Effects of Positive and Negative Feedback on Student’s Motivation

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Black and White

• Positive Feedback increases motivation

• Negative Feedback decreases motivation
Shades of Gray

- Feedback on negative issues can be done in a positive way
- Feedback on positive issues can sometimes decrease motivation too
- All depends on how it's given
Two Main Types of Motivation

• Intrinsic Motivation – doing an activity for its inherent satisfaction rather than for a consequence

• Extrinsic Motivation – doing an activity to attain a separable outcome (outside reasons)

• We want to develop intrinsic motivation in our students so they are able to make changes, continue on with difficult tasks, and act appropriately when no one else is around
Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic

• Intrinsic motivation will occur only for activities that hold intrinsic interest for a student and not everything can be intrinsic

• Variations in extrinsic motivation:
  - Student who does something for fear of getting in trouble vs. student who does something because it will help their career or help them match into a specialty
  - Both extrinsic but the second student has personal endorsement and a feeling of choice (autonomy).
Using Feedback to Increase Motivation

- Feelings of competence, sense of autonomy and locus of control

- Feedback needs to be factual, contextual, constructive, and positive
Using Feedback to Increase Motivation

• If students feel the feedback is useful, it can have a positive effect on changes in achievement and interest
• It encourages students to return to or continue with an activity they may have struggled with
• “Yes, that’s right, you formulated that well, but you have to rethink the structure”
How to give Feedback to Increase Motivation

• Show that you are interested in their success

• Competence - frame the feedback as common mistakes made by my most medical students; stick to the facts and behaviors
  - Not ‘you were unprofessional’ but ‘when you were late, it slowed us all down, which made you seem unprofessional’
How to give Feedback to Increase Motivation

- **Autonomy** – ask them what they think they did well and what they need to work on before you start giving feedback; ask what’s going on with them
  - ‘why do you think you were late? Is something going on?’
How to give Feedback to Increase Motivation

• **Locus of Control** – have them help you develop a specific plan for improving areas of concern and focus on action items that are specific and measurable
- Not ‘be more professional’ but ‘arrive on time for all rounds"
How to give Feedback to Increase Motivation

• Giving feedback to students who are not interested in certain behaviors/requirements can be difficult but is doable

• Focus on behaviors that are valued by significant others to whom they feel (or would like to feel) connected
  - Creates a sense of belongingness/connectedness
  - Helps them understand the reason behind requirements
How to give Feedback to Increase Motivation

- Focus on behaviors that improve perceived competence
  - Relevant skills to succeed at the task/activity
  - Offer optimal challenges and relevant feedback
Final Thoughts

- Several studies show that positive performance feedback enhances intrinsic motivation and negative performance feedback diminishes it.
- Extrinsic rewards can undermine intrinsic motivation.
- But, feedback focused on perceived competence, autonomy, and locus of control can negate the negative effects and increase motivation.
Questions?

References:


