

Optimal Motivation at Work

Self-Determination Theory: An Approach to Enhancing Employees' Motivation and Wellness

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Structure of the Colloquium

- Your perspectives on motivation in the workplace
- An overview of self-determination theory
- An application of self-determination theory to organizational behavior
- Creating need supportive workplace climates
- A case study analysis



A Preamble

A Preamble, cont.

- How do you define motivation?



Your Perspectives on Motivation in the Workplace

Employees' Perspectives on Motivation



- What types of experiences motivate you in the workplace?



Managers' Perspectives on Motivation



- How do you motivate your employees in the workplace?

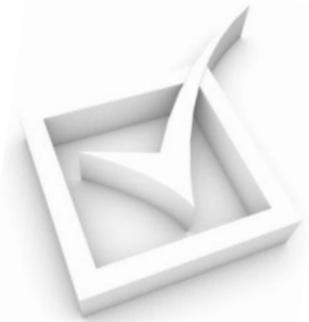


Why We Do What We Do at Work

- **Employees complete their tasks at work for a variety of reasons:**
 - **Andy** completes tasks to earn a merit-based bonus or to avoid reprimand
 - **Barb** completes tasks to feel pride for being a “good employee” or to avoid guilt for not having worked hard enough
 - **Chris** completes tasks because he finds his work to be valuable and important
 - **Dom** completes tasks because doing so allows him to help those who are in need, which aligns with his life values
 - **Ed** completes tasks because doing so is inherently satisfying and enjoyable

Why We Do What We Do at Work, cont.

- **Who do you think will perform best at work?**
 - **Andy** completes tasks to earn a merit-based bonus or to avoid reprimand
 - **Barb** completes tasks to feel pride for being a “good employee” or to avoid guilt for not having worked hard enough
 - **Chris** completes tasks because he finds his work to be valuable and important
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 - **Ed** completes tasks because doing so is inherently satisfying and enjoyable



Why We Do What We Do at Work, cont'd.

- **Who do you think will be happiest at work?**
 - **Andy** completes tasks to earn a merit-based bonus or to avoid reprimand
 - **Barb** completes tasks to feel pride for being a “good employee” or to avoid guilt for not having worked hard enough
 - **Chris** completes tasks because he finds his work to be valuable and important
 - **Dom** completes tasks because doing so allows him to help those who are in need, which aligns with his life values
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An Overview of Self-Determination Theory

A Focus on Human Motivation

- Motivation has been a long-standing topic of inquiry within psychology
- Applications cut across psychological sub-disciplines and domains of life
 - Including organizational behavior
- Two views on motivation:
 - The “traditional” view
 - The “differentiated” view



Intrinsic Motivation



- Doing an activity because it is inherently satisfying and enjoyable
 - No separable outcomes or contingencies
 - Behavior occurs spontaneously (exploration, play)
- Think about those times in *your* life when you experience intrinsic motivation. How does it feel?
- The prototype of autonomous, self-determined behavior

Effects on Intrinsic Motivation

- Rewards, threats of punishment, deadlines, surveillance, and evaluations undermine intrinsic motivation
- Providing choice enhances intrinsic motivation
- Negative feedback undermines intrinsic motivation, whereas positive feedback enhances intrinsic motivation



But why?!?



Extrinsic Motivation

- Intrinsic motivation tends to decline with age



- Extrinsic motivation refers to doing an activity because it leads to a separable outcome or consequence, such as obtaining a reward or avoiding a punishment



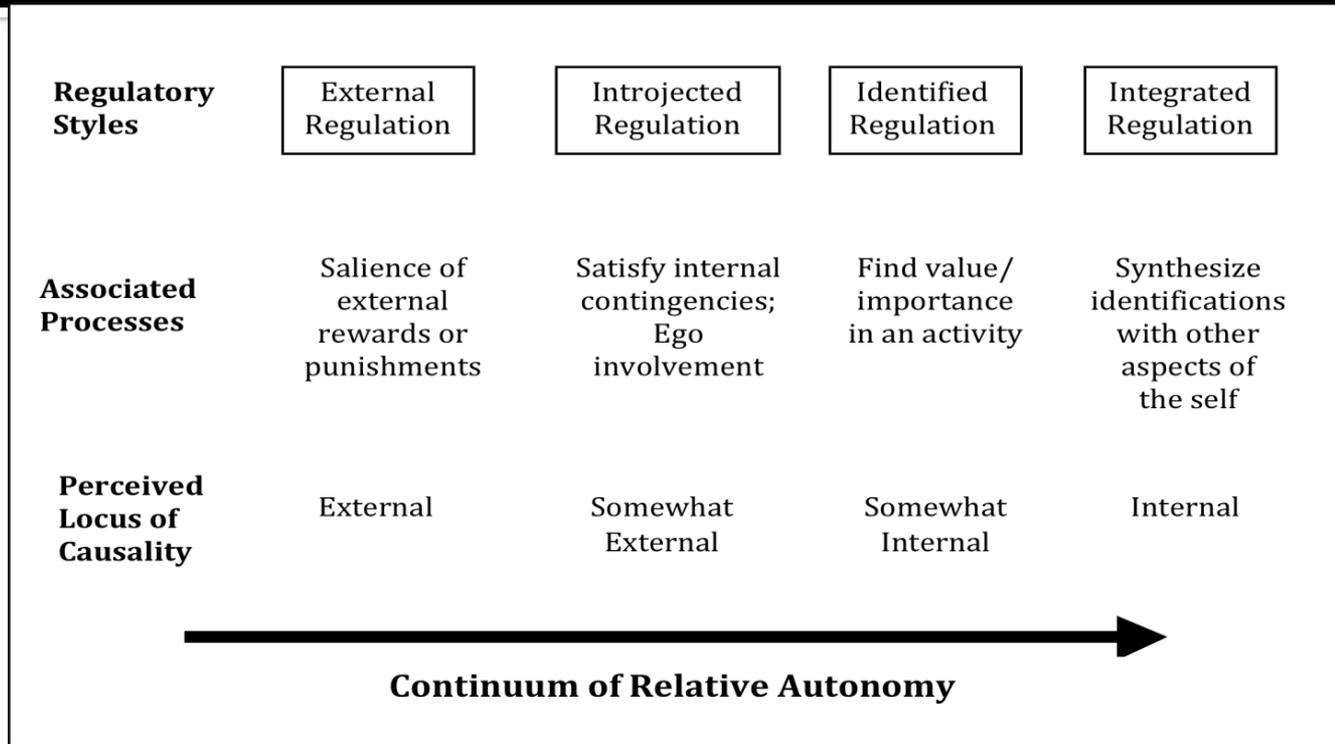
Can Extrinsic Motivation be Internalized?

- The process of internalization
- People tend to internalize aspects of the environment that are endorsed by important others

But why?!?



A Continuum of Internalization



Niemiec, C. P., & Ryan, R. M. (2009). Autonomy, competence, and relatedness in the classroom: Applying self-determination theory to educational practice. *Theory and Research in Education*, 7, 133-144.

Autonomous Versus Controlled Motivation

- Autonomous motivation
 - To endorse one's behavior fully
 - Accompanied by experiences of choice and volition
 - Intrinsic motivation, integrated regulation, and identified regulation
- Controlled motivation
 - To be coerced into behavior by external or internal forces
 - Accompanied by experiences of pressure and obligation
 - External regulation and introjected regulation



Correlates of Autonomous Motivation

- Across a variety of important life domains, autonomous motivation is associated with higher levels of:
 - Task persistence and performance
 - Task interest, enjoyment, and creativity
 - Relationship quality
 - Psychological and physical



For reviews, see:

Niemiec, C. P., Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2010). Self-determination theory and the relation of autonomy to self-regulatory processes and personality development. In R. H. Hoyle (Ed.), *Handbook of personality and self-regulation* (pp. 169-191). Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Vansteenkiste, M., Niemiec, C. P., & Soenens, B. (2010). The development of the five mini-theories of self-determination theory: An historical overview, emerging trends, and future directions. In T. C. Urdan & S. A. Karabenick (Eds.), *Advances in motivation and achievement, v. 16A—The decade ahead: Theoretical perspectives on motivation and achievement* (pp. 105-165). London: Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Review of Self-Determination Theory

- Focuses on the *type* of motivation, rather than on the *amount* of motivation
- Intrinsic motivation is supported by choice and positive feedback, and is undermined by external contingencies and negative feedback
- Extrinsic motivation can be internalized to varying degrees and, as a result, can be experienced as more or less autonomous
- Autonomous (relative to controlled) motivation associated with positive outcomes across a domains



An Application of Self-Determination Theory to Organizational Behavior

Perspectives on Work



STUDS TERKEL

“This book being about work is, by its very nature, about violence— violence to the spirit as well as to the body. It is about ulcers and depression, about back aches and nervous breakdowns. It is above all about daily humiliations, about the continued interruption of the organismic process. And to survive each day is a victory.”

Working: People talk about what they do all day and how they feel about what they do (Studs Terkel, 1974)

Autonomous Motivation at Work

- **Family alienation, emotional exhaustion**
 - Senecal, Vallerand, & Guay (2001)
- **Work satisfaction**
- **Emotional exhaustion, turnover intention**
 - Richer, Blanchard, & Vallerand (2002)
- **Emotional exhaustion, depersonalization**
- **Personal accomplishment**
 - Fernet, Guay, & Senecal (2004)



Autonomous Motivation at Work

- **Job satisfaction, job commitment**
 - Lam & Gurland (2008)
- **Autonomous: Job search intensity, self-actualization**
- **Controlled: Negative experience, general health, life satisfaction, self-actualization**
 - Vansteenkiste, Lens, De Witte, De Witte, & Deci (2004)



Creating Need Supportive Workplace Climates

Different Types of Managers

- Think about your **best** manager
 - How does (s)he relate to you?
 - What types of opportunities does (s)he afford you?

- Think about your **worst** manager
 - How does (s)he relate to you?
 - What types of opportunities does (s)he afford you?



My Best Manager

- My *best* manager does the following in the workplace, most of the time:
 - Tries to see things from my perspective
 - Encourages me to do my best
 - Strives to create a warm, caring interpersonal environment



My Worst Manager

- My *worst* manager does the following in the workplace, most of the time:
 - Tries to see things from my perspective
 - Encourages me to do my best
 - Strives to create a warm, caring interpersonal environment



Motivating and Demotivating Workplaces

- Optimal strategies for motivating employees are of utmost importance in the workplace
- Blue-collar workers (N = 50) in Sydney (Australia) responded to a semi-structured interview about two workplace experiences
 - Motivating experience
 - Demotivating experience



Motivating and Demotivating Workplaces, cont. 1 of 10

- Sample excerpt (motivating experience)
 - Support for autonomy
 - **The foreman understands that the easiest way to fix a job is to actually fix it rather than yell at somebody about it. Personally, I come down harder on myself when I make a mistake than he does by a huge degree. I'm a perfectionist, so yeah, it's good to know that if I do make a mistake and if it manages to get past me (which they don't usually manage to do anyway) then I'm not going to be humiliated or yelled at.**

Motivating and Demotivating Workplaces, cont. 2 of 10

I'm not even going to be frowned upon, it's simply a case of "these things happen". So that's very comforting, which is not usually a word you associate with boiler making but it makes it easier to go into a job knowing that even if I make a mistake then I'm not going to suffer for it. We're just going to fix it...The foreman is a bit of a ninja. He walks through a shadow and disappears. So he's not standing over your shoulder. It's almost completely autonomous from receiving the drawings to having the job go out the door.

Motivating and Demotivating Workplaces, cont. 3 of 10

- Sample excerpt (motivating experience)
 - Support for competence
 - **One of the best parts of being a boiler maker is the sense of accomplishment you get when you take just a bunch of raw steel and whatever timeframe is necessary, and later you've got an industrial cooler. And you can see what you've done. It's tangible. It's right there. It's not some dots and dashes or whatever on a computer. It's something physical. It has an impact and when you do it well, when it all comes together, not only do you have the sense of accomplishment but you've got the pride of doing it well. You don't have to touch up here or fix that or anything like that. For me, that is very good.**

Motivating and Demotivating Workplaces, cont. 4 of 10

- Sample excerpt (motivating experience)
 - Support for relatedness
 - **This guy in the bay next to me, when we work together too long we do get on each other's nerves and there has been at least one occasion where one of the apprentices was standing on the side laughing his head off over what we were saying to each other. That is the good thing about it. I don't know if it's all blue collar, but everywhere I've worked, if you think somebody's an idiot then you can tell them. You don't get taken to some board of inquiry or whatever.**

Motivating and Demotivating Workplaces, cont. 5 of 10

When I had the argument with the guy, it was over some measurements and yeah, I called him an idiot—and several other things—and two minutes later I went and apologized to him for saying what I said. I told him that I shouldn't have said it. I told him that I meant it, but I shouldn't have said it. But that's fine and we just went straight back to work. It was really good to talk about life outside of work, what you did on the weekend, all that sort of stuff...you can have a blow up with somebody and it's not a problem.

Motivating and Demotivating Workplaces, cont. 6 of 10

- Sample excerpt (demotivating experience)
 - Thwarting of autonomy
 - **People try to put you down for something or authority...always authority...because they use their authority to stand over you—to try to stand over you. I feel that I get a lot of respect from management, but it's when you see other people, you know, getting stood over and I think everyone should be treated equally and they're not. And I think that's just the world we live in. There's nothing you can do about that, it's just different workplaces and different personalities. I think that is a big part—personalities.**

Motivating and Demotivating Workplaces, cont. 7 of 10

- Sample excerpt (demotivating experience)
 - Thwarting of competence
 - **Being belittled by upper management for something that may have just been a human error or not even your fault. People don't treat you on your merits, they treat you on your personality and try to put you down. I get frustrated because things don't seem to happen as well and as organized as you'd like, which holds you up in what you need to achieve with your work, and therefore you can't reach that level of personal satisfaction in achievement because you've been held back by...be it supply or others or processes or procedures.**

Motivating and Demotivating Workplaces, cont. 8 of 10

- Sample excerpt (demotivating experience)
 - Thwarting of relatedness
 - **One of the long-serving people here retired. He was the apprentice supervisor. I don't know who, but someone decided to bring him up here and just give him a little fucking goodbye moment. But they only had a select few who were selected. It wasn't his choice. It was management's choice. You've got people who have been here for, say, a year or two, and they were upstairs in the office. But I was his apprentice. I worked with him directly for a year and a half straight. I was one of the people who didn't get invited. I'd say that I didn't feel too motivated that day. I was a bit, you know, unimpressed.**

Motivating and Demotivating Workplaces, cont. 9 of 10

- Interviews were coded for content by two naïve raters
 - Support for autonomy (eg, The employee experiences others as demanding and pressuring [r])
 - Support for competence (eg, The employee experiences others as helping to develop his/her skills)
 - Support for relatedness (eg, The employee experiences others as relating in a warm, positive way)
- Hypothesis 1: Provision of need support will be most apparent in interviews about *motivating* experiences

	Autonomy Support	Competence Support	Relatedness Support
Estimated Marginal Means:	Mean (SE)	Mean (SE)	Mean (SE)
Motivating Experience	3.467 (.072)	3.377 (.061)	3.570 (.084)
Demotivating Experience	2.693 (.066)	2.623 (.051)	2.703 (.083)
Pairwise Comparisons:	η_p^2	η_p^2	η_p^2
vs. Demotivating Experience	.586***	.680***	.572***

Motivating and Demotivating Workplaces, cont. 10 of 10

- Interviews were coded for content by two naïve raters
 - Incentives (eg, The employee focuses on financial incentives as a relevant factor in the experience)
- Hypothesis 2: Financial incentives will **not** distinguish *motivating* versus *demotivating* experiences

	Financial Incentives
Estimated Marginal Means:	Mean (SE)
Motivating Experience	3.155 (.066)
Demotivating Experience	3.135 (.067)
Pairwise Comparisons:	η_p^2
vs. Demotivating Experience	.001



Need Supportive Techniques at Work

- It is critical for managers to provide support for their employees' autonomy, competence, and relatedness
 - **Support for autonomy:**
 - Relate from the employee's perspective
 - Encourage self-initiation and choice
 - Provide a rationale for requested behavior
 - Minimize use of controlling language
 - **Support for competence:**
 - Be positive that the employee can succeed
 - Create optimal challenges
 - Give accurate, effectance-relevant feedback
 - **Support for relatedness:**
 - Develop a warm, empathic, non-judgmental relationship



An Intervention Study

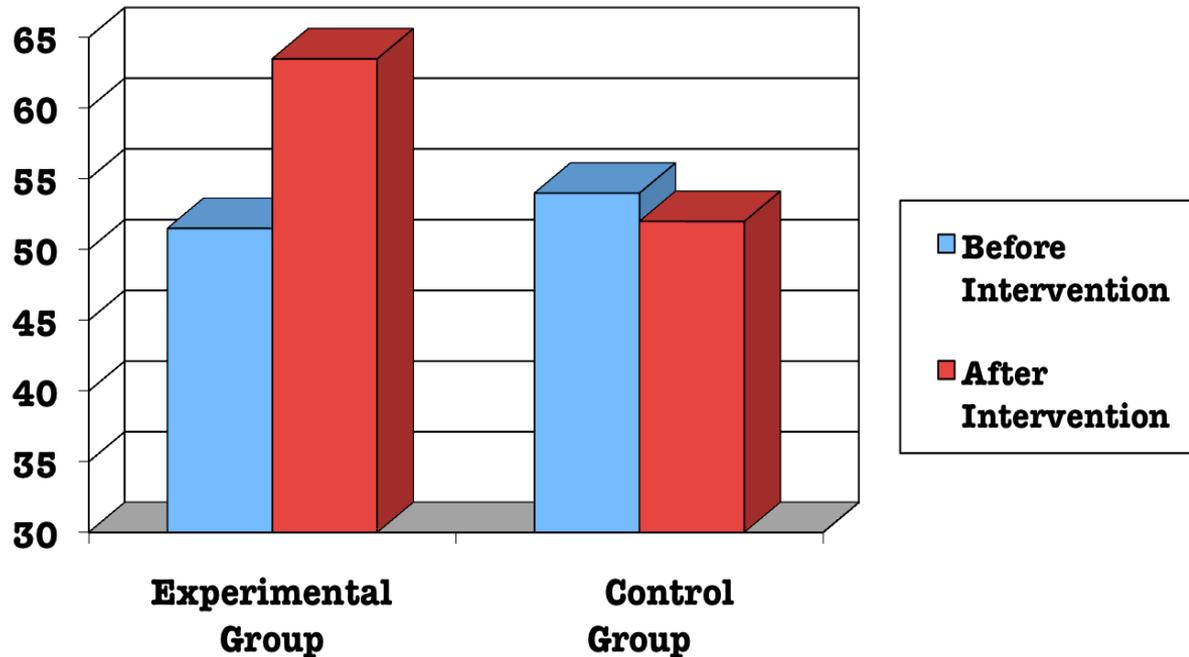
Deci et al. (1989)

- Involved training managers in a Fortune 500 Company to be more need supportive
 - Worked with branch manager for 1 day
 - Worked with management team for 5 days
 - Worked with field managers for 7 days
- Managerial need support
- Ripple effect to employees
 - Higher trust in corporation
 - Higher job satisfaction



An Intervention Study

Deci et al. (1989) cont.



Deci, E. L., Connell, J. P., & Ryan, R. M. (1989). Self-determination in a work organization. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 74*, 580-590.

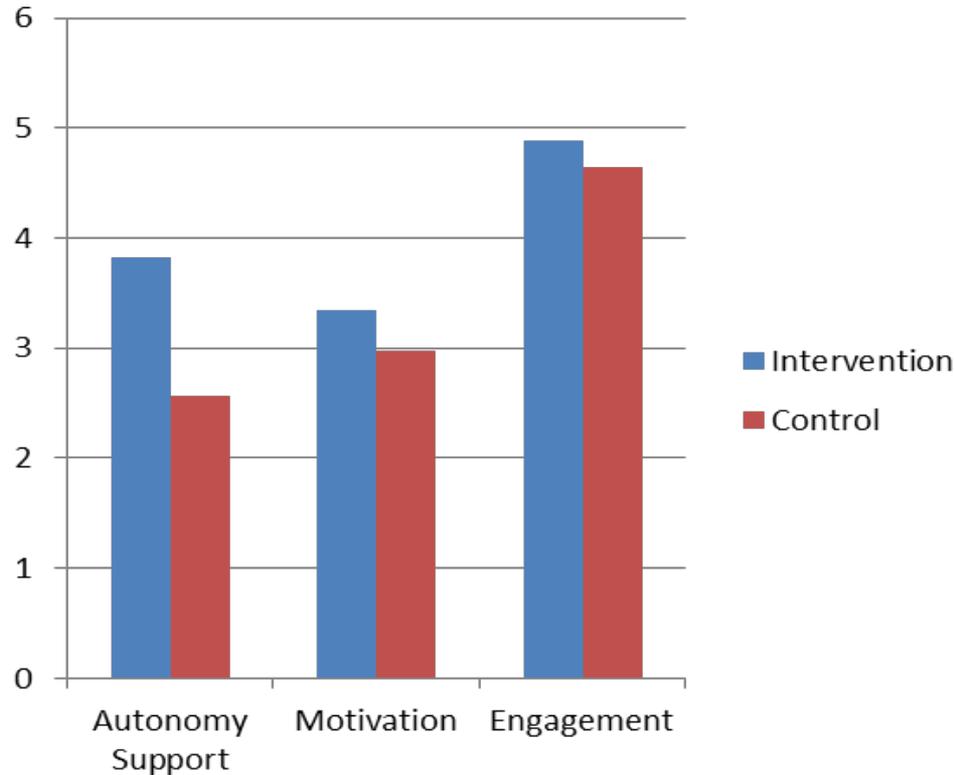
An Intervention Study

Hardré and Reeve (2009)

- Involved training managers in a Fortune 500 Company to be more need supportive
 - Group-delivered training session for 1 hour
 - Group-delivered Q & A session for 1 hour
 - Individual study of a training booklet
- Managerial need support
 - At 5 weeks after the training
- Ripple effect to employees
 - At 10 weeks after the training

An Intervention Study

Hardré and Reeve (2009) cont.



Hardré, P. L., & Reeve, J. (2009). Training corporate managers to adopt a more autonomy-supportive motivating style toward employees: An intervention study. *International Journal of Training and Development*, 13, 165-184.

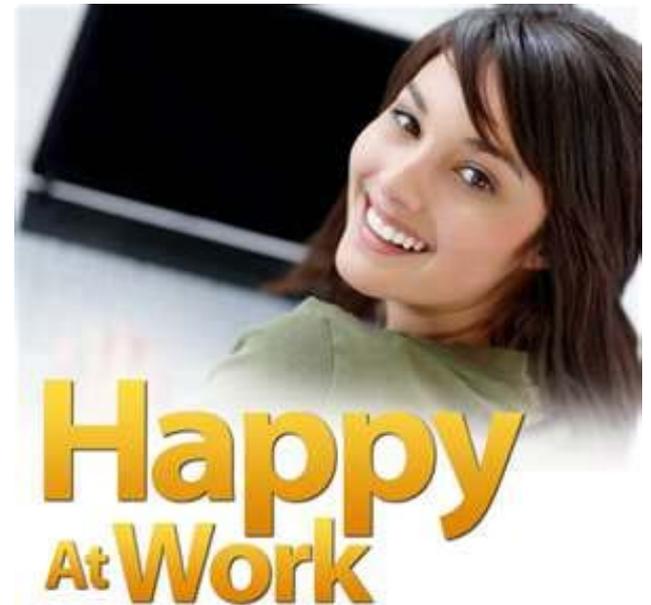
An Intervention Study

Spence et al. (in preparation)

- Involved training organizational coaches to work with coachees (i.e., managers) in a need-supportive way
 - Training workshop on SDT-based coaching for 1 day
 - Action learning assignment on theoretical application in practice
 - Five 60-minute coaching sessions over 10 weeks
- Managers who received SDT-based coaching reported more change in autonomous motivation for managing, relative to those in the control condition
- Change in autonomous motivation predicted change in perceived competence, which in turn predicted changes in work engagement, somatic symptom burden, and mental ill-health

Conclusion

- The *quality* of employees' motivation matters
- Autonomous (relative to controlled) motivation is associated with higher levels of employee health and work-related functioning
- Managers can facilitate autonomous motivation in the workplace by providing support for their employees' autonomy, competence, and relatedness



Thank You!!!

A Case Study Analysis

A Case Study Analysis, cont.

- Think about all of the individuals with whom you have interacted in your professional organizational life
 - Select one person who **seemed to find it easy to generate enthusiasm for his/her work and/or the organization. In other words, this individual could be described as “engaged” while at work**
 - Select one person who **seemed to find it difficult to generate enthusiasm for his/her work and/or the organization. In other words, this individual could be described as “disengaged” while a**



A Case Study Analysis

- Identify themes that seem to represent support—or lack thereof—for the three basic psychological needs identified within self-determination theory
 - **Autonomy:** An experience of choice and self-endorsement
 - **Competence:** An experience of capability and mastery
 - **Relatedness:** An experience of connection with and support from others



Your Narratives of a (De)Motivated Person

- Where do you see evidence of support (or lack thereof) for autonomy, competence, and/or relatedness in your narratives?
- Share your findings with the group

