Motivation and perseverance:
Stay focused and don’t give up
**CONTEXT**

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**PROJECT CONSORTIUM**

| Lancaster Royal Grammar School | Emphasys Centre | Fundatia Euroed |
| United Kingdom                 | Cyprus          | Romania         |

| MI Gen CIC                  | EIS Enrico Fermi | Lycee Proffessionel Claude-Anthime Corbon |
| United Kingdom              | Italy            | France          |
# Motivation and Perseverance – what are they all about?

Motivation and Perseverance – a growth mindset.

A growth mindset is one which does not see failure as a problem, but learns from it and moves on. A person with a growth mindset sees challenges as opportunities and is open to new ideas.

## Motivation

Internal vs. External motives

Perseverance: Challenging yourself

Perseverance: Regulating your behaviour to stay driven

Setting SMART goals

Visualizing your success

Practical ways to stay motivated

Conclusion

## Potential Interview Questions linked to Motivation and Perseverance

- Tell me about a time when you failed – what did you learn?
- What motivates you?
- Have you ever given up? (It’s ok to say yes – just explain why!)
- What is the hardest thing that you have ever done?
- What has given you your greatest sense of personal achievement so far?
- What is your ambition in life?
- Who inspires you and why?
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Motivation and perseverance:
Stay focused and don’t give up

- Be determined to turn ideas into action and satisfy your need to achieve.
- Be prepared to be patient and keep trying to achieve your long-term individual or group aims.
- Be resilient under pressure, adversity, and temporary failure.

**Foundation Level**
Learners are driven by the prospect of success, show passion for their goals and do not give up when facing difficulties.

**Intermediate Level**
Learners can visualise their success and regulate their behaviour to achieve their goals, even if that means that they have to work hard for a longer period of time.

**Advanced Level**
Learners put in great efforts based on their belief in their abilities to succeed, and can use strategies to stay motivated.
Motivation and Perseverance – what are they all about?

Life is not always easy. There are times when you might face significant difficulties, but even so, you shouldn’t give up. This competency encourages you to follow your dreams.

In order to persevere, you need to have an incentive, a driving force to push you forward. Being motivated will help you persevere through adversities and stick to achieving your goals, even though you may not always feel up to the task.

Often, when we see successful people we assume that it has come easily to them. We think that they are somehow special or gifted. What we don’t see is all the hard work, setbacks and problems they have faced in achieving their success. In other words, we don’t see their motivation and perseverance. Studies have shown that in order to become an expert at something, 10,000 hours of practice can be required.
Motivation and Perseverance – a growth mindset

Research has shown that the trait of never giving up or resilience is a key signifier of success. There are countless stories of successful people who spent years trying to achieve their goal. James Dyson, the engineer and richest person in the UK, failed 5,126 times before he created his successful vacuum cleaner. This is often termed having a ‘growth mindset’.

It took 5 years and 5,126 failed prototypes for James Dyson to develop the world’s first bagless vacuum cleaner. 10 years later Dyson setup his own manufacturing facility, because other manufacturers wouldn’t produce his vacuum.

Now he has the best selling vacuum in the world. According to The Sunday Times, in 2013 his net worth was 3 Billion Pounds.

A growth mindset is one which does not see failure as a problem, but learns from it and moves on. A person with a growth mindset sees challenges as opportunities and is open to new ideas.

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**FIXED MINDSET**

- My potential is predetermined
- Failure is the limit of my abilities
- I avoid challenges
- I stick to what I know
- Feedback and Criticism is personal
- I will never improve
- I am either good at it or I am not
- There is no point in trying it!

**GROWTH MINDSET**

- My intelligence can be developed
- I embrace challenges
- I learn from feedback
- I keep trying and never give up
- I am inspired by others people’s success
- My mistakes help me grow
- I know this will help me even though it is difficult

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Motivation

How can we motivate ourselves to stay focused on our long-term goals?

Firstly, we need to understand the reasons behind our actions. Why do we want to achieve? What is the driving force behind it?

Depending on the venture we’re setting out to accomplish, our motives can be any number of things, some of which may be:

• **Financial gain/stability**
  For many people their aim in life is to become rich! There are a lot of success stories of people who had the right idea at the right time, in combination with the right attitude to promote their venture and procure the needed resources.
  Many entrepreneurs chose the path of running their own business because they believed they would make more money on their own. They followed their particular dream.
  However, other people have the dream of working for a company or organisation, benefiting from the security and community that brings. Being motivated to achieve either of these things is crucial for success.

• **Sense of personal achievement/realisation of dream**
  This is a significant factor in anyone’s dream. Entrepreneurs are often proud to say “I built this company from the ground up” or may have had a more specific dream such as “I have wanted to turn that old building in my neighbourhood into a pub since I was in secondary school”.
  People may also get the sense of personal achievement from serving others in a caring or legal profession, or following adventurous or sporting careers, performing on stage, or being able to purchase the house of their dreams. Whatever your dream, a sense of personal achievement will be a great motivator as you strive towards it.

• **The potential to influence society in a good way**
  Another strong motivator can be the desire to do good in the world and believing you can make a difference.
  Social entrepreneurs set out to bring positive change and improve the world through their business or profession, by tackling cultural, societal or environmental issues.
  Social enterprises can be of various sizes and act on different levels, from trying to improve the local community of a town, to a wider influence of national or even global scale.

• **The potential to leave behind a lasting legacy**
  The desire to leave behind a lasting legacy is another powerful motivator.
  There can be different underlying reasons for this, such as the desire for fame, the wish to pass on an enterprise to future generations, or simply to be remembered with admiration in future years for your achievements.
  Whichever the driving force behind it, some people want to create something that outlasts their lifetime.
**Internal vs. External motives**

Some of the motives described in the previous slides come from internal factors and some come from external factors.

- **Internal motivation** is when we do something for the sake of doing it, without external benefit. This can be a hobby or something else which is itself its own reward like doing our homework *because we like the subject*.
- **External motivation** is when we do something to earn a reward or to avoid negative effects, such as doing our homework to get good grades (reward), or so that the teacher doesn’t reprimand us (avoiding negative effects).

It’s important to understand if the driving force behind our desire to do something comes from within or from outside. Studies have shown that internal motivation can be more effective than external motivation, which means that when we are personally invested in something, we are more likely to strive towards achieving it. This doesn’t mean that external motivation is a bad thing. On the contrary, it can be especially beneficial in cases where we don’t really like a task or activity that needs to be done.

Being able to distinguish where the need to do something comes from can help us set “safety measures”, or “rewards” to urge us to achieve something.

The word “reward” shouldn’t always be taken in a strictly literal sense. The reward for completing a task we dreaded can simply be the personal satisfaction and sense of achievement at having pushed through.

**Occasionally we can literal about it and say “once I have completed this task, I will reward myself by getting a new pair of shoes/that video game I wanted to get”**.

**We need to be careful with material rewards though**, to avoid spending too much money on things we don’t need and to avoid “spoiling” ourselves.
Perseverance: Challenging yourself

Perseverance and self-regulation is all about managing our habits. To challenge ourselves is to take things one step further, to try out things that we perhaps never tried before or failed to complete in the past, and maybe form new, better habits.

Challenges can be a great way to grow and evolve in a variety of ways. Other than the obvious benefit of learning about the new thing we’re engaged with, we may also acquire new skills, peripheral to the actual task at hand, e.g. self-defence classes can teach us how to defend ourselves (the immediate, obvious benefit) but they can also teach us discipline (a secondary, but equally beneficial trait).

In addition, challenges can often lead to self-discovery. How will you know how you feel about knitting, let’s say, if you’ve never tried it? You might hate it because it’s boring and repetitive, or you might find calmness in the hand motions and a sense of accomplishment and pride in the blanket you knit for your bed. You might also find that you’re an especially talented knitter, or a particularly bad one.

It doesn’t really matter!

Whichever the result of the experiment is, the point is to be open to new experiences and challenges and welcome them as opportunities.

People who are afraid of challenges are afraid of failure, and they shouldn’t.

Whether you win or you lose, whether you can or you cannot, you have learned something from the process, either about an external skill or about yourself. Mistakes can be beneficial, as they can show you what went wrong and give you an idea what to do differently next time.

The right attitude in the face of challenge can make all the difference!

Efficient people have the ability to set challenges for themselves to push forward, grow and achieve their goals:

• Identify the entrepreneurial tasks that you dislike or feel insecure about and tackle them head-on. There’s probably some elements of entrepreneurship that you don’t feel you will be good at. For some it can be approaching investors, for others it can be advertising. In any case, write these tasks down and start working through them. The satisfaction of having completed something that scares you has a two-fold advantage: one, the scary task is out of the way, and two, you build confidence in your abilities to tackle things you’re insecure about.

• If you know you’re prone to procrastination, set short-term goals for yourself. Give yourself a specific amount of time to carry out a task, and aim to complete it by the deadline. This helps you gain good time-management skills, which are essential for entrepreneurs, who often have to juggle a lot of tasks.

• Control your emotions. This sounds like a very generic piece of advice, but it’s very useful, not only for entrepreneurship but also as a life skill. Letting our emotions rule us when making a decision may lead to things we regret. Taking the time to think about possible courses of action and their potential outcomes will allow us to weigh the positives against the negatives, balance our emotions against logic, and lead us to make an informed decision about the direction we are sending our enterprise towards.

• Find the skills that you feel you are lacking in and develop them. Feeling that we’re not very good at something can cause anxiety about related tasks and makes us want to ignore them for the moment and focus on other things. This can be counter-productive though, as prolonged postponement of tasks may make us feel that they are huge and impossible to handle. Practise to get better and build your confidence. The satisfaction of having completed something that you felt you couldn’t do well has a two-fold advantage: one, the scary task is out of the way, and two, you build confidence in your abilities to tackle things you’re insecure about.
**Perseverance: Regulating your behaviour to stay driven**

When undertaking an ambitious long-term task, we will surely be faced with the threat of demotivation. It may come from external factors, such as our daily obligations taking up a large portion of our energy, leaving us feeling tired, or from internal factors, such as having “off-days” where we just don’t feel like putting in the work we planned to.

Neglecting our goals doesn’t only mean that our goals will just take longer to achieve. It can also result in negative feelings such as guilt and anxiety, because we feel like we are “cheating” on our future well-being, or our potential for success.

Behavioural regulation is therefore not only important for achieving our goals, it’s also vital for our well-being and continuing motivation:

- **Monitor your behaviours**
- **Assess the outcome. Is it beneficial?**
- **If not, what can you change and how, to lead yourself towards the desirable direction?**

Effective self-regulation comes from focusing on our deep-set values - in this case, our motives for becoming entrepreneurs.

**Setting SMART goals**

The SMART goals system is a way to take a generic goal and give it details to flesh it out. By contextualising your goals, the SMART system makes them more realistic and attainable. SMART is an acronym for:

- **Specific** goals give you focus and concentrate your efforts towards a specific direction.
- **Measurable** goals have numbers assigned to them to help you keep track of your progress.
- **Attainable** goals are ambitious, but not unrealistic.
- **Relevant** goals contextualize your effort, stating their relation to yourself and to the market.
- **Time-based** goals have a deadline that gives a sense of urgency, reducing the possibility of procrastination or postponement.

![The Balance/Alison Czinkota](image)
Think of your motives and aspirations. Grab a piece of paper and write down your ultimate goal. Let’s say you aspire to become a writer.

**Overall goal:** “I want to become a writer.”

Ask yourself the below questions to turn your goal into a SMART goal. Follow the example below to do the same with your own goal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific</th>
<th>What will I write?</th>
<th>“I will write a fiction novel.”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measurable</td>
<td>How long will it be?</td>
<td>“It will be 100,000 words long.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attainable</td>
<td>What is my (realistic) ambition?</td>
<td>“I will complete my manuscript, and look for a publishing house, or look into self-publishing.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td>How will I make my goal relevant to the market?</td>
<td>“I will promote my book on social media and websites that deal with fiction.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-based</td>
<td>When will my goal be achieved?</td>
<td>“I will write one chapter per month, and my manuscript will be ready for publication in a year’s time.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Visualizing your success**

Visualizing what it feels to fulfill your motives is encouraging, and can give you a daily boost to convince yourself to do the work you need to do.

- **Create a mental picture** of yourself as having succeeded in your goal, whether that is to start your own business, write a book, or make a certain amount of money from your venture. Make this image as detailed as possible, for example what you’re wearing, how you’re feeling, the background, even the temperature and the smells of the place.
- **Use a trigger** to recreate that mental picture. Assign an object that will function as your trigger. Use this object as a trigger to call to your mind the image of success. You can write your goals on cards, or you can use an object of special significance to you. It doesn’t really matter what the object is, as long you assign significance to it and turn it into your trigger. When you wake up in the morning and before you go to bed at night, use your trigger to visualize your success.
- **Use affirmations** to support your visualization. Repeat a phrase that states your success to train your subconscious to strive towards that goal. An example of an affirmation would be:

  “I'm making a profit spending my days doing what I love, writing books and managing my own blog.”

Affirmations help us focus on our goals and strengthens our motivation.

Whatever your preferred technique is, the point is to **tie it back to your motives**, to the reasons you started this endeavor in the first place.

Sometimes it can be hard to remember the reasons for trying so hard, especially if we feel discouraged after a setback. The mental picture of our success can help us get back on track after a particularly disheartening event, and point us to the right direction if we are unsure what to do.
Activity 2: Visualising your success (1/2)

If you successfully completed the first activity, you should now have your SMART goal. Follow the advice described in the previous slides to visualise your success, according to your goal. Let’s follow through with the example we used for setting our SMART goal:

I am sitting at my desk, in my home office, where I also do my writing. The wall behind me is covered in books. Next to me, on my desk, I have my three published works. I am wearing comfortable clothes, I have a cup of good coffee on my desk, and I am writing my next book. The room temperature is comfortable, and I feel calm, content and fulfilled.

Now, create your trigger. An easy way to do this is to get a card and write down the description of your mental image.

Once this is done, you can use this card in the morning when you wake up and at night before you go to sleep to bring to mind the mental image of success.

To complete this exercise, use affirmations:
“I am a successful, published writer. I make a living doing what I love.”
Practical ways to stay motivated

• Get inspired by others
When faced with discouragement, read success stories by others or watch motivational videos on YouTube. Seeing others repeat their success stories, even though you may have heard of them already, can renew your resolve and give you the push you need to keep going.

• Get involved with motivated people
Being in the company of people with similar interests can help put you back on track. Seeing your friends pushing through, you’ll feel motivated to do the same.

• Take care of yourself
It’s good to stay focused, but not to the point where you burn out. Take some time for yourself, play some videogames, read a book, or go out with friends. Engage in your hobbies to relax and take some time off your busy schedule.

• Sleep well
Achieving your dream could find youPer working until late at night. It’s important not to neglect your sleep though, as being sleepless can have negative effects on your health and lead to poor judgement.

• Set reminders for tasks
Even though you may have your list of tasks in front of you, you can still get side-tracked easily if you’re absorbed in doing something else. Put alarms on your phone to remind you to send emails, write social media content or any other tasks that need to be done by a specific time.

Conclusion

Achieving your dream can be fun, but it will be difficult at times. It’s vital not to give up in the face of adversity and keep going.

Find what motivates you internally and keep it in the foreground of your mind to help you stick to your goals.

Experiment with various motivational techniques, find what works for you and make it a habit.

Don’t give up!
Motivation and Perseverance - Case Study 1: The Billy Monger Story

A successful young British driver with race winning success in Ginetta Junior and British F4, Billy Monger’s life changed forever on 16th April 2017. He was just 17 years old. After crashing into an unsighted, stationary car at over 120mph during a British F4 race at Donington Park circuit, Billy was left with life-changing injuries and received amputations to both legs.

He spent several weeks in hospital recovering from his injuries and learning to walk again and most people assumed that his sporting career would be over.

However, despite the huge personal challenges that lay ahead, Billy wasted no time in setting out his goal to return to motor racing in the future. Just 3 months after his accident, in July 2017, he made his return to the track when he tested a Fun Cup race car adapted with additional hand controls by disabled motorsport specialists Team BRIT at Brands Hatch, where he regained his race licence.

Fuelled by an outpouring of support from the motorsport industry and the wider public, Billy embarked on his remarkable journey to a different future. He now drives an adapted car in British F3 alongside able-bodied drivers, and he has made podiums in several races. The mental and physical strength he has shown to be able to get behind the wheel and compete in his beloved sport is an amazing example of motivation and perseverance.

"All the support just makes me more determined to get back in the car and win again. That's my goal" - Billy Monger

https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p06qx4gt/driven-the-billy-monger-story
Motivation and Perseverance - Case Study 2: The Global Hack

Today’s technology has uniquely positioned us all to quickly learn about and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout this crisis, technology has become the connective tissue of our physically distant lives, from video call platforms to new tech ideas. Around the world and in our homes, we are turning to technological innovators to build resilience. If social isolation is a side effect of this crisis, technology is its medicine.

In mid-March, immediately after an emergency situation was declared in Estonia in response to COVID-19, the public and private sector organized a two-day online hackathon—aptly called ‘Hack the Crisis.’ Estonia’s rapid response through technology has transformed into a movement that has spread to over 40 countries and reached more than 100,000 participants, and evolved into what is now called ‘The Global Hack.’ This small but mighty community-driven initiative is now reaching and helping populations across continents in Italy, Latvia, India, Belgium, Brazil, Switzerland, Turkey, Norway, Afghanistan, Kosovo, Madagascar, Benin and Georgia — and the list is growing. Teams of innovators, designers, and developers are coming together online to find solutions to the growing number of challenges the world is facing against the pandemic.

Among the innovative solutions proposed at Estonia’s ‘Hack the Crisis’ were: a tracker map that provides data about the spread of the virus; the chatbot Suve—an artificial intelligence mechanism that connects people with reliable sources of COVID-19-related information, and a data base of medically trained volunteers who were willing to help. Latvia, then Poland, followed Estonia’s lead. At the Polish version of the event, the government awarded cash prizes for the most effective tech solutions. Top prize went to “Mama teraz pracuje” – a platform that connects tele-working parents with recently unemployed artists, entertainers and musicians.

For Mitch Sinclair, a Hackathon mentor and Design Director at IDEO, The Global Hack represents “a world without borders. It’s a world that is coming together right now in fundamentally new ways. It’s governments working hand-in-hand, global organizations working side by side, it’s coders and hackers and startups, designers, moms, activists — the entire world is rallying and working together.”

There are countless examples of communities building resilience through the use of technology by connecting resources and ideas, innovators and volunteers, and those most at-risk with those offering help. As New York City stay-at-home orders pulled the curtain down on Broadway and thrust artists into unemployment, the organization Broadway Babysitters, a childcare network that employs the city’s artists, actors, and dancers, quickly shifted their services to bring Broadway stars to our living rooms.

In the five days following the closure, co-founders Vasthy Mompoint and Jennifer Malenke worked nonstop to find a way for their organization to respond.

Now, the Broadway Babysitters Playhouse is running virtual dance parties and story time for children, featuring names like Michael Potts (The Prom, Book of Mormon), choreographer Dominique Kelley, and Tony award nominee Ephraim Sykes. The team recognized that financially, times are tough for so many parents, so for a suggested donation of $10, parents can sign their kids up, while middle school students can quiz Broadway’s best about what it’s really like to audition, and nursing homes can perk up their residents with virtual Broadway singalongs.
Through Zoom, Mompoint personally hosts every session, giving kids a familiar face to welcome into their homes. At the end, the microphones of all the students are unmuted and the performing artists hear a chorus of ‘thank yous’ ending each session in gratitude. The company is building a sense of community for their students by asking kids to bring props to share and by supplying the same Zoom background to parents to use to, “bring children into the same virtual world.”

Technology as a community connector has mobilized entire neighbourhoods of UK citizens to build a national network of ‘mutual aid’ groups. Covid-19 Mutual Aid UK is “offering people in self-isolation help with shopping, dog walking and picking up prescriptions.” In just over a month, the network has grown from about 200 groups to thousands, empowering neighbours all over the country to help their communities. The network’s website offers tools and resources for individuals looking to organize a group in their community and provides a platform for people to find help in their town or on their block. Using Facebook and WhatsApp, volunteers are connecting to each other and those who need help in isolation.

By finding these groups on social platforms, people are able to answer the call for help from their neighbours. In Miami, a similar network was created by two local women ready to respond to the crisis. The WhatsApp “coronavirus buddy system connects at-risk people with volunteers in their neighbourhood who can run errands, pick up groceries and medicine in order to limit their exposure to the virus. The short-term goals of these informal community projects are to meet an urgent need, but their long-term effect has been to help build community.

This pandemic may have shut down borders and closed the doors of public places and community centres around the world, but technology has helped to keep them open. People may be physically isolated through stay-at-home orders and community lockdowns, but they are finding solace and solutions in the growing virtual world. We may be socially distanced, but through the power of tech, we are also more connected than ever.

Potential Interview Questions linked to Motivation and Perseverance

- Tell me about a time when you failed – what did you learn?
- What motivates you?
- Have you ever given up? (It’s ok to say yes – just explain why!)
- What is the hardest thing that you have ever done?
- What has given you your greatest sense of personal achievement so far?
- What is your ambition in life?
- Who inspires you and why?

How do I prove competence in Motivation and Perseverance?

- Overseas experience e.g. World Challenge/cultural exchange/volunteer programme
- Volunteer work
- Mentoring younger students
- Charity work/fundraising
- Working towards your dream: choosing universities/apprenticeships/management schemes/setting up a business/
- Enterprise/Business competition
- Taking part in sport/competitions/music/drama
- Duke of Edinburgh Expedition
- CCF camp
- NCS Course
- Project management
- Prince’s Trust course
- EPQ
Key Reflections on Motivation and Perseverance

What are your aims and passions in life?

Would you say you had a growth or a fixed mindset?

How do you deal with setbacks?

What are your strategies to stay motivated?

How much effort are you prepared to put into something in order to achieve?
Want to find out more?

Ideas for further research

Books
- Duckworth, A. Grit: Why passion and resilience are the secrets to success, Vermilion (2017)

Online articles

Video clips
- The story of James Dyson, Entrepreneur and engineer https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eXXRiZoeXx8
- Entrepreneurship is about motivation and perseverance, EU Science Hub Joint Research Centre https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gK3m6hmZoSM
- The Billy Monger Story https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p06qx4gt/driven-the-billy-monger-story
- Denzel Washington’s inspiring story https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0FB9i7P9Zs4

Websites
- https://www.atlassian.com/blog/productivity/how-to-write-smart-goals
- https://psychcentral.com/lib/the-power-of-positive-internal-motivation/
- https://www.inspireyoursuccess.com/