

Day 6 - Starting with Why

Welcome to the how to learn anything course from Play-Doh university, where you're going to learn the science-based tools of pro learners to accelerate your learning. Remember more and master any hard skills. These are the secret techniques. They didn't tell you in school.

If you're passionate about changing your life with learning, join us, at plato.university to get exclusive content with every lesson. I'm your learning guide, Brandon Stover and let's get started.

All right. We are going to start making our learning plan. And the very first place that we're going to start with is starting with Y. Now, obviously this is a very famous thing that was presented by Simon. Sinek of starting with why, but really what we're talking about here is the motivation for you to.

Again, this isn't traditional school. we're not being forced to learn anything in our life. Rather, we're going to start learning things because we want to, because we want to apply these skills in our life and be able to do something with it.

So when it comes to determining why we're learning something, it boils down to intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation.

Now we're going to talk about intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation from the modern day theory of self-determination theory.

And according to self-determination theory, intrinsic motivation leads one to do something because it is inherently interesting and satisfying for that person. In contrast, extrinsic motivation leads one to do something because of. External motivators. Now, according to self-determination theory, there's really three drivers in intrinsic motivation that we're going to tap into

the first is we have a need to be competent, which means We want to, to experience mastery,

and this is why we're going to embark on a journey.

We want to be smart. We want to be a competent about the skills and knowledge that we learn. And so we're going to embark on a long journey of learning in order to gain mastery, to be able to apply what we've learned in new situations and create things in the world.

The second need inside of intrinsic motivation is the need to be autonomous.

the need to have control over our life.

We have the need to want to make choices that are going to affect our lives and be in the driver's seat of those choices. This means in your own learning, you need to choose your own course of action, not be told what to learn, to make those choices for yourself.

And the third need is to relate to other people which leads us to want to feel connected to others and to belong to a group or a committee.

And this is why it's so important to be within a group and a community of learners that are all embarking on this path of mastery so that you can relate with one another and keep each other motivated. And although these courses are self-directed here at Play-Doh university. This is why we have the learning community so that you can continue to interact with each other and help each other through these courses.

now, think back to when you were first in school, most of the time when you were learning, did your teacher ever tell you really why you were learning those concepts? In fact, I'm sure you yourself, or many of your other peers asked the question, why are we even learning.

and one relevant finding about education is that giving students a meaningful rationale for why they should do something that they don't inherently find interesting, actually helps to facilitate some of that motivation. And at the same time, this practice increases the student's engagement, motivation and learning.

Now another theory called cognitive evaluation theory, which is really just a sub theory of self-determination theory. And no, there's not a test at the end of this. You don't need to remember all these types of theories, but it helps you understand the science. One of the things that cognitive evaluation theory states is that intrinsic motivation is increased.

When feelings of competent are combined with the feelings of autonomy. This means you need to feel that you are responsible for actually mastering something for actually learning. You have to know that it is your choices and your actions that actually led to the positive result. Now, the second type of motivation that we're talking about is extrinsic motivation. This is when there's something external to you, that's motivating you to actually engage in this

learning. Now in our modern day school system, these are grades and we give you a grade mark in order to motivate you to do better.

Obviously that hasn't worked out very well, but it's, what's been done. Other external motivators are things like money, salary gifts, or present

no extrinsic motivators aren't necessarily about.

They can be great motivators for things that you're not inherently drawn to learning. Sometimes there's going to be skills in life that we need that we're just not very inherently drawn to want to learn. So setting up different systems. With external motivators can help us to give the motivation to start to push through that first little hump of learning. However, once we start engaging with the learning, we may actually find that we enjoy it, and we start to tap into the internal motivation because we want to go down that path of mastery to gain that competence.

Now one way to provide yourself with extrinsic motivation is to build incentives and consequences into your tasks.

So you could either do something like give yourself positive reinforcement for when you've done a learning site. Maybe giving yourself praise or rewarding yourself with a cup of coffee after you've gone through a learning session, where you can do some sort of subtractive or negative motivator, which may mean. You don't get to watch your favorite movie. If you didn't engage in your learning session.

Now when you're setting up external motivators and realize that humans are more sensitive to the prospect of losing something that we have, then we are to failing, to actually gain something additional. We have something known as loss aversion. So in your own psychology, when you're going throughout life, you're trying to do things to maximize reinforcement and minimize punishment. So you can use these tools to set up external motivators for yourself in case you're not actually very motivated to learn something.

Now, there is a famous effect in psychology called the over justification effect, which occurs when an external incentive actually decreases a person's intrinsic motivation to perform a behavior or activity.

Researchers actually found that when something like money or prizes, which are external rewards are given for actions that people actually find intrinsically

motivating and they become less internally motivated to pursue those activities in the future.

And what did we do in our traditional education system? Well, we set up a bunch of grades, a bunch of external motivators, and because of this, we start to kill off people's intrinsic motivation to want to learn.

So, this is why whenever possible, we want to focus on the intrinsic motivation. What does that internal drive for us to be learning this thing?

Now, I want to make an important note about motivation. Motivation isn't about how much you want to do something. It's about how much effort you willing to exert to get the thing that you want.

The more you want something, the more effort you're probably going to put in to actually get it. But if you don't want something, you're not going to exert a lot of effort to go after it.

now? Why is determining our motivation for learning so important?

Well, famous researcher in the science of adult learning. Dr. Malcolm knows.

Laid out six needs of every single adult learner has when engaging in learning

I'll quickly list the six needs and what they are, and then get to the most important one, which is motivation. So the first need is to have foundation.

This means as adult learners, we need to actively leverage our prior knowledge and experience when.

When you're going to find out later in this course, this is where you're going to start with everything that you learn is learning those foundations. First,

the second need that we have as adult learners is a need to know, and this is really answering the question of why we're learning something. What we're focusing on here today. you need to give an answer to yourself of how you're going to apply this skill in your life later on or ways you're going to use it right now. why is this information relevant to your life?

The third need that we have is readiness. As adult learners, we want to know how we're going to apply the information that we're expected to learn. And not 20 years from now, how's going to immediately apply to our life.

The fourth need is orientation. Because the Dole learning is so much more pragmatic and practical. It's logical that it should be centered around problem solving. So it's best to start with a problem and work towards a solution, learning the skills along the way in order to reach that.

And this makes perfect sense because you're inundated with problems all day long. And my guess is that you're doing things like Googling, how to fix something. Maybe watching a quick YouTube video, reading a book, trying to figure out how to solve the problems that you have going on in your.

this is one reason why at Plato university, we extend this problem beyond yourself and to the larger global issues. We know that your brain is wired to want to solve problems. So why not try and solve the problems To everyone in the world is facing.

The fifth need is self-concept. Alongside the importance of prior experience and practical application. adult learners need to be involved in the planning of their own. And that's exactly what this course is all about. We're trying to give you self-concept about your learning. Remember, you need to have choice in your own learning, have that autonomy, and that's why we're giving you the tools to take back control of your own.

Now the final need related to everything we've talked about is motivation.

What is going to motivate you to put the effort in to actually learn this skill or concept?

Now we took this idea of adult learning theory and combined it all together at Play-Doh university. And this means we're helping students understand themselves their purpose and aligning their education to that.

Now I want to talk about one of the most powerful motivators that I believe any person has. And that's the idea of having a purpose in their life.

And now the definition of purpose that I like to use comes from Dr. Bill Damon at Stanford university.

Which states that purpose is something that's meaningful to the self and consequential to the world.

That means when we engage in our purpose, we're doing something that's going to better us. And also the world at large, we're helping to solve our own problems and the world.

So, when you think about the things that you're engaging, then how does this benefit you and the others around you?

And this is why a Play-Doh university we're taking the things that you're most passionate about, that you have interest in that you're intrinsically motivated to want to do. And combining that with some of the world's largest issues. we're helping you to develop a sense of purpose because you're doing things that light you up and also help everyone around you.

we're helping you to understand yourself, your purpose and aligning your education. All the skills and knowledge that you're going to gain when you learning is going to help you fulfill your purpose to help you do those things that are intrinsically motivating to you and help all of those around you.

And as we mentioned before, it's important to put your learning into context by defining how it fits into your everyday. Only after establishing the why should you move on to how you're learning the method and what you're learning the subject matter?

Uh, it turns out most people learn better when they understand why first by tapping into our intrinsic curiosity in internal motivation, our brain becomes aligned with the. And ripe for learning

once you've started with why you prime your brain to receive the how and what.

imagine being given a single piece of a thousand piece jigsaw puzzle and being asked, where does it fit? You would have no idea where to start, but now imagine the edges of the puzzle have been defined for you. And you're told what the puzzle is. You now have a context and are far more likely to be able to build on it and start filling that puzzle. It's the same thing with learning. We're defining why we're doing this so that we can start to fill in the how and what into that context.

Now let's discuss how we can discover our motivators and set up things both in internal motivation and external motivation.

Let's first discuss internal motivation.

Here's some questions I encourage you to spend time considering before diving into any learning project, the first is answering, why am I learning this information and how, and when will I actually use it?

You can see my answering this. We're already checking off some, a doctor knows requirements, but beyond that, it also helps us determine just what we're going to focus on in the first place.

The second thing, you can do, when focusing on the internal motivation is finding the value in what you're learning for you. And you can do this for even things that you don't necessarily want to learn. And you, do this by reframing the perception of what you're learning.

One way to reframe your perception of a learning task is to make a list of all the benefits you can think of. If you can take the time to compile reasons, ideas may emerge that you hadn't thought of before, and this can motivate you even further. Your list can include how the task moves you closer to your goals.

For example, if you want to earn a certificate in project management, you might think doing this homework or project will move me closer to that certificate. Not doing this homework. We'll move me away from that certificate.

The other thing that we mentioned before to increase that internal motivation as by, reminding yourself of the journey of mastery. You need to experience progress when you're learning. So as you work towards mastery, your study should fall in the doable, but with effort range, you can grow frustrated. If the task is too hard and lose motivation to do it. But if things are too easy, you'll also lose motivation because you become.

So you need to be right in that Goldilocks zone where it's just a little bit past what you're able to do, and this will drive you to want to overcome that challenge, to overcome that difficulty and get better at what you're doing.

And the last thing you can do is set goals for yourself, both long-term and process goals. And we'll go specifically into what those are and some of the later lessons, but just think about the goals in your own life. How does the things that you're going to learn fit with those goals? How are they going to help you reach those goals? All of these are internal motives.

Now let's talk about a few external motivators that we can use. Remember, external motivators aren't bad. It's just the way that we use them in combination with internal motivation. And we want to do this in a balanced and healthy way. So whenever possible, we start with internal motivation, but if we don't have any internal motivation, That's going to drive us to want to learn this thing. And it's still something that we actually need to learn. Then we can start using some of the external motivators to kick our button to gear.

one way to do it is to set stakes for yourself. So ask yourself the question, how can I use psychology or social pressure to condense my timelines and push myself to learn faster?

An extremely powerful, external motivator is social pressure working with somebody else. So forming some sort of study group or peers that are learning the same thing as you as a great way to facilitate learning and stay motivated. Additionally, discussing the study material and hearing what others think can give insights into the key points in the material.

Now, obviously the task of learning didn't actually change. But if you have other people motivating you either by working with them, figuring out concepts and problems, or having them keep you accountable for when you don't engage in the learning and they have some. Reward or punishment for what you've done.

You can even start to game a fight. You're learning if you want it. Gamification is using elements of gaming, such as point scoring, competing with others and rewards to make your learning more engaging. And the consequence of gamification is that we're more likely to form habits around our learning and using gamification can actually make learning. So you can do things like scoring points for your learning sessions, creating progress reports for yourself, or using things like rewards after you engage in a learning session.

now, one thing about external rewards. If you're using this for learning, you actually want to use random intermittent reward. and this is something that was presented by Andrew. Uh, Stanford university.

See the neurosurgeons that control rewards are closely tethered to circuits that control motivation and the desire to pursue things, including learning the question of how often to reward our. In order to keep our motivation high is quite simple, make it random and intermittent. This is exactly what casinos have done to keep people gambling. See when rewards are predictable, They start to lose their motivational impact quickly. They're not as exciting.

Now the final tactic that I want to share with you and answering the question of why, why you are learning and what that implies for how you should approach your learning projects is the expert interview method.

And the expert interview method means that you go and talk to people who have already achieved what you want to achieve. They're already masters of the thing that you want to learn.

So for example, let's say you want to be a successful architect.

And this case you probably need to master the design skills before you get started. You could actually do talk to some successful architects and help you get a sense of whether the things that you want to learn are actually going to help you reach your goals.

And finding these type of people. Isn't that hard. If your goal is career related, just look for the people that have the career that you want and send them an email. You can even use Twitter or LinkedIn to reach out to these.

If your goal is related to some other type of skill, you get search online forums or other communities that have people that have learned the thing that you want to learn.

Now reaching out and setting up a meeting with an expert. Isn't hard either. I can seem scary. And a lot of people shy away from it

because of a fear of being rejected, ignored, or even yelled at because you want to ask for this person, that's time.

however, this actually doesn't happen. Most experts are more than willing to offer advice and are flattered by the thought that someone wants to learn from their experience.

The key is to write a simple to the point, email explaining why you're reaching out to them and asking if they could spare 10 or 15 minutes to answer some simple.

or not asking for more than 15 minutes or some type of ongoing mentor relationship

doing this can help you get a greater sense of why you're learning something and possibly good directions about the way you're going to approach your learning. which we'll cover in the rest of making this plan.

So our activity today is just to determine why you want to learn. You can start even with this course. Why did you start taking this course? What was it that drawn you to want to learn? Then start looking at the other skills or knowledge sets that you want to learn. Why is it that you want to learn those things going through those internal and external motivators and figuring out why the time is now for you to learn those things?

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