



Thoughts from Linda:

Drive  
*The Surprising Truth  
About What Motivates Us*

by Daniel H. Pink  
2009

In this short book, Daniel Pink delivers one of the 'next chapters' of the work of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Edward Deci, Marcus Aurelius, and Viktor Frankl. He joins the chorus of philosophers, researchers, thinkers, and writers who understand the power of Purpose in living a good life and the shifts occurring in human values in our 21st century. This book, written almost 20 years after Flow, illustrates numerous examples from the science of the time (14 years ago as of the time of this writing) and makes a strong case for a new mental paradigm of human motivation.

Using a technology metaphor, his key thesis is that societies all have operating systems, including laws, social customs, economic practices, etc. And as he notes, our cultural identity sits atop certain shared assumptions of the 'way things are.' He takes us through what he calls Motivation 1.0, the early paradigm that relied on pure survival for all humans to develop and propagate. After thousands of years, we humans moved into what he termed Motivation 2.0 when we needed to cooperate to live and work productively. One of the key assumptions underlying this 2.0 operating system included the realization that we were 'more than the sum of our biological urges. As humans, we were driven to seek reward and avoid punishment.'

Following his metaphor, Pink explains the work of Frederick Taylor, the early 20th-century engineer who framed what Pink called 'software' to run atop the Motivation 2.0 platform. The approach is well known by businesspeople as the 'carrot and stick' approach to management. He traces the evolution of thought, including the work of Abraham Maslow, Douglas McGregor, and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, all of whom foster a more sophisticated and nuanced view of what drives human beings and exposes the fundamental weaknesses of the Motivation 2.0 model. As he says, this system has three major inadequacies: "it is antagonistic to how we organize what we do, how we think

about what we do, and how we do what we do.” In numerous interesting examples, he shows how the ‘rewards/punishment’ approaches backfire and yield exactly the opposite of the desired result. He gives an example of an Israeli school that decided to fine parents for late pick-ups of their children, only to find that the behavior only increased when the policy was implemented. The “Seven Deadly Flaws of Carrots and Sticks” list includes:

THEY CAN...

1. extinguish intrinsic motivation
2. diminish performance
3. crush creativity
4. crowd out good behavior
5. encourage cheating, shortcuts, and unethical behavior
6. become addictive
7. foster short-term thinking

He then introduces us to the Motivation 3.0 model and his own “alphabet suggestion,” which introduces Type I into our lexicon as a ‘Third Theory’ to follow the Theory X and Theory Y thinking of McGregor. Pink gives a great description of the thinking and science undergirding this approach and illustrates how new generations and baby boomers alike have been responsible for the shifting societal values that pave the way for this approach. One of his strengths as a writer is his ability to connect the dots clearly and with just enough background to illustrate his points

The new model of Motivation 3.0 is based on three driving elements: Autonomy, Mastery, and Purpose. His treatment of the third leg of the stool of the model, purpose, is masterful and filled with interesting statistics and emerging trends, which the past 15 years have shown to be true. He takes us through the open-source surprise of Wikipedia, the TOMS shoe phenomenon, and the Harvard “MBA Oath,” which is more or less a Hippocratic oath for business. Many of the stories he relays are part of the story of ‘Conscious Capitalism,’ which in its own right is an excellent example of Motivation 3.0 in action.

Daniel Pink is a one-person industry, as his web page will show you. He is the author of seven books, five of which have been NYT bestsellers, including this one. He earned a BA from Northwestern University, where he was a Truman Scholar and elected to Phi Beta Kappa. He received a JD from Yale Law School and has earned honorary doctorates from Georgetown, The Pratt Institute and Ringling College, the University of Indianapolis, and Westfield State University. Before beginning his own company, he

worked in several positions in politics and government, including as chief speechwriter for Vice-President Al Gore.

He was the host and co-produced a television series for National Geographic that focused on human behavior called "Crowd Control." This program aired in over 100 countries. He is a contributing editor at Fast Company and Wired and a journalist for entities such as The New York Times, The Sunday Telegraph, The Atlantic, Slate, and Harvard Business Review. In an interesting twist that reveals the span of his curiosity, he is also a Japan Society Media fellow, a title he earned in Tokyo. At the same time, he studied the massive comic industry in Japan.

Daniel Pink's signature blend of big ideas and practical takeaways is well displayed in this book. He concludes the book with several practical tools. First is The Type I Toolkit, which includes eight sections called: Type I for Individuals—Nine Strategies for Awakening Your Motivation; Type I for Organizations: Nine Ways to Improve your Company, Office or Group; The Zen of Compensation: Paying People the Type I Way; Type I for Parents and Educators: Nine Ideas for Helping Our Kids; The Type I Reading List: Fifteen Essential Books; Listen to the Gurus: Six Business Thinkers Who Get It; Type I Fitness Plan: Four Tips for Getting (and Staying) Motivated to Exercise and Drive—The Recap.

He concludes in a way that clearly shows his experience as a speechwriter and an extraordinary communicator. He provides a second set of tools for communicating what the book is all about, as this Twitter summary of 140 characters shows: "Carrots and sticks are so last century. Drive says that for 21st-century work, we need to upgrade to autonomy, mastery, and purpose." He follows with a 'Cocktail party' summary: "When it comes to motivation, there's a gap between what science knows and what business does. Our current operating system—which is built around external carrot-and-stick motivators—doesn't work and often does harm. We need an upgrade. And science shows the way. This new approach has three essential elements: 1. Autonomy—the desire to direct our own lives; 2. Mastery—the urge to get better and better at something that matters; and 3. Purpose—the yearning to do what we do in the service of something larger than ourselves."

He follows with a helpful Glossary and a set of "20 Conversation Starters to Keep You Thinking and Talking." I appreciated his ending message and will end this review with it: "We know that human beings are not merely smaller, slower, better-smelling horses galloping after that day's carrot. If we've spent time with young children or remember ourselves at our best, we know we're not destined to be passive and compliant. We're

designed to be active and engaged. And we know that the richest experiences in our lives aren't when we're clamoring for validation from others but when we're listening to our own voice—doing something that matters, doing it well, and doing it in the service of a cause larger than ourselves.

So, in the end, repairing the mismatch and bringing our understanding of motivation into the 21st century is more than an essential move for business. It's an affirmation of our humanity."