# Review - The Work Preference Inventory \_ Assessing Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivational Orientations

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## Abstract:

The Work Preference Inventory (WPI) is designed to assess individual differences in intrinsic and extrinsic motivational orientations. Both the college student and the working adult versions aim to capture the major elements of intrinsic motivation (self-determination, competence, task involvement, curiosity, enjoyment, and interest) and extrinsic motivation (concerns with competition, evaluation, recognition, money or other tangible incentives, and constraint by others). The instrument is scored on two primary scales, each subdivided into 2 secondary scales. The WPI has meaningful factor structures, adequate internal consistency, good short-term test-retest reliability, and good longer term stability. Moreover, WPI scores are related in meaningful ways to other questionnaire and behavioral measures of motivation, as well as personality characteristics, attitudes, and behaviors.

## Takeaways:

WPI measures is designed to capture all the major elements of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation orientation as a personal trait. Factor analysis established extrinsic and intrinsic motivation as primary scales, and sub-class secondary scales of Challenge and Enjoyment in intrinsic factor and Compensation and Outward secondary sub-factors in extrinsic motivation.

Relative stability of the WPI scores over 6 to 54 months interval implies WPI can be considered as a stable personal trait/preference, an enduring individual-differences characteristic. Correlations were found with other personality, attitudes and perception measures.

Intrinsic and extrinsic are distinct, independent process. One type of motivation does not necessarily undermine the other. Highly intrinsic motivated individual can also be highly motivated by extrinsic compensation.

Individuals could be divided into four types: dually motivated, intrinsically motivated, extrinsically motivated, and unmotivated. Unlike people who are primarily intrinsically or primarily extrinsically motivated, those strongly motivated by both should experience synergistic effects on performance and satisfaction when working on tasks where both types of motivators are salient. On the other hand, dually motivated individuals might be the only ones to experience conflict when faced with a choice between a strongly intrinsically motivated activity and a strongly extrinsically motivated one. Thus, motivational orientation identification with the WPI might help to illuminate some of the motivational boosts and conflicts that people experience in their work.

