

How to Teach Your Students to Motivate Themselves

By Raymond Gerson

How can you teach your students to motivate themselves? How can you get them to pursue worthwhile goals? What is the secret of self-motivation?

Advertisers know the secret. They use the pain/pleasure principle to motivate potential customers to buy their products.

Advertisers link pain to the avoidance of their products and pleasure to their use. For example, if you leave home without your American Express card what happens in the television commercial? Suffering occurs. When you leave home with the card, you experience wonderful benefits. At least that's what the commercial tells us. Advertisers understand that our minds are attracted to pleasure and that we dislike pain.

So what is the lesson that you can teach your students? Teach them how to link pain with not pursuing their dreams. Teach them to associate pleasure with the pursuit of their goals.

What is a practical way to teach this pain/pleasure principle to your students? First, ask them to identify a goal. For the purpose of this example, let's say it is a career objective. It will be easier for your students to sustain a high level of motivation toward this goal when they identify pleasurable reasons for taking action and painful consequences that will result from inaction.

You can ask your students to do the following exercise:

1. List five benefits of obtaining the job you want.
2. List five costs of not obtaining the job you want.

You can teach your students to use this self-motivation strategy for any goals that they wish to pursue. They can frequently review the benefits and costs for the inspiration to make their dreams come true.

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Raymond Gerson has a masters in psychology and over forty years experience teaching personal and career development. Career counselor, job placement specialist, trainer, and former owner of an executive search business, he teaches college success strategy courses. He is the author of five books, including *Create the Life You Want*. Two of his e-books, *How to Create the Job You Want* and *Effective Job Search Strategies* are available for free at <http://www.raymondgerson.com> along with numerous articles on success and study skill strategies.