

You *Can* Influence Thoughts and Behaviour

By Dan Mariani and Natalie Sarlo-McGarvey

Wouldn't it be great if you could learn how to understand, predict, and influence behaviour? Imagine what you could accomplish by identifying what motivates a person to respond in the manner that you want. Just think about how it would feel to be able to motivate your health-care professional to accept what you are offering. This can be accomplished by learning how to recognize motivational traits in others, and how to effectively use language patterns.

The right words: Better results

While the message or content you are communicating is important, we have now learned the correct choice of words in specific context will strengthen the outcome. Research suggests that how people think and process information varies from person to person. How we

What's your motivational trait?

In this article, we will discuss one specific motivational trait and the corresponding language pattern you can use to influence the behaviour of a person possessing this trait. Through directed questioning, we are able to identify words and language patterns that lead us to determine how someone is motivated in specific situations. Knowing what motivates people allows you to use words or language patterns that will be most influential with them, and that will increase their responsiveness to us.

Answer the following questions before reading on:

- What do you want in a job or in your work?
- Why is that important to you?

Imagine how it would feel to be able to motivate health-care professionals to accept what you are offering.

respond to this uniqueness is more important than the content in getting a desired response. Using specific predicates and language patterns, which match those of your listener, makes your communication clearer and more readily accepted. Talking someone's language increases the person's responsiveness to you and gives them the experience of being understood.

"Solutions in Mind" has taken neuroscience and behavioural science techniques and has applied them to everyday business. By using a customized coaching and reinforcement model in our training, we teach our clients how they can influence behaviour in themselves and in others.

In responding to these questions, some people are motivated by moving "toward" something, like a bonus. Others are motivated by moving "away from" something, like an unfriendly colleague. In a work situation, 40% of the population is "toward"-oriented, 40% is "away from"-oriented, and the remaining 20% is a combination of the two. The "toward" people want to attain something, or achieve an objective. These people may not notice problems or what is going wrong because they are so focused on what they want. "Toward" people are motivated by the reward.

In contrast, the "away from" people are motivated by a threat of punishment. These individuals want to fix



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what is going wrong. For example, “away from” people may search for new jobs only when their current positions becomes unbearable. While these people are good at problem solving, they, at times, lose sight of the overall objective or goal.

While these two groups of people complement each other in a work situation, there is also potential to annoy each other.

Prescribe your medication!

How does awareness of this motivational trait help you? Through questioning, you are able to gain an understanding of how a particular health-care professional is motivated with regard to this trait. For instance, you may determine that a certain doctor is an “away from” person. With this in mind, when attempting to convince that doctor to prescribe your medication, you want to reinforce the language pattern that addresses his or her “away from” motivation. Although the formulation and the dosage of medication may be of interest, from a language perspective, it is not the decision driver for the doctor. One way to impact the doctor’s desire to prescribe your medication would be to say, “You can relieve your patient’s suffering with this medication and, because there are so few side-effects, you minimize the risk of poor compliance.”

On the other hand, if you have ascertained that a doctor has a “toward” motivational strategy, you may instead say, “You can increase your patient’s level of comfort with this medication, and their compliance will be maximized based on the reduced number of side-effects.

Regardless of whether you are a “toward” person or an “away from” person, you can switch your language pattern to motivate your client. When you use that doctor’s language pattern, you will be more effective in influencing the behaviour you want because you have given the doctor the experience of being understood. Although, your message may be the same, your choice of words will change. Only you will know the difference. The doctor will understand because this type of communication happens at the unconscious level.

Additional motivational traits will be discussed in subsequent issues. Stay tuned! In the meantime, remember, *you can influence thoughts and behaviour.*

For more information about “Solutions in Mind’s” training and coaching programs, check out our Web site at www.solutionsinmind.com. or contact Natalie Sarlo-McGarvey at (905) 884-2282 or via e-mail at natalie@solutionsinmind.com. **CPM**