Motivation is a need or desire that energizes and directs behavior. The early view that instincts control behavior has been replaced by evolutionary theory, which searches for the adaptive functions of behavior. Drive-reduction theory maintains that physiological needs create psychological drives that seek to restore internal stability, or homeostasis. In addition, some motivated behaviors increase arousal, and we are pulled by external incentives. According to Maslow, some motives are more compelling than others.

Hunger seems to originate from changes in glucose and insulin levels that are monitored by the hypothalamus, as well as changes in the levels of leptin, orexin, and PYY. To control weight, the body also adjusts its basal metabolic rate. Body chemistry and environmental factors together influence our taste preferences. Psychological influences on eating behavior are most evident in those who are motivated to be abnormally thin.

Like hunger, sexual motivation depends on the interplay of internal and external stimuli. In nonhuman animals, hormones help stimulate sexual activity. In humans, they influence sexual behavior more loosely. One’s sexual orientation seems neither willfully chosen nor willfully changed; new research links sexual orientation to biological factors.

The need to belong is a major influence in motivating human behavior. Social bonds boosted our ancestors’ survival rates. We experience our need to belong when feeling the gloom of loneliness or joy of love, and when seeking social acceptance.

Work meets several human needs. The growing field of industrial-organizational psychology attempts to match people to work, enhance employee satisfaction and productivity, and explore strategies for effective workplace management.

People who excel are often self-disciplined individuals with strong achievement motivation. Effective leaders build on people’s strengths, work with them to set specific and challenging goals, and adapt their leadership style to the situation.
Perspectives on Motivation

1. **Define motivation as psychologists use the term today, and name four perspectives for studying motivated behavior.**

   A **motivation** is a need or desire that serves to energize behavior and to direct it toward a goal. The perspectives useful for studying motivated behavior include instinct theory (now replaced by evolutionary theory); drive-reduction theory, which emphasizes the interaction between internal pushes and external pulls; arousal theory, which highlights the urge for an optimal level of stimulation; and Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs which describes how some motives are, if unsatisfied, more basic and compelling than others.

2. **Discuss the similarities and differences between instinct theory and the evolutionary perspective.**

   Under Darwin’s influence, early theorists viewed behavior as being controlled by **instincts**, complex behaviors that are rigidly patterned throughout a species and are unlearned. When it became clear that people were naming, not explaining, various behaviors by calling them instincts, this approach fell into disfavor. The idea that genes predispose species-typical behavior is still influential in evolutionary psychology. This perspective searches for the adaptive functions of behavior.

3. **Explain how drive-reduction theory views human motivation.**

   **Drive-reduction theory** proposes that most physiological needs create aroused psychological states that drive us to reduce or satisfy those needs. The aim of drive reduction is internal stability, or **homeostasis**. Furthermore, we are not only pushed by internal drives but we are also pulled by external **incentives**. When there is both a need (hunger) and an incentive (smell of baking bread), we feel strongly driven.

4. **Discuss the contribution of arousal theory to the study of motivation.**

   Rather than reducing a physiological need or minimizing tension, some motivated behaviors increase arousal. Curiosity-driven behaviors, for example, suggest that too little or too much stimulation can motivate people to seek an optimum level of arousal.

5. **Describe Maslow’s hierarchy of motives.**

   Maslow’s **hierarchy of needs** expresses the idea that, until satisfied, some motives are more compelling than others. At the base of the hierarchy are our physiological needs, such as for food, water, and shelter. Only if these are met are we prompted to meet our need for safety, and then to meet the uniquely human needs to give and receive love, to belong and be accepted, and to enjoy self-esteem. Beyond this, said Maslow, lies the highest of human needs: to actualize one’s full potential.

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**Hunger**

6. **Describe the physiological determinants of hunger.**

   Although the stomach’s pangs contribute to hunger, variations in body chemistry are more important. Increases in the hormone **insulin** diminish **blood glucose**, partly by converting it to body fat.
We do not consciously feel this change in blood chemistry. Rather, our body’s internal state is monitored by the hypothalamus, which regulates the body’s weight as it influences our feelings of hunger and satiety. Other hormones monitored by the hypothalamus include ghrelin (which is secreted by an empty stomach), leptin (secreted by fat cells), and PYY (a digestive tract hormone). Orexin is a hunger-triggering hormone secreted by the hypothalamus. Activity in the lateral hypothalamus (sides of the hypothalamus) brings on hunger; activity in the ventromedial hypothalamus (the lower mid-hypothalamus) depresses hunger. Researchers have abandoned the idea that the body has a precise set point—a biologically fixed tendency to maintain an optimum weight—preferring the term settling point to indicate an environmentally and biologically influenced level at which weight settles in response to caloric input and expenditure. Human bodies regulate weight through the control of food intake, energy output, and basal metabolic rate—the body’s resting rate of energy expenditure.

7. Discuss psychological and cultural influences on hunger.

Part of knowing when to eat is our memory of our last meal. As time passes, we anticipate eating again and feel hungry.

Although some taste preferences are genetic, conditioning and culture also affect taste. For example, Bedouins enjoy eating the eye of a camel, which most North Americans would find repulsive. Most North Americans also shun dog, rat, and horse meat, all of which are prized elsewhere. With repeated exposure, our appreciation for a new taste typically increases, and exposure to one set of novel foods increases willingness to try another. Some of our taste preferences, such as the avoidance of foods that have made us ill, have survival value.

8. Explain how the eating disorders anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa demonstrate the influence of psychological forces on physiologically motivated behavior.

**Anorexia nervosa** is an eating disorder in which a normal-weight person (usually an adolescent female) diets to become significantly (15 percent or more) underweight, yet feels fat and is obsessed with losing weight.

**Bulimia nervosa** is an eating disorder characterized by private, binge-purge episodes of overeating, usually of high-caloric foods, followed by vomiting, laxative use, fasting, or excessive exercise.

In both disorders, challenging family settings and weight-obsessed societal pressures overwhelm the homeostatic drive to maintain a balanced internal state. Low self-esteem and negative emotions that interact with stressful life experiences are additional contributing factors. Twin studies suggest that eating disorders may also have a genetic component.

**Sexual Motivation**

- Lectures: Introducing Sexual Motivation; Cultural Differences in Sexuality; Gender Differences in Sex Drive; Causes of Sexual Disorders; Virginity Pledges; Bisexuality; A Gay Gene?; Fear of Intimacy Scale
- Exercises: The Sexual Opinion Survey; The Complexity of Sexual Orientation; Attitudes toward Homosexual Persons; Hendrik Sexual Attitude Scale
- Transparencies: 127 Levels of Analysis for Sexual Motivation; 128 Biological Correlates of Sexual Orientation

9. Describe the human sexual response cycle, and discuss some causes of sexual disorders.

The human sexual response cycle normally follows a pattern of excitement, plateau, orgasm (which seems to involve similar feelings and brain activity in males and females), and resolution, followed in males by a refractory period, during which renewed arousal and orgasm are not possible.
Sexual disorders are problems that consistently impair sexual functioning. Premature ejaculation and female orgasmic disorder are being successfully treated by new methods that assume that people learn and can modify their sexual responses.

10. Discuss the impact of hormones on sexual motivation and behavior.

The sex hormones direct the physical development of male and female sex characteristics and, especially in nonhuman animals, activate sexual behavior. Although testosterone and estrogen are present in both sexes, males have a higher level of testosterone and females a higher level of estrogen.

In humans, the hormones influence sexual behaviors more loosely, especially once sufficient hormone levels are present. In later life, as sex hormones decline, the frequency of sexual fantasies and intercourse also declines.

11. Describe the role of external stimuli and fantasies in sexual motivation and behavior.

External stimuli, such as sexually explicit materials, can trigger arousal in both men and women, although the activated brain areas differ somewhat. Sexually coercive material tends to increase viewers’ acceptance of rape and violence toward women. Images of sexually attractive men and women may lead people to devalue their own partners and relationships. Our imaginations also influence sexual motivation. For example, in nearly all men and some 40 percent of women, dreams sometimes do contain sexual imagery that leads to orgasm.

Wide-awake people become sexually aroused both by memories of prior sexual activities and by fantasies. About 95 percent of both men and women say they have had sexual fantasies. Fantasizing about sex does not indicate a sexual problem or dissatisfaction. If anything, sexually active people have more sexual fantasies.

12. Discuss some of the forces that influence teen pregnancy and teen attitudes toward contraception.

The increase in premarital sexual activity among American teenagers has led to an increase in the adolescent pregnancy rate. Although contraceptives are a sure strategy for preventing pregnancy, only one-third of sexually active male teens use condoms consistently. Reasons for this failure include ignorance of which birth control methods will protect them and a tendency to overestimate the sexual activity of their friends. Guilt related to sexual activity sometimes results in lack of planned birth control. When passion overwhelms intentions, the result may be conception. Often there is minimal communication about birth control, as many teenagers are uncomfortable discussing contraception with either parents or partners. Sexually active teens also tend to use alcohol, which can break down normal restraints. Finally, television and movies foster sexual norms of unprotected promiscuity.


Unprotected sex has also led to increased rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) such as the human papilloma virus and AIDS. Teenage girls, because of their less mature biological development and lower levels of protective antibodies, seem especially vulnerable to STIs. Attempts to protect teens through comprehensive sex-education programs include a greater emphasis on teen abstinence.

Teens with high rather than average intelligence more often delay sex. Religiosity, father presence, and participation in service learning programs are also predictors of sexual restraint.

14. Summarize current views on the number of people whose sexual orientation is homosexual, and discuss the research on environmental and biological influences on sexual orientation.

Sexual orientation is our enduring sexual attraction toward members of either our own sex (homosexual) or the other sex (heterosexual). Studies in both Europe and the United States suggest that about 3 or 4 percent of men and 1 or 2 percent of women are exclusively homosexual. Estimates derived from the sex of unmarried partners reported in the 2000 U.S. Census suggest
that 2.5 percent of the population is gay or lesbian. Such studies also tell us that sexual orientation is enduring.

Although we are still unsure why one person becomes homosexual and another heterosexual, it is beginning to look as though biological factors are involved. No links have been found between homosexuality and a child's relationships with parents, father-absent homes, fear or hatred of people of the other gender, childhood sexual experience, peer relationships, or dating experiences. On the other hand, biological influences are evident in studies of same-sex relations in several hundred species, straight-gay differences in body and brain characteristics, genetic studies of family members and twins, and the effect of exposure to certain hormones during critical periods of prenatal development.

15. Discuss the place of values in sex research.

Although research on sexual motivation does not attempt to define the personal meaning of sex in our lives, sex research and education are not value-free. Researchers’ values should be stated openly, enabling us to debate them and to reflect on our own values. Sex at its human best is life-uniting and love-renewing.

The Need to Belong

➤ Lecture: Social Ostracism
➤ Exercises: The Need to Affiliate; Measures and Issues Related to the Need to Belong; Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale
➤ Feature Films: March of the Penguins; Cast Away and the Need to Belong; The Mirror Has Two Faces and the Looking-Glass Self
➤ Video: Program 25 of Moving Images: Exploring Psychology Through Film: Social Rejection: The Need to Belong

16. Describe the adaptive nature of social attachments, and identify both healthy and unhealthy consequences of our need to belong.

Social bonds boosted our ancestors’ survival rate. Adults who formed attachments were more likely to come together to reproduce and to stay together to nurture their offspring to maturity. Cooperation in groups also enhanced survival. When relationships form, we often feel joy. Most people mention—before anything else—close relationships as making life meaningful. Even our self-esteem is a gauge of how valued and accepted we feel.

Attachments can keep people in abusive relationships as the fear of being alone may seem worse than the pain of emotional or physical abuse. When something threatens our social ties, negative emotions overwhelm us. When ostracized, people may engage in self-defeating or antisocial behaviors. Finally, social relationships enhance health.

Motivation at Work

➤ Lectures: Flow; Flow in “Good Business”; Graduate and Professional School Interviews; Interviewing for Integrity (see Chapter 13); Organizational Citizenship; Charisma
➤ Feature Film: Mr. Holland’s Opus and Flow
➤ Exercises: A Job, a Career, or a Vocation?; Assessing Flow; Self-Confirming Interviews; The Needs Assessment Questionnaire; Birth Order, Achievement, and Personality; Desire for Control; Achievement and Intrinsic Motivation; The Purpose-in-Life Test; Theory X and Y Orientation Scale; Assessing Leadership Style
➤ Project: Describing Good Leaders
➤ Transparency: 129 The Gallup Workplace Audit
➤ Video: Segment 30 of the Scientific American Frontiers Series, 2nd ed.: The Power of Persuasion

17. Discuss the importance of flow, and identify the three subfields of industrial-organizational psychology.

Work helps satisfy several levels of need identified in Maslow’s hierarchy. Work supports us, connects us to others, and helps define us. When work fully engages our skills, we experience flow.
We are completely involved and have a diminished awareness of self and time. Flow experiences boost our sense of self-esteem, competence, and well-being.

**Industrial-organizational psychology** aims to apply psychology’s principles to the workplace through its primary subfields of personnel psychology, organizational psychology, and human factors psychology. **Personnel psychology** applies the discipline’s methods and principles to selecting and evaluating workers. **Organizational psychology** considers how work environments and management styles influence worker motivation, satisfaction, and productivity. Human factors psychology, discussed in Chapter 6, explores how machines and environments can be optimally designed to fit human abilities and expectations.

18. **Describe how personnel psychologists seek to facilitate employee selection, work placement, and performance appraisal.**

Personnel psychologists aim to identify people’s strengths and match them with specific organizational tasks. They use various tools to assess applicants and decide who is best suited to the job. Unstructured interviews frequently foster illusory overconfidence in one’s ability to predict employee success. **Structured interviews** offer a disciplined method of collecting information. They pinpoint job-relevant strengths and enhance interview reliability and validity. Performance appraisals include checklists, graphic rating scales, and behavior rating scales. Some firms practice **360 degree feedback**, in which everyone rates everyone else. They help managers decide which employees to retain, how to appropriately reward and pay people, and how to better harness their strengths. Job appraisals can also serve to affirm workers’ strengths and motivate needed improvements. Performance appraisal, like other social judgments, is vulnerable to bias and subject to error—for example, **halo error**, **leniency** and **severity errors**, and **recency error**.

19. **Define achievement motivation, and explain why organizations would employ an I/O psychologist to help motivate employees and foster employee satisfaction.**

**Achievement motivation** is the desire for significant accomplishment, for mastering skills or ideals, for control, and for rapidly attaining a high standard. Those who achieve the most are distinguished not so much by natural ability as by hard work and daily discipline.

Organizations turn to I/O psychologists to help motivate employees and foster employee satisfaction because research shows that the most productive and engaged workers are those working in satisfying environments. Engaged workers know what’s expected of them, feel fulfilled in their work, and perceive that they are part of something significant. Worker satisfaction and engagement are associated with lower absenteeism, higher productivity, and greater profits.

20. **Describe some effective management techniques.**

Effective managers harness job-relevant strengths, set goals, and choose an appropriate leadership style. They discern their employees’ natural talents, adjust their work roles to suit those talents, and then give people freedom to do what they do best. They care about how their people feel about their work and reinforce positive behaviors through recognition and reward. To foster productivity, managers work with people to define explicit goals, elicit commitments to implementation plans, and provide feedback on progress.

Some managers excel at **task leadership**—setting standards, organizing work, and focusing attention on goals. They keep a group centered on its mission. Task leaders typically have a directive style, which can work well if they are bright enough to give good orders. Other managers excel at **social leadership**—mediating conflicts and building high-achieving teams. Social leaders often delegate authority and welcome the participation of team members. Leadership style should be appropriate for the people and goals involved. The best leaders exude a **charisma** and inspire their workers; this is referred to as **transformational leadership**. Some research suggests that effective managers exhibit a high degree of both task and social leadership.