful information on how they are progressing in achieving or sustaining the tasks. Even then, work by Carol Dweck has shown that focusing on a person’s *effort* (“you must have really worked hard to get that many children immunized”) pays off more than focusing on their *innate abilities* (“You must be really good at community mobilization to get that many children immunized”).

In summary, a lot of modern psychological theory based on on-the-job experimentation shows that for good performance, greater health, and higher overall well-being, we need to mobilize workers *intrinsic* motivations rather than that just focusing on extrinsic, monetary motivation. Counter-intuitively, once very

¹ D.H. Pink *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*” Riverhead Books Pubs Penguin Books New York 2011

basic needs are met, increased remuneration has been shown to sometimes hurt performance, especially when the size of the reward is connected to performance. When these extrinsic rewards decrease internal motivation, autonomy and creativity, increasing extrinsic rewards may actually decrease performance.

The three elements of internal motivation are autonomy, mastery and purpose. (Pink, p. 222)

- **Autonomy** is the degree to which people are allowed to direct their own work. *People work better when they are given an adequate degree of autonomy over **task** (what they do), **time** (when they do it), **team** (who they do it with) and **technique** (how they do it).*
- **Mastery** is becoming better at something that **matters to the worker**...*Making progress in one's work turns out to be the single most motivating aspect of many jobs. It is the capacity to see your abilities not as finite but as infinitely improvable.*
- **Purpose** is important as people, by their nature, ... *seek to make a contribution and to be part of a cause greater and more enduring than themselves. Within modern organizations, "purpose motivation" is expressed in goals that use profit to reach purpose: in words that emphasize more than self-interest and in policies that allow people to pursue purpose on their own terms.*

Implications of these findings on intrinsic motivation for CHWs

First, we need to remember that most CHWs are adults, and most are just as intelligent as we are, but without having the same educational opportunities. Their basic work needs – supplies, consumables, training, and some sort of compensation that is *fair relative to the amount of work involved as determined locally* – need to be addressed. At the same time, we believe that volunteers can be called upon to do many things that CHWs do if:

- the load is kept light (e.g., < 8 hours/week),
- only basic skills are needed, and those skills can be imparted slowly; and
- there is a focus on intrinsic rewards such as giving volunteers more autonomy, providing pathways to mastery in what they do, and helping them to discover the purpose associated with their work (e.g., measuring decreases in child deaths).

However, when a certain level of time, intensity and skills are needed, or when the job is inherently dull or distasteful (e.g., digging ditches, cleaning out latrines), some sort of regular compensation or other extrinsic motivation is usually required. For this type and level of tasks, "carrot and stick" motivation may be useful if provided appropriately. However, if we want to mobilize their commitment, creativity, and ownership – and sustained program results – we need to mobilize their *internal* motivations, as well. If our counterparts and we – as facilitators – choose to do so, many of these elements can be gradually – and as appropriate to local circumstances – addressed in most health programs, including many national ones.

Our experience is that projects represented here – such as FH's Care Groups, Jamkhed, CRHP and the Future Generations projects – already address these three elements of internal motivation. Of course, motivation plans should be adapted to local circumstances and have a "local flavor" rather than following a rigid pattern. In Jamkhed, CHWs meet regularly together, give one another feedback on their performance and address all the three elements above.² They indeed were the key drivers instrumental in the spread of the project to over 500,000 people. Note that the initial large drops in IMR achieved apparently happened over a 4 year period. Note also that even *after 30 years, these very poor CHWs are not remunerated directly* but do receive benefits through getting positions of priority for small loans and similar benefits. Standards of health care in clinical skills and compliance with drug regimens are also maintained by well established systems of supervision. (Connie Gates can give you more details about Jamkhed's programs.) FH's USAID-supported Care Group projects have achieved dramatic results, such as a 30% reduction in child mortality at \$442 per life saved, as well as changes in nutritional status and behavioral changes in very short periods of time.³ These changes were brought about through utilization of only 65 paid CHWs who worked with a vast cadre of 4,100 Care Group Volunteers to serve an area with 1.1M people.

² MA and R Arole Jamkhed A Comprehensive Rural Health Project Pubs Macmillan 1994.

³ Perry, H. (2010) Expanded Impact Child Survival Program, Final Evaluation Report, Sofala Province, Mozambique. Available: http://www.caregroupinfo.org/docs/FH_Final_Eval_Report_27Dec2010.pdf