



Practice Tool

What motivates your team to keep going?

Introduction

Ikigai (pronounced ick-ee-guy) is a Japanese concept that explores what we value in life, and why. When used in a work context, it can help you to learn more about why people stay in their jobs, what they value about their work and what motivates them to remain in an organisation in spite of challenges.

Talking about ikigai can, therefore, help you to gain an appreciation for what drives each staff member in your team, what they are proud of and what aspects of the work they are good at. It can also help you learn more about the parts of their work life or role that aren't satisfying.

This tool explains what ikigai is and offers some ideas about how you can use it to explore what motivates your team to keep going, even when they face challenges.

Have a look at the diagram on the next page.



There four outer 'petals' are:

- > that which you love
- > that which the world needs
- > that which you are good at
- > that which you can be paid for

The four inner petals are:

- > passion
- > mission
- > profession
- > vocation

At the very heart of the diagram is your ikigai.

If you are lucky enough to be employed in a professional role that is at once a vocation and mission you are passionate about and skilled at, you have found your ikigai; the 'sweet spot' where all these elements come together.

It is not realistic to expect to feel passionate about all aspects of a professional role, particularly if working conditions require improvement in some way. But ikigai can help you consider what's rewarding about your role, and prompt you to reflect on why this is.

Therefore, using the concept of ikigai provides practice supervisors with a simple and effective way to have a reflective discussion with supervisees about what motivates them to keep going.

Ikigai can help you to:

- > Understand the values and motivations of each practitioner and what they are passionate about.
- > Find out what they really enjoy about their roles.
- > Identify what each person in the team is most skilled at.

To prompt discussion with your team members, all you need to do is show them the diagram, explain what the different elements of ikigai are, then ask them to think about how each petal of the model applies to them. It's an activity you can do in ten minutes.

In the discussion that follows, it can be helpful to ask these questions:

What keeps you motivated in your work when the going gets tough?

What are you passionate about in practice?

What values or vision drives your approach to practice? What are you hoping to achieve?

What parts of your work do you like best?

Where do you do your best work and why?

The discussions that arise from this activity will allow you to learn more about the skills and motivations of each member of your team, and what helps them be resilient in their roles.

You can build on these discussions further as part of CPD or skill development planning, or in joint appraisals and reviews with your supervisees.

You can also discuss ikigai as a whole team exercise, which can help build team identity and cohesion. You might want to ask questions like:

What are we passionate about?

What are we good at?

How do our diverse identities and experiences shape our passions and capabilities?

What do we think the world needs (from us or that we can offer)?

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