



# THE HUNT FOR **INNER** **MOTIVATION**

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# The Hunt for Inner Motivation

Is it the need for power and prestige that drives you in your career, or is it a passionate desire to change the world? People are different, and the things that make us perform at our best can also be varied.

Frode Pettersen at EMA Partners in Norway (Prime Executive AS) has worked in executive search for fifteen years. He has a passion for the profession, and has been a driving force behind the development of methods to clarify and match candidates' motivations with employers' ability to satisfy them.

"We have used personality, value and capability testing for many years, but our experience was that these were insufficiently tailored to our need to identify and describe candidates' motivations in a way that was relevant in an executive search context," he says. "As a result, we had to develop our own proprietary tools for this purpose, based on accepted theoretical frameworks and empirical data."

"Our company has carried out thousands of interviews with candidates for leadership and specialist positions in Norway. This means we are in possession of a very valuable empirical dataset in terms of what these people have indicated their own motivations are."

"Allow me to emphasise that this information is as a matter-of-course anonymised to preserve privacy," he assures.

"We began by analysing a large sample of interview records from within each category. This was in itself a challenging task, but it paid dividends by providing us with an impressive overview of which motivational factors candidates had stated were the driving factors in their professional lives."

"In order to balance out any differences between those being interviewed for leadership roles and people being engaged for specialist positions, we examined an equal number in each category. That difference alone is fascinating."

"Following a process that incorporated evaluation, sorting and categorisation, we have assembled the key inner motivational factors that we uncovered in our sample spread across 12 dimensions. We have then developed support tools in relation to these that are used when analysing the role with the employer, and during subsequent in-depth interviews with candidates."

## Theoretical Framework

Research examining happiness and motivation in professional life is nothing new. However, the development of a methodology and associated support tools to match candidates' motivations with the capability of employers-to-be to satisfy them is in fact new.

"The theoretical basis we use is particularly well illuminated by the capabilities outlined by Professor Bard Kuvaas at the BI Norwegian Business School. Studies examining internal and external motivational factors for employees in professional life show how people driven by internal motivation seem to succeed better over time than those who only have external motivations."

"The motivational dimension is naturally not an isolated component in the modern executive search process. It supplements a thorough review of qualifications, skills and personal qualities."

"Our hypothesis was that if we could be in a better position to discover a candidate's true drivers and inner motivations, then the likelihood of a hired candidate's long-term success in the role would also increase substantially."

"This is very inspiring for a dedicated ambassador of the executive search profession such as myself," Frode Pettersen concludes, noting that clients involved in pilot testing have been impressed with the results obtained.

# Author



## **Frode Pettersen**, Partner, EMA Partners Norway

Frode is a founding partner in the company and has been in the recruitment industry for many years. His experiences also include sales executive positions in Retail and Travel organizations.

His main focus now is Executive Search for top management positions and key professionals within Finance, FMCG/Retail, Telecom and IT.



Frode Pettersen

Since 1988, EMA Partners has been serving local and international businesses across multiple industry sectors. The firm has been instrumental in helping its clients recruit numerous leaders who have made a significant impact in their organizations.

With access to intellectual property through our association with Decision Dynamics AB, EMA Partners is a provider of leadership assessments and other advisory services to our clients.

Our expertise lies in assessing, hiring and developing leaders at the Board, C-Suite and Senior Executive level across industries. Our clients include global corporations, local companies and not for profit organizations.



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