

Why Set Goals?

Goal Setting – Powerful Written Goals in Seven Easy Steps

We often dream about where we want to go, but we don't have a map to get there. Too many of us treat goal setting as a dream and forget the map.

What is a map? It is the written word.

But we need to do more than simply scribble down some ideas on a piece of paper. Our goals need to be complete and focused, much like a road map.

Why Set Goals?

Setting goals gives you long-term vision and short-term motivation. It focuses your acquisition of knowledge, and helps you to organise your time and your resources so that you can make the most of your life.

By setting sharp, clearly defined goals, you can measure and take pride in the achievement of those goals, and you'll see progression in what might previously have seemed a pointless grind. You will also raise your self-confidence, as you recognise your own ability and competence in achieving the goals that you have set.

How to Set Personal Goals

This is why we start the process of goal setting by looking at your lifetime goals. Then, we work down to the things that you can do in, say, the next five years, then next year, next month, next week, and today, to start moving towards them.

By following the seven steps outlined below you will be well on your way to becoming an expert in building the road maps to your goals.

1. Make sure the goal you are working for is something you really want, not just something that sounds good.

When setting goals it is very important to remember that your goals must be consistent with your values.

2. A goal can not contradict any of your other goals.

For example, you can't buy a \$750,000 house if your income goal is only \$50,000 per year. This is setting up an unrealistic expectation and will sabotage all of the hard work you put into your goals. We should continually strive to eliminate contradictory ideas from our thinking.

3. Develop goals in the 6 areas of life:

- Family and Home
- Financial and Career
- Spiritual and Ethical
- Physical and Health
- Social and Cultural
- Mental and Educational

Setting goals in each area of life will ensure a more balanced life as you begin to examine and change the fundamentals of everyday living. Setting goals in each area of life also helps to eliminate unrealistic expectations.

Here are some questions for your consideration in some of the goals areas in your life:

Career - What level do you want to reach in your career, or what do you want to achieve?

Financial - How much do you want to earn, by what stage? How is this related to your career goals?

Education - Is there any knowledge you want to acquire in particular? What information and skills will you need to have in order to achieve other goals?

Family - How are you going to be a good parent? How do you want to be seen by a partner or by members of your extended family?

Artistic - Do you want to achieve any artistic goals? What are the talents you want to develop?



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Attitude - Is any part of your mindset holding you back? Is there any part of the way that you behave that upsets you? (If so, set a goal to improve your behavior or find a solution to the problem.)

Physical - Are there any health goals that you want to achieve? What steps are you going to take to achieve this?

Pleasure - How do you want to enjoy yourself? Do you need to set aside time for yourself? (You should ensure that some of your life is for you!)

Public Service - Do you want to make a contribution to your community? If so, how?

4. Write your goal in the positive instead of the negative.

Work for what you want, not for what you want to leave behind. Part of the reason why we write down and examine our goals is to create a set of instructions for our unconscious mind to carry out. Your unconscious mind is a very efficient tool, it cannot determine right from wrong and it does not judge. It's only function is to carry out its instructions. The more positive instructions you give it, the more positive results you will get.

Thinking positively in everyday life will also help in your growth as a human being. Don't limit it to goal setting.

5. Write your goal out in complete detail.

Be specific. Instead of writing 'a new home', write 'a 40 square contemporary house with 4 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms and a view of the sea on 2 acres of land.'

Can you close your eyes and visualise the home described above? Walk around the house. Stand on the balcony off the master bedroom and see the waves crashing on the shore. Look down at the garden full of tomatoes, green beans and lettuce. Can you see it? So can your unconscious mind.

Once again we are giving the unconscious mind a detailed set of instructions to work with. The more information you give it, the more clearer the final outcome becomes. The more precise the outcome, the more efficient the unconscious mind can become.

6. Make sure your goal is high enough.

Shoot for the moon, if you miss you'll still be in the stars.

7. This is the most important step, write down your goals and revisit regularly.

Writing down your goals creates the roadmap to your success. Although just the act of writing them down can set the process in motion, it is also extremely important to review your goals frequently. Remember, the more focused you are on your goals the more likely you are to accomplish them.

Sometimes we realise we have to revise a goal as circumstances and other goals change. If you need to change a goal do not consider it a failure, consider it a victory as you had the insight to realise something was different requiring modification or a complete change.

When it comes to setting goals, make sure you set a SMART goal. Here is an example of a SMART goal:

Specific: specify the actions you will take, when and where you will do so, and who or what is involved. Example of a vague or non-specific goal: "I will spend more time with my kids." A specific goal: "I will take the kids to the park on Saturday to play football." A non-specific goal: "I will be more loving towards my wife." A specific goal: "I will ring my wife at lunchtime each day and say hi"

Meaningful: The goal should be personally meaningful to you. If it is genuinely guided by your values, as opposed to following a rigid rule, or trying to please others, or trying to avoid some pain, then it will be meaningful. If it lacks a sense of meaning or purpose, check in and see if it is really guided by your values.

Adaptive: Does the goal help you to take your life forwards in a direction that, as far as you can predict, is likely to improve the quality of that life?

Realistic: The goal should be realistically achievable. Take into account your health, competing demands on your time, financial status, and whether you have the skills to achieve it.

Time-bound: to increase the specificity of your goal, set a day, date and time for it. If this is not possible, set as accurate a time limit as you can.

References:

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Goal Setting – Powerful Written Goals In 7 Easy Steps, <http://topachievement.com/goalsetting.html>, 03 January 2012.

Dr R Harris, www.thehappieststrap.com, 04 January 2012.