

# WIIFM, the Power of Motivation, and the Principle of Reciprocity

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There are many ways that a professional in the Animal Health industry and Veterinary profession can grow their career and achieve success.

Some of these ways are short term in nature, which means they are not sustainable over long periods of time. Others, meanwhile, are long term, meaning that they **are sustainable**. And since you're probably going to be a member of the workforce for the foreseeable future, opting for a long-term and more sustainable strategy is the better way to go.

The problem, though, is that we live in an “**instant gratification society**.” Unfortunately, we've been trained to want everything we want and to want it now. Even more unfortunately, some of us have been trained to believe that we should always get what we want when we want it.

After more than 20 years working in the employment marketplace as a recruiter and search consultant, I can tell you unequivocally that is NOT how it works. It's never worked that way, and it never will.

However, I can tell you how it does work, and there are three main pieces of the puzzle. Those pieces are **WIIFM**, the **power of motivation**, and the **Principle of Reciprocity**.

### WIIFM

This acronym stands for “**What's In It For Me?**” So it's not an acronym for a statement, but rather an acronym for a question. The mistake that some job seekers and candidates make is that they only think about what's in it for them. When they talk to a hiring manager during a phone screening, they think about what *they want*. When they head into a face-to-face interview, they think primarily about what's in for *them* and not for the organization that is interviewing them.

Instead, these job seekers and candidates should be thinking about the **value** that they could provide to the employer. They should be talking about what is in it for the organization, namely the value they bring to the situation. Consequently, if you're a job seeker or candidate, this is what YOU should be doing. Emphasize what's in it for other people and not for yourself. That's easier said than done, of course, but it's a critical step in the overall process.

### The Power of Motivation

When you really think about it, just about everything in life boils down to motivation. In other words, nothing happens unless someone is motivated to make it happen. Now, there are **two main types** of motivation. There is intrinsic (internal) and there's extrinsic (external). In other words, people are motivated to do something because they want to do it themselves or because they're being influenced by outside forces. In extreme cases, someone could be *forcing* them to do it.

Here's a handy tip: if you know what motivates an individual, then it's easier to predict what that person will say and/or do. Consequently, you should make it a priority to know what motivates those around you, especially those with whom you work. You might have already guessed this is part of the soft skill of **emotional intelligence**, and it is. However, it's also an important skill to use during your job search or while in the hiring process of an organization. You should know the WIIFM of the other people involved in the process, and you should know what motivates them.

### **The Principle of Reciprocity**

I have long been an advocate of The Principle of Reciprocity, namely for **two reasons**. First, it helps to brand a person with integrity, and second, because it works. First of all, let's define what the principle is and what it means. The Principle of Reciprocity means that when someone gives us something, we feel compelled to give them something in return. Conversely, when you first give something to someone else, they will feel compelled to give something to you in return.

Now let me say a word about what this does NOT mean. It does not mean doing something for someone only because you believe that you will receive something in return. It's not a selfish act, nor should your motivation for it be selfish. When you give to someone first, you should be **genuine** in your giving. If you're not, then the other person will probably sense that you're not. The Principle of Reciprocity is not a form of manipulation, and it should not be approached as such.

**Networking** is another of the long-term sustainable ways to grow your career and enjoy more success. And while you network with other people within your profession, you can incorporate all of the elements described in this article. You can invest in your future by investing in other people, and when the time is right, they will invest in you. As you might have already guessed, that investment could take the form of hiring you for an open position.

If you're a professional in the Animal Health industry or Veterinary profession or in any profession for that matter, and you want to grow your career and experience more success, then you should understand WIIFM and the power of motivation and you should also practice the Principle of Reciprocity. While I can understand the desire to focus on yourself, your situation, and your needs, resist that desire and focus on other people instead.

By doing so, you'll set yourself on the path to long-term, sustained success on your chosen path, positioning yourself to reach your full potential and maximize your career in the process.