

What Drives You to Improve?

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Last week, I wrote about increasing your awareness through paradigm shifts and feedback. I invite you to use both approaches to expand your understanding of your desire to improve.

For this article, consider “you” to include both you personally and your organization--the individuals under your direct authority, those you most directly influence and serve.

Also, this article simply identifies possible motives. In creating the list, I’ve worked to avoid judgment. I want leaders and organizations to improve, and I realize there are many motives that might drive your desire to improve your personal and organizational values, behaviors, culture, and service to others. My objective is to strengthen and encourage you, to help you build on what is naturally there.

Unrealized potential. You know you have more in you than you’ve manifested to date.

Competitiveness. By your nature, you want to be better than the next person (or organization).

Glory. You want people to admire and talk about your accomplishments. You want recognition!

Ambition. You have aspirations that can only be satisfied by enhanced achievements.

Perfectionism. If it’s worth doing, it’s worth doing flawlessly!

A rewarding vision. Something in the future is pulling you; something keeps you going even when the obstacles seem overwhelming.

Pride. Your ego wants more and better. Only the best will do!

Creativity. You know there has to be a better way, and you intend to find it!

“Not good enough.” When you were younger, you felt this, maybe from your parents and certainly from your friends. Today, you keep trying.

You want better for your kids. A big motivator three generations ago, maybe not so big today.

You care. You want good things for your customers and your employees.

The “status quo” must go. You’re easily bored. You hate maintaining. You prefer innovation.

Benchmarking. Others out there are known to be better, and you want to at least match them.

You are blessed. You realize that your organizing and planning abilities, interpersonal savvy, business acumen, and every other gift exists in you for only one reason--for you to serve.

You love the Lord, your God. You do your work as unto the Lord (Colossians 3:23), focusing all your heart, mind, soul, and strength on Him.

Okay, so maybe some of these motives overlap. I never said they were mutually exclusive. Further, I’m sure the list is not exhaustive. Perhaps the incentive that drives you isn’t listed.

I encourage you, as a leader, to spend some time reflecting. Write all of the feelings and desires you have that relate to “improvement.” Naming them will bring them to life!

If you influence and have authority over others, share your insights with them. Better yet, ask them to do their own reflection and share their thoughts with you. As they offer their perspectives, nurture their inspirations. Do all you can to support their desire to grow, personally and organizationally.

If I’ve not successfully identified your passion for improvement, would you send me a note or call me? If you’ve seen a similar listing in a business or psychology book, please bring it to my attention. Let’s make this a more inclusive inventory!

Dennis Hooper helps leaders find their inspiration and move their organizations toward genuine excellence. If you have additions to this list of motives for improvement, contact Dennis at dhooper2@juno.com or (478)-988-0237.