



The InTA Signature Planning Tool

Taking Action: Checklist to Increase Motivation in the Classroom

Supporting sustainable motivation without complicating teaching practice

FOREWORD

Student motivation is frequently conceptualized as unstable, difficult to define, and at times beyond instructional control.

Educators often seek rapid solutions, modify learning activities, and attempt to increase student engagement.

However, motivation does not emerge from isolated techniques.

Rather, it develops through the consistent establishment of appropriate learning conditions in daily practice.

Research indicates that students are more likely to engage when they:

- Clearly understand the purpose of the task
- Perceive themselves as capable of succeeding
- Feel respected and supported within the learning environment

Thus, motivation should not be viewed as a prerequisite for learning, but rather as an outcome of effective instructional conditions.

This checklist does not propose an additional pedagogical method.

Instead, it serves as a reflective tool to assess whether essential conditions are in place to foster stable, sustained, and autonomous student engagement.

1. Fostering a Sense of Autonomy

- ☐ Has at least one meaningful choice been provided (task type, format, or sequence of activities)?
- ☐ Do your students understand the purpose of the activity?
- ☐ Is instructional language oriented toward meaning rather than mere procedural direction?

💡 A lack of perceived autonomy is associated with increased resistance and reduced engagement.

2. Developing a Sense of Competence

- ☐ Is the task both accessible and appropriately challenging?
- ☐ Are success criteria explicit and visible?
- ☐ Do your students understand how to improve their performance?

💡 When students do not perceive themselves as capable, they are more likely to avoid tasks or disengage prematurely.

3. Calibrating the Level of Challenge

- ☐ Is the task aligned with your students' actual level of proficiency?
- ☐ Can success be achieved through sustained effort?
- ☐ Are appropriate supports available (examples, peer interaction, scaffolding tools)?

💡 Misalignment in task difficulty often results in either boredom or disengagement.

4. Strengthening the Sense of Belonging

- ☐ Are your students acknowledged as individuals?
- ☐ Are your classroom interactions respectful and psychologically safe?
- ☐ Are opportunities for dialogue and collaboration incorporated?

💡 A lack of recognition or psychological safety reduces participation and limits engagement.

5. Using Motivationally Supportive Language

- ☐ Are effort, strategies, and progress explicitly valued?
- ☐ Are social comparisons between students avoided?
- ☐ Does feedback facilitate understanding and improvement?

💡 Poorly framed feedback can undermine self confidence and reduce engagement.

6. Making Progress Explicit

- ☐ Can your students identify their progress, including incremental gains?
- ☐ Are intermediate stages of learning made visible?
- ☐ Do your students have a clear awareness of their current position within the learning process?

💡 When progress is not perceived, motivation tends to decline rapidly.

7. Sustaining Active Cognitive Engagement

- ☐ Are all your students cognitively engaged on a regular basis?
- ☐ Are extended passive periods minimized?
- ☐ Does participation involve active thinking rather than mere physical presence?

💡 Passive engagement leads to superficial learning and diminished motivation.

8. Providing Timely and Actionable Feedback

- ☐ Is feedback delivered promptly?
- ☐ Does it enable immediate adjustment and improvement?
- ☐ Is feedback specific and sufficiently precise?

💡 Delayed or insufficiently precise feedback disrupts learning continuity and weakens engagement.

Final Reflective Question

Are your students engaging because they perceive meaning and competence, or solely due to external obligation?

💡 Engagement driven exclusively by obligation remains fragile, whereas engagement grounded in meaning and perceived competence is more durable and self sustaining.

