

Motivation in Sport



What is motivation? Motivation is defined as “The drive to succeed or the desire/want to achieve something.” What motivates you can be divided into two subsections, intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is the drive that comes from within the player. Intrinsic motivation has internal rewards such as pride, personal achievement, belonging, and growth, for example. As such, the player is driven to achieve something for the feeling it brings them. Extrinsic motivation is the drive experienced by the player whilst striving to achieve an external reward. It can be either tangible (certificates, medals, money etc) or intangible (praise, feedback, status etc).

Motivation in sport. Is the drive to take part and persist in an activity. That imaginary force that pushes you through the gruelling training sessions, that encourages you to play in through the highs and lows. But when we start to struggle with motivation, it takes something we love and makes it all feel a bit alien. We become uninterested, we maybe can't be bothered putting in the effort, and others sometimes don't understand why. It's then important to look at what can help increase the levels of motivation again.

This can be done in a couple of ways, but an easy way is by creating goals. Goals can be set at the beginning of a season and monitored, re-set when reached and followed right through. They are a really good way of challenging, pushing and bettering yourself as a player all whilst being able to track them along the way. They can also help us feel a little more in control of what's happening.

Goal Setting. Goal setting has been acknowledged as a performance enhancer across multiple disciplines, both within and out with the sporting world. Goals allow for athletes to direct their attention towards relevant tasks and can be set at any time which can help athletes focus on areas for improvement. In order to set clear achievable goals and to maintain motivation throughout, you should aim to set outcome, performance and process goals.

The 1-2-3 rule. For every outcome goal, you should aim to have two performance goals and three process goals. For example,

1. Outcome: To be more competitive with top-performing teams in the league.

- a. **Performance 1-** 65% shooting percentage
- b. **Performance 2-** Release the ball in under 3 seconds

- i. **Process 1-** Read the defence prior to ball release
- ii. **Process 2-** Consistent footwork to improve deception in play
- iii. **Process 3-** Stand strong and balanced in the pocket during defence.

Ensure when you set goals that you record them to provide yourself with accountability and prioritise them daily. Both long and short-term goals should be set which are personally meaningful to allow athletes to be in ownership of their own goals. Set positive goals rather than negative, focus on the good and good will follow!

Outcome Goals: Based on a result or a final state- where you want to be as a player (the end result).

Performance Goals: the level of performance to be achieved during competition (the standard).

Process Goals: What you will do to improve the areas which lead to the desired performance (the behaviour/strategies).

After 4-6 weeks, check back on your goals, re-set them if reached, or if too difficult. There is no shame in making them easier, their whole aim is for them to be achieved so new, challenging goals can be set!