

As we begin 2008, many of us have already turned to building goals for the year. Often 'business' or 'financial' goals are then followed by personal, spiritual or relationship goals. How do you begin to set achievable goals? How do you begin and sustain your motivation for the goals you set? How measurable and attainable are your goals? How to insure you include what you need to meet your goals this year...

Proper time should be taken to determine all goals in detail to improve success from the beginning.

In the common business definition of goals that was stated by the Expectancy Theory, a goal is defined as follows:

"A goal is a written statement that clearly describes certain actions or tasks with a measurable end result."

To elaborate on this definition, a goal must be written. If it is not written, it is merely an idea with no power, conviction or motivation behind it and will lack energy and purpose. A written goal will allow you to remind yourself exactly what has to be done. Re-reading this written goal on a regular basis will provide the necessary motivation to achieve the goal.

A goal will clearly describe certain actions or tasks. A goal that is clearly defined eliminates misunderstandings, or changes in focus and recall as often happens over time. Clearly described goals will include action verbs such as create, design, learn, improve, organize, purchase, etc.

Goals must have a measurable result with a time frame for completion. A measurable goal is quantifiable. It is described in such a way that the actual result cannot be disputed. If you cannot measure something, chances are that you cannot effectively manage it. A simple test for goal clarity is to ask yourself, "can I put it in a wheel barrel?" If your goal is to "be successful" or "happy", try to put those in a wheel barrel! Now, if your goal is to create \$20,000 of income per month, or to use your time on Tuesdays for date night, those are things you can measure, you can 'put them in the wheel barrel, so to speak.

Now that you have a written goal, the following will help you direct your actions to achieve the goal. Here are 8 Steps I suggest to help you achieve your goal.

- 1. Regularly and vividly imagine your goal as accomplished. Include looking out of your eyes, seeing, hearing, feeling, and inviting you to even smell and taste your experience...to really be in it.**

2. **If appropriate, share your goal with as many people as possible so they can support you and encourage your actions in achieving the goal.**
3. **Break the goal into small steps or tasks and set deadlines to complete the smaller steps.**
4. **Review your progress regularly. Regularly will depend on the nature of the goal. I suggest weekly and monthly review.**
5. **Plan each task or step on a calendar by making an appointment to work on a particular part of the task. Block out the time necessary and do not allow interruptions, phone calls or other task that distract you.**
6. **If you are having trouble or getting bogged down, accept this and ask for help. You may want to help others who may be in need of help as well.**
7. **Remain positive, hopeful and trusting that in the decision that you will accomplish the goal.**
8. **Plan a reward for yourself for the accomplishment of the goal.**

This is a solid process to meet or exceed any of your goals. Use it, follow it, and your will make it happen! Sometimes it is in the breaking down of the goals in to achievable steps that you can begin to see progress toward your bigger goal. In my book “Getting What You Want: The Art of Living On Purpose” (buy now!) I offer similar guidelines in a step by step planning procedure, starting with 10 or 20 years goals leading toward annual goals, quarterly goals and even weekly goals, all in service of meeting your bigger long term goals.

When doesn't this process work? Well, sometimes our beliefs and values bump up against achieving the goals we ourselves set. Sometimes it is a matter of motivation, the driving force for the completion of goals. At times although the path seems clear, we can't seem to stay on it! If this is the case, then some personal coaching around what is going on in you, what is stopping you, or getting in your way may be indicated, you know. Use it! Experiment! Succeed and learn! What goals do you want to accomplish?