



What makes staff happy?

What makes them productive?

What makes them stay?

All three of these are related of course, and they're all affected by your staff's opportunity to experience autonomy, mastery, and purpose.

So what do these terms mean and what does each of them look like?

We'll talk about that in this video.

As we do you might find yourself asking well, which one is most important?

This is one of those places where it's going to depend on your staff.

All of them are likely going to need some level of each of these but in differing degrees.

For some, autonomy might be more important than anything else, but that doesn't mean they don't care about mastery or purpose.

For another staff, mastery might be the end goal, but that necessarily includes some level of autonomy and purpose.

Your role as team leader is to figure out what your staff respond to.

It's very hard to motivate someone else to do something.

It's much easier to try and understand what already motivates them and how to tap into that.

As you get to know your staff you get to know what autonomy looks like for them and what it means to them. What mastery looks like to them and what it means to them. What purpose looks like to them and what it means to them.

Let's start with autonomy.

Sometimes this word can elicit images of being alone.

In the work sense, it may be sitting in an office by themselves working on something by themselves. This can be a type of autonomy. It can refer to physical space. But it also means some space to learn and grow instead of expecting them to do everything immediately when they start.

It's far more effective to give them space to learn and observe and get feedback and coaching and grow along the way.



Autonomy also refers to freedom, to have some freedom and autonomy to explore areas that your staff are interested in, exploring and trying new things, and experiencing new things as a staff member.

Autonomy also includes trust.

You can think of it in the sort of opposite way that we think of micromanaging where everybody is so fearful of being a micromanager and every staff is quick to say they don't want to be micromanaged.

So autonomy in the sense that you trust your staff to do what they are expected to do.

We'll talk about Daniel Pink a lot throughout this video and in other videos because he is a preeminent voice when it comes to motivation and what makes people satisfied and motivated.

He talks about these four types of autonomy and how they can show up in the workplace. He labels each of the words and they all start with the letter T, so it's a little bit easier for you to remember.

He starts with time.

What type of autonomy do your staff have over their time both in their working hours and their flex time?

What are they doing with their time and when they're in the workplace?

Also tasks- how much freedom and autonomy do they have when it comes to what tasks they're doing and what tasks they have the opportunity to do?

Who do they get to work with?

Do they have any voice or choice (as we say in the youth development field) over different team members they work with and in what capacity?

And technique- can they do the work in the way in which they want to do it?

Do they have autonomy in the process as well as in the outcome?

When it comes to mastery and growth, this refers to the feeling that we are in a position to have mastery or a very high level of performance in the work that we're doing.

Staff are motivated by doing their work well.

Everybody wants to feel successful and they want to feel like they're doing their work well.



Daniel Pink refers to this as mastery. Sometimes you'll see this referred to as growth. Pretty similar concept.

When you're thinking about mastery and growth and what that might look like for your team, think about it both in terms of how high and how wide.

Some staff are going to be interested in moving up. That's the height.

They want to learn how to become a leader and maybe a director and eventually an executive director or whatever their path may be.

Other staff aren't really going to have any interest in this, but they are really interested in growing wide and deep.

They want to get really, really good at what they're currently doing.

And this word freedom that's going to pop up throughout this video but also throughout your staff's journey- adults like to have freedom like kids do over their own growth, over their own work and career and decisions and goals.

How do your staff have some freedom into what types of opportunities they can pursue for their own growth and mastery?

How are you balancing what staff want in terms of where they want to grow and what you need from them as the team leader?

When you think of mastery and growth you can think of it in the areas of quantity. How much opportunity do your staff have to grow? What is the quality of that quantity?

We know that lots of opportunities are great, but if they're not high quality opportunities, then they're not so great.

How are you ensuring that the support they're getting is high quality?

How much choice and voice do they get into their own growth opportunities and finally how much opportunity do they have to then put into practice the level of mastery and growth that they've achieved?

Finally, purpose.

This goes back to our why.

Starting with why.

Working with why.



Leading with why.

Ending with why.

What is the purpose?

What is their personal purpose?

What are they trying to develop for themselves in their own life?

What are their professional goals?

What is their professional why?

What is their mission as it relates to your organizational mission but also their own mission?

What are they trying to do?

What is their purpose and very importantly, how are you connecting, articulating, verbalizing that what they do ties back to the mission and purpose of what your organization does?

We don't always do this well, and we lose staff because of it, particularly our lower level staff that might not have a lot of connection with the higher organization or the higher ups in the organization.

When they're doing some dirty work, so to speak, sometimes literally they might not really understand how it all contributes to the greater purpose or the mission of the work that you're doing.

Remember to always articulate why you're asking staff to do what you're asking them to do.

Now when it comes to the purpose that people have, it tends to fall into one of these four areas in most cases.

We have some level of all four but people tend to be most driven by one of these four, so it would be interesting to find out from each of your staff which one they're most motivated by.

What about you?

Which one are you most motivated by?

Is it money and status?



Is it the mission at hand?

Is it the relationships you're building along the way?

Is it the creativity and the ability for you to try out new things and learn new things and think outside of that proverbial box?

And always what do they need from you and all of those areas and whatever quantities they need them?

What do they need from you and how can you provide it?

So, something for you to think about is, how can you ensure that your staff are getting the autonomy, mastery, and purpose that they need?