

## What motivates you to do a better job?

As part of the continuing focus on improving leadership agency-wide, the staff of the *DDC Review* asked employees what motivates them. The first round of responses were printed in the Spring 2006 issue. The common theme was that each employee is different, and good supervisors learn how to motivate individual employees to unlock their potential.

If you would like to submit a response to our question, please use the DDC Review Feedback form at [www.ddc.dla.mil/Review/feedback.asp](http://www.ddc.dla.mil/Review/feedback.asp). Responses will be posted to *DLA Today & Tomorrow*. Anonymous responses are accepted.

It is the mission that motivates me to do a better job and knowing that, no matter how big or how small my contribution



is, I am helping our country to fight the war on terror. I am also motivated to help the victims of natural disasters.

*Jose Bermudez, DDPH*

The motivation to do a better job comes from personal pride and constant efforts at self improvement with the hope of succeeding in accomplishing a better job. My motivation is to support the Warfighter so that he or she can accomplish their mission. I will always be trying to do a better job so that others can succeed at their jobs.



*Gilbert Padilla, DDPH*

Speaking from experience as a military veteran, just being able to support our Warfighters is a motivator in itself.

*Ernie White, DDJC*

## What motivates employees to succeed?

*By John Destalo, DDC Transformation Office*

It depends. There are a great number of human motivation theories to choose from and they all appear to be right to some extent.

A basic definition of motivation is that which gives purpose and direction to behavior, therefore anything from a time-off award to a more all-encompassing organizational mission can give purpose or direction to our behavior.

This article on motivation is the first in what will be a series of articles discussing issues related to culture/climate and the principles of Lean.

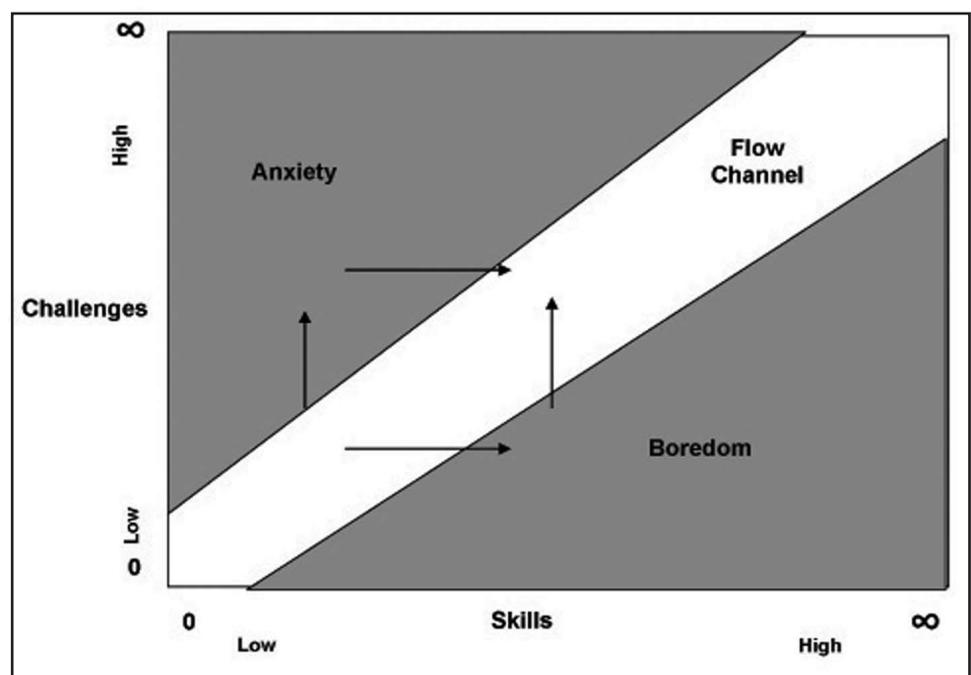
Flow is an important concept within the context of Lean and usually refers to the flow of value to the customer, such as the flow of material through the distribution process to the Warfighter.

But utilizing the theories of famed psychologist and writer Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, flow can also relate to human motivation. In his book, *Flow: The Psychology of*

Optimal Experience, he extensively researched one of the internal drivers that motivate people, happiness, or as he puts it, “optimal experiences.” From his research he determined that the following traits described people’s experiences when they felt most positive:

- They are performing tasks they have a chance of completing
- They are able to concentrate on what they are doing
- The task has clear goals and immediate feedback
- They act with a deep and effortless involvement that removes from awareness the worries and frustrations of everyday life
- They feel they are able to exercise control over their actions
- Their sense of the duration of time is altered

He describes the people having these optimal experiences as being



*Flow as depicted in Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (Harper & Row, 1990)*

Everyone in the workforce deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. It really is amazing what can be accomplished in this type environment.



Steve Frey, DDSP

What motivates me to do a better job is knowing that I am able to support our troops and Warfighters not only outside of my job but as well as inside. Being able to get them the supplies they need makes me work harder at my job. I take pride in my job on knowing what I know and learning new things all the time. I also like having the opportunity to progress in my job with promotions. The interaction with my co-workers is a very important part of me wanting to do better in my job.

The new Lean processes are also motivators to doing better in my job. I want to know how things work as well as being part of the crew making it work. The challenges that I encounter in my job and the process to overcome them motivates me, as well. I like knowing that in all phases of the processes on my job, I am a vital part.

Cathy Bazan, DDJC

What motivates me to do a better job is the desire to be the best witness for my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Realizing the importance of the tasks I have been given is reflected in my motivation to do my best. I am also motivated by others excellent work ethic which is prevalent here at DDOO.



Linda Bowers, DDOO

Speaking from experience as a military veteran, just being able to support our Warfighters is a motivator in itself.

Ernie White, DDJC

in a “flow channel.” The way people enter and remain in this channel is by having an appropriate balance between challenges they face and possessing the skills to meet these challenges.

Csikszentmihalyi describes people who are challenged but do not have the skills to meet the challenges experiencing anxiety while people who have high skills but are not challenged as experiencing boredom. The movement up the channel occurs by increasing both our challenges and our skills to meet those challenges. The chart describes this flow graphically.

So what does this mean for motivation in a workplace? Can leaders and managers create an organizational context that allows people to work in a flow channel?

How can managers increase an employee’s chances of having optimal work experiences?

Some recommendations for leaders and managers are:

- Ensure your employees are always challenged and have the skills to meet those challenges.
- Provide clear goals
- Provide clear expectations
- Provide immediate feedback on performance
- Remove distractions from the environment so that employees can concentrate— this includes removing tasks that are no longer necessary

What motivates you? Tell us at [www.ddc.dla.mil/Review/feedback.asp](http://www.ddc.dla.mil/Review/feedback.asp)



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