

## Bobcat Breakthroughs

### Internal vs. External Motivation

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Sometimes we complete tasks because we want to do them; this is internal motivation. At other times, we complete tasks because someone else wants us to do them or offers us a reward for completing the task; this is external motivation. Recognizing the difference between these two types of tasks will help you understand your motivation.

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#### Internal Motivation

“Internal motivation” means that the drive to accomplish your goals comes from within you. It is determined by your own values and dreams. With internal motivation, it is much easier to stay interested in your classes and to be successful. Trying to find some internal value in your classes and assignments can improve your overall motivation.

#### Sample goals that are internally motivated:

1. I will go to class every day this semester so that I can learn as much as possible.
  2. I will do my absolute best in my astronomy class. I'd really like to teach my little brother about the stars and planets!
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#### External Motivation

“External motivation” means that your drive to accomplish your goals come from a source outside yourself.

#### Sample goals that are externally motivated:

1. I will earn a 3.0 GPA so my parents will buy me a car.
2. I'll try to get off academic probation because my friends all have high grades. I really want to impress them with my GPA.

It's okay to have some external motivators, but it's easier to maintain your drive to succeed when they're *paired with* internal motivators.

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## **Your Reasons for Going to College**

It may be that you are attending college because you want to; it is also possible that you are going to college because someone else expects or requires you to do so. Below, list at least three academic tasks you do because you want to do them. Then list at least three tasks you do because someone else wants you do to them or rewards you for completing the task.

### **Three tasks you want to do:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Three tasks you do because someone else wants you to do them:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Suggestions for Making External Motivators Internal**

- Change your mindset: view classes and assignments as opportunities, not just requirements
- Imagine your success: rather than assuming the worst, think of the best possible scenario or outcome. How does that look to you? Is the reward worth the work?
- One step at a time: break down your big goals into smaller goals so that they are not as overwhelming. Small victories are important!
- Remember your why: who or what is motivating you? When you feel discouraged, think of those motivators and why you are pushing through!