

EXPERT GUIDANCE TO GIVE
YOU THE WINNING HAND
TO ACE THE EXAMS

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Students, you need to be motivated, accepting and persevere...

Let's Get Motivated

Students! Are you struggling for motivation at the moment? Having high motivation levels is an important element of getting any task completed. The first thing to realise is that you can achieve any goal by discovering ways to motivate and drive yourself on.

Try to accept other people and the skills that they have, remembering that you have talents that they may not possess. Wanting to be like your peers too much will probably not be that beneficial to you. You are unique, with so many different, amazing qualities and when you find your focus, you will achieve great things too.

The way we converse can sometimes reflect our motivation levels and can also increase them intrinsically, without us even knowing. Highly motivated individuals will use words like 'could', 'will', 'may', 'like to' as opposed to 'must', 'won't', 'can't' and 'need to'. Writing, considering and repeating positive sentences out loud can improve motivation and reset a positive mind-set. Here are some examples of these sentences in the context of your final year.

You should re-write these to reflect your own current situation and mind-set.

- ♣ I want to start preparing myself for the upcoming exams.
- ♣ I need to put a structured timetable in place.
- ♣ I'd like to get into University after school.

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- ♣ I should get my head in the books this weekend.
- ♣ I have to start working hard to reach my short term goals.
- ♣ I can achieve whatever I want through hard work.
- ♣ I will deliver brilliant exam scripts in this year's Leaving Cert.
- ♣ I am going to set up a little study group.
- ♣ I know that I have plenty of ability.
- ♣ I am a force to be reckoned with.

Hearing about the study habits of others on Instagram or Facebook can be a positive thing. Instead of feeling bad about not being highly driven, use it to motivate yourself. The fact that there is someone out there competing against you, who wants your college place, should get you going and make you more determined. Another motivating factor in this final year is its length. The length of sixth year is just nine months, so you only really need to raise your game for that short period.

Do you fancy repeating somewhere while your friends head off to college or employment or how does re-studying everything in a repeat year sound? Not too appealing I would imagine. Again, don't ignore these thoughts; instead use them to inspire yourself. It's a nice idea to list out motivations on the back of your school journal, having a glance at them whenever you find yourself losing interest in your work.

Accept The Things You Cannot Change

Upon reaching the Christmas break, you are roughly half way through the year so you need to ask yourself at that point, "Am I on track to deliver a performance when the big day arrives?" Being on holidays at Christmas normally serves as a re-motivator to keep going or get back on track. Guilt, even though it is not a pleasant emotion, can be a positive force to give you that push forward you need. Ask yourself, "Will I feel better or worse if I do absolutely nothing over the next week?" It is worth remembering that you cannot change the past and it shouldn't limit you either. I always remind my students that you can only shape your future through present actions. The prayer of serenity comes to mind here:

"Accepting the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference"

Having a bad day can unfortunately commence a negative thought process: "I'll drop down to pass or foundation to concentrate on other subjects". You need to guard against one lapse destroying your motivation for a subject. A bad day is not a bad week and this is a long-term project. If things are not progressing well; your grades,

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performance and teachers' feelings are three pointers guiding any decision on a potential movement of level. It is normal to have difficulty getting started sometimes; it's not always going to be perfect. You may be in a bad humour or just not feeling positive on study nights, facing into certain subjects.

Perseverance and doggedness are two key features of success. You will get there if you keep trying and will achieve what you want if you stick at it. In this book, I will give you a myriad of specific pieces of advice. Alongside your subject teacher's expertise, this will hopefully be the key to you unlocking the exam door – the magical recipe for success, the winning hand, the full house. At a minimum; you will have a solid plan you can work to, be more informed about studying efficiently, be more organised, and most importantly, be poised to deliver the best quality exam script you can. To be successful in any realm of life-a good plan is necessary.

...Extract from 'Chapter 1: My Top 40 Smart Ways To Study' of Joe McCormack's book "How to ACE the Leaving Certificate" for ALL subjects.

For more Information on Joe's work, see his website www.acesolutionbooks.com or follow him on Facebook for useful links and Secondary School resources by clicking this link:

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