**Master Your Motivation Press Kit**

**Book Summary**

If you want to accomplish what's important to you, discipline and willpower won't get you where you need to go. In this iconoclastic new book, Susan Fowler reveals compelling insights and actions to help you master and maintain your motivation. 

Motivation is at the heart of everything you do and everything you want to do but don't. Unfortunately, the ways we typically motivate ourselves don't work. Relying on sheer determination eventually becomes exhausting—it's not sustainable.

Susan Fowler says motivation is energy, and what matters is the quality, not the quantity. Traditional "motivators" such as fear, guilt, or the promise of a reward provide low-quality, short-term energy. Drawing on the latest empirical research, she proves that high-quality, optimal motivation is a skill that you can learn and apply.

Science tells us that satisfying three basic needs—for choice, connection, and competence—is essential to optimal motivation. You need to feel like you've picked your path, not that you're being driven down it. Your goal should be linked to people or a purpose meaningful to you. And you want to continually learn and grow.

Through practical exercises and eye-opening stories, Fowler shows you how to identify and shift the quality of your motivation. The skill to master your motivation is important—it may be your greatest opportunity to evolve, grow in wisdom, and be the light the world so desperately needs.

**About the Author:**

[Susan Fowler](https://susanfowler.com/) has shared her message on optimal motivation, self leadership, and thriving together in all 50 states and over 40 countries. She teaches at the University of San Diego’s Masters of Science in Executive Leadership and is also coauthor of the bestselling [*Self Leadership and The One Minute Manager*](https://www.amazon.com/Self-Leadership-Minute-Manager-Effectiveness/dp/0060799129) with Ken Blanchard.

In her bestselling book, [*Why Motivating People Doesn’t Work . . . and What Does*](https://www.amazon.com/Motivating-People-Doesnt-Work-What/dp/1626569452), [Susan Fowler](https://susanfowler.com/) implored leaders to stop trying to motivate people because it just doesn’t work and aggravates everyone involved. Thanks to this bestseller, translated in over a dozen foreign languages, thousands of managers worldwide have learned how to activate their staff members’ optimal motivation.

Now, with her latest book, [*Master Your Motivation: Three Scientific Truths for Achieving Your Goals*](https://www.amazon.com/Master-Your-Motivation-Scientific-Achieving/dp/1523098627), Susan is on a mission to help individuals master their own motivation, achieve their goals, and flourish as they succeed.

Widely known as one of the foremost experts on motivation and personal empowerment, Susan gained her knowledge through extensive experience in business, advertising, sales, production, marketing, executive and life-style coaching, and leadership training in all fifty states and forty foreign countries with clients as diverse as AARP, Dow, Eli Lilly, Google, and the National Basketball Association. Susan is also the creator and lead developer of Self Leadership, the best-in-class self-leadership and personal empowerment program.

Susan lives with her husband, Drea Zigarmi, in San Diego, where she is a senior consulting partner for The Ken Blanchard Companies, a leadership consultant and motivation coach, and a professor in the Masters of Science in Executive Leadership program at the University of San Diego. Susan is a rotating board member for Angel Faces, a non-profit organization serving adolescent girls with severe burn trauma and disfigurements. For more info, visit [www.susanfowler.com](http://www.susanfowler.com).

**Relevant Stats**

Most of us don’t understand motivation and how it affects the quality of our well-being day in and day out. Need proof? Consider these facts:

* The typical dieter makes 4 attempts per year to try and lose weight.
* Virtually all large companies offer employees contests, programs, and incentives to promote healthy behavioral change. Virtually none of the employees experience long-term changes.
* 80% of people who join a gym in January quit within five months.
* 50% of organizations in the U.S. collectively invest over $750 million annually to improve engagement in the workplace. Despite this money spent, less than 32% of employees claim to be engaged.

What keeps us from doing what we say we want to do? Fatal distractions. Fatal distractions are junk food motivators such as incentives, rewards, and prizes. Fatal distractions are low-quality motivation techniques that we succumb to such as pressure, threats, and fear. Optimal motivation only comes when our 3 Cs are satisfied.

**Book Background**

It’s time we awakened to this truth: People don’t want to be bored or disengaged. People appreciate meaningful challenges. People want to contribute, feel fulfilled, and grow and learn every day. No matter what our situation—or age—our basic nature is the desire to thrive. And now, thanks to the most groundbreaking research in the history of motivation, we know how to promote thriving. It’s not money, power, or status. Not promotions, perks, or raises. Not pressure, tension, or fear. The source of our thriving is optimal motivation based on satisfying three basic psychological needs for choice, connection, and competence. These three needs are as essential to our human thriving as the “big three biological needs” for water, food, and sex. When psychologicalneeds are eroded, we languish. When satisfied, we flourish. *Master Your Motivation* gives readers the tools to create choice, connection, and competence so they can thrive as they attain their highest aspirations.

**Author Q and A**

**Q. You wanted to write this book several years ago but didn’t. Why not?**

A. *Master Your Motivation* is a book I’ve always wanted to write and set out to do so in 2014. I wanted to write a book for every person, from and for their individual perspective. However, my publisher suggested I take a different approach with *Why Motivating People Doesn’t Work… and What Does,* aimed at business and organizational leaders. I began writing *Why Motivating People* with an imposed motivational outlook. You learn more about this outlook in my book, but it means I felt obligated and pressured to write a different book than I’d imagined. It didn’t take me long to realize I needed to practice what I teach and shift my motivation. I’m glad I did! *Why Motivating People* is a bestseller with over a dozen foreign rights sold. More importantly, I’ve heard how the book has positively influenced how leaders, teachers, coaches, and parents approach motivation. And, I’ve had years to travel the world and gain more clarity on how individuals can apply the skill of motivation. Now my publisher and I feel the time is right for *Master Your Motivation*.

**Q. What do you hope to accomplish with this book?**

**A.** I hope to arm people with a research-based model and pragmatic, field-tested tools for taking advantage of cutting-edge motivation science. This book teaches that not all motivation is created equal. There’s a spectrum of motivation with optimal on one side and suboptimal on the other. Optimal motivation comes from high-quality reasons based on values, purpose, and pure enjoyment and suboptimal motivation comes from lower-quality reasons like rewards, fear, and pressure. Too often, workplaces, schools, and home environments set us up for suboptimal motivation. I am asking the reader to forget what they’ve believed about motivation and think of it in a different way. I am asking them to consider that we all are motivated, we just have different kinds of motivation, and to be optimally motivated you need to satisfy three basic needs—and to do this takes practice.

**Q. So, what are these three basic needs?**

**A.** These three basic needs, or the 3 Cs, are the three scientific truths I reveal in my book.

*First scientific truth: you need to create Choice*. You have an innate need to perceive you have choices, recognize and feel you have options within boundaries, and have a sense of control over what is happening at any time: “I am the source of my behavior.” When you don’t create choice, your energy is diminished, and you are less likely to achieve your goals.

*Second scientific truth: you need to create Connection.* You have an innate need to feel a sense of belonging and genuine connection to others without concerns about ulterior motives, pursue goals aligned to meaningful values and a noble purpose, and contribute to something greater than yourself. When you don’t create connection, your energy is compromised, and even if you achieve your goals, you are less likely to find the experience meaningful or worth repeating.

*Third scientific truth: you need to create Competence*. You have an innate need to feel effective at managing everyday situations, demonstrate skill over time, and feel a sense of growth and learning every day. When you don’t create competence, your energy is blocked, and your frustration at being unable to meet challenges or make progress puts achieving long-term goals at risk.

Create choice, connection, and competence to master your motivation and thrive.

**Q. If I am sub-optimally motivated, can I change?**

**A.** Yes! You can create choice, connection, and competence—and experience optimal and sustainable motivation. If you are stuck on a goal such as completing expense reports on time, working out regularly, or sticking to a diet, you can shift the quality of your motivation by asking strategic questions.

*To create choice:* What choices have I made that I’m glad I made? What choices do I have?

*To create connection*: What do I find meaningful about my goal? How does my goal align with my values and purpose?

*To create competence*: What skills can I bring to this goal? What might I learn by pursuing my goal?

In *Master Your Motivation,* I share lots of real-life examples of how people used these questions to shift their motivation and flourish. I share how I was even able to do it around my extreme displeasure of waiting in the TSA line at the airport.

**Q. But are some people just lazy?**

**A.** No! It is our human nature to thrive. Being bored or disengaged isn’t thriving. Being lazy isn’t thriving. Resenting hard work isn’t thriving. The truth is, no one wants to be bored, disengaged, or lazy. At our core, we don’t resent hard work. We welcome productive and meaningful work, even when it’s hard. We appreciate meaningful challenges. We want to contribute, feel fulfilled, and grow and learn every day. We long to thrive. And now, thanks to the research featured in my book, we know that thriving doesn’t depend on money, power, or status. It doesn’t come from promotions, perks, or pressure. Thriving requires Choice, Connection, and Competence. Motivation is the energy to act. Choice, connection, and competence generate the high-quality motivation (energy) you need to thrive.

**Other suggested questions**

1. You say someone cannot “lack” motivation—and that we are always motivated. What do you mean by that?
2. What are the types of motivation on the motivation spectrum?
3. What are the biggest misconceptions people have about motivation?
4. Why are discipline and willpower red flags when it comes to trying to motivate yourself to do something?
5. What are mistakes people make when trying to motivate themselves or others?
6. What are the top distractions from being motivated to achieve a goal?
7. You talk about “shifting” to improve your quality of motivation. How does that work?
8. What can someone do if they feel like others are hindering their motivation?
9. Why do you call motivation “energy”?
10. What are exercises someone can do daily to master their motivation?

**Previous Media Appearances**

[SmartBrief column](https://www.smartbrief.com/author/susan-fowler)

[Huffington Post](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/susan-fowler/eating-my-words-on-praise_b_10409322.html)

[Fast Company](https://www.fastcompany.com/3039776/why-the-way-we-motivate-people-and-ourselves-matters)

[Forbes](https://www.forbes.com/sites/chriscancialosi/2015/03/16/dont-let-your-passion-and-values-erode-employee-motivation/#5c41a3d16f6e)

[Harvard Business Review](https://hbr.org/2014/11/what-maslows-hierarchy-wont-tell-you-about-motivation)

[Inc.com](http://www.inc.com/christina-desmarais/why-motivating-employees-will-never-work.html)

[LeadX podcast interview](https://leadx.org/leadership-podcast/086-fowler/)

[RADIO W.O.R.K.S. WORLD LIVE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=33qwN_H5Mdw)

[Blanchard Companies](https://resources.kenblanchard.com/featured-videos/self-leadership-an-interview-with-susan-fowler)

**Book Chapter Names**

Foreword by John Paul Richard with Dr. Jacques Forest

Introduction — Why Motivation Science Matters

Part One — The Truth about Motivation

1 Three Scientific Truths

2 Motivation Isn’t What You Think

3 Create Choice

4 Create Connection

5 Create Competence

Part Two — Motivation Is a Skill

6 Identify Your Outlook

7 Shift Your Outlook

8 Reflect on Your Outlook

Part Three — What’s Stopping You?

9 I Can’t Shift

10 Beware Fatal Distractions

11 Work Hazards

12 Can People Change?

Afterword by Ken Blanchard

Resources

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About the Author

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