

Motivation and Goal Setting

Motivation is a combination of desire, values and beliefs that drives you to take action. These three motivating factors, and/or lack of them, are at the root of why people behave the way they do.



Because you ultimately control your values, beliefs and desires, you can influence your motivations. This means, if you consider something important and assign value to it, you are more likely to do the work it takes to attain the goal. When motivation originates from an internal source and is combined with a realistic goal and circumstance, the odds of a good outcome are greatly increased.

Why Should We Set Goals?

We set goals to boost confidence, take action and face fear. Setting goals gives you long-term vision and short-term motivation. By setting sharp, clearly defined goals, you can measure and take pride in the achievement of those goals, and you'll see forward progress in what might previously have seemed a long pointless grind. You will also raise your self-confidence as you recognize your own ability and competence in achieving the goals that you've set.

Tips for Setting Goals

- **Prepare.** When you know nothing of what you are about to do, it's very easy to get lost in fear. When you to set a goal, you will feel more comfortable and confident.
- **Realize that failure will not kill you.** Failure makes you learn, grow and become stronger. You realize more and more that it's not the end of the world. Failing can also have an exhilarating component because even though things didn't go as planned, you at least took a chance. Every failure can make you more and more likely to succeed if you don't give up.
- **Get to know who you are and what you want.** Figure out what really excites you by simply trying new things. When you know more about who you are and what you want out of life, you will have more confidence in yourself.

Quick Tips for Setting Goals

- Focus on what you do want, not what you don't.
- Steer your fear.
- Create short-term goals as well as long-term goals.
- Include reminders within the plan.
- Choose your personal support system among family and friends.
- Create actionable steps.
- Be clear about the reasons for reaching each goal. Relax yourself.
- Mentally visualize the actions you have to perform to achieve your goals.
- Repeat positive affirmations.
- Practice daily.
- Eliminate punishment for not reaching a goal.

Continued on back



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- Recognize and reward yourself for accomplishments, no matter how small.
- Be flexible, allowing for revisions in your plan, and alternate positive choices when necessary.
- Maintain an environment consistent with your needs.
- Maintain open communication.
- Clarify expectations.

Set S.M.A.R.T. Goals

It's important to set goals that are strategic, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound. When setting S.M.A.R.T. goals, keep in mind the following tips:

S = Strategic and Specific: The goal should identify a specific action or event that will take place.

M = Measurable: Include in the specific goal statement the measurements to be used to determine that the results or outcomes expected have been achieved.

A = Attainable: Goals should challenge people to do their best, but they need also be achievable.

R = Relevant/Rigorous: Goals need to pertain directly to the performance challenge being managed.

T = Time Bound: Plan enough time to achieve the goal but not too much time, which can affect project performance.

Key Points

Goal setting is an important method of deciding what you want to achieve in your life. It separates what's important from what's irrelevant, motivating yourself and building your self-confidence.

Set your lifetime goals first. Then, set a five-year plan of smaller goals that you need to complete if you are to reach your lifetime plan. Remember to take time to enjoy the satisfaction of achieving your goals when you do so.

If you don't already set goals, do so, starting now. As you make this technique part of your life, you'll find your career accelerating, and you'll wonder how you did without it!

Sources:

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