

## CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR GOALS

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By David Stoddard

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I've done the goal setting things in the past. I heard of the studies where only the successful 3% have goals written down. I had ideas of what I wanted to accomplish. But for differing reasons, I didn't always reach them as often as I would have liked. Some were just ideas which stayed ideas. Others I worked at didn't turn out as planned. So I wondered why.

>From what I came up with, some were due to things I was or wasn't doing. Not happy with that as an answer, I looked around for other possibilities. And I came up with my own list of what goals have in common. Characteristics if you will.

A goal must be...

**ACHIEVABLE:** Just because we may not have done something doesn't make it impossible for us. Odds are, someone, somewhere, at some point in time, has done what we would like to do. That by itself, makes it possible. And, like running the 4-minute mile, what seemed impossible before, is now achievable.

**BELIEVABLE:** Can we do it? Can we learn how to do what it takes? Do we have the time? Can we find the time? Do we have the self-discipline it will take to keep going to achieve it? Have we made any steps toward it? Have we reached any other goals in our lifetime no matter how small they seem now? As long as we can

## CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR GOALS

answer yes to some of those questions, and our goal is within reason, it can happen for us.

**DESIRABLE:** Whatever we set as a goal, it must have meaning to us. We should have our own set of reasons as to why attaining this goal is important. By knowing why we want to attain something is a powerful force behind our getting it. Things will happen to derail us, but keeping focused on why we do what we do, will help considerably on those days when things seem to be against us.

**MEASURABLE:** We need to know we are getting someplace. All too often we feel as if we are stuck just because we haven't gotten where we wanted to go yet. We don't always see how far we have come, we just see the long road ahead. By having our goal set up in such a way that we can see the steps we can take, will help provide the momentum needed to keep going.

**WORKABLE:** Each step along the way is part of our plan to get there. The plan should be written out so we can see what we will need to do next. Plus, it gives us something to mark off along the way. Like a shopping or to-do list, the plan gives us a basic guide for what needs to be done. It's up to us how to work it.

**FLEXIBLE:** Our plans should provide room for changes along the way. We have learned so much from Murphy's law that whatever can go wrong, will at some point. We need to be able to just go around the problems we face. It may mean adjusting our goal a bit or re-working our plans. But as long as we have room to change, we won't get stuck.

I hope something in this article inspired you to begin looking at your own goals. Well, at least that was MY goal.

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David publishes "Qué Sera Sera," a weekly motivational newsletter. To subscribe [mailto:que\\_sera\\_sera-subscribe@topica.com](mailto:que_sera_sera-subscribe@topica.com). Subscribers receive his booklet "In Search Of Ourselves." Visit him online: <http://www.djstoddard.net>

## **Where's The Map, I Think I'm Lost!!**

**By Jill Lambert**

### **Where's The Map, I Think I'm Lost!! by Jill Lambert**

How many times have you begun the year with grand ideas of things you needed to do? The calendar changes a little bit, and we have this sense of a new beginning. You know what I'm talking about, those silly things we call "New Year's Resolutions".

"New Years Resolutions", okay I confess I've made a few in my lifetime too. And, it always seems I can't remember them on January 5th!

What if there was a way to get you on the right path on January 1, and keep you there year after year? Sounds too good to be true, right? Well it's not. I know you've heard this before, but here it goes again. We all need to have written goals.

A written goal is not just an idea in your head. It's not a dream or a wish. That's not the kind of goal we're talking about. Take the hopes and good intentions out of your mind, and analyze what you can realistically accomplish. How much hard work and determination are you willing to expend?

Working hard and setting goals applies to you, no matter what your situation. If you are a parent that needs to begin a savings plan for your child's college education, you need goals! If you are interested in buying your first home, or maybe upgrading from the home you have, you need goals! If you're just getting starting, or are an online pro in marketing a product on the internet, you need goals! Goal setting is a must to get you on the right path! Think of your goals as your road map!

I bet you can't tell me the characteristics of what a goal should be. Let's take a look:

1. It should be **USEFUL**. Think of you goal as a bridge, a way to get from where you are, to where you want to be.
2. It should be **TIME-LIMITED**. Each phase of your goal needs a deadline. Without a deadline, you'll keep traveling the same road, probably the one you're on now.
3. IT should be **SPECIFIC**. Don't say, "I want to go to San Francisco." Say, "I'm going to San Francisco, and the first thing I need to do is get on I-40 and travel west."
4. It should be **MEASURABLE**. If it isn't measurable, how will you gauge your progress? Determine how far you'd like to "travel" each day. Set a specific goal for how many "miles" you'll cover.
5. It should be **CHALLENGING**. Pushing yourself and continuing to grow is a wonderful feeling. Do things you thought you'd never do before, you'll be amazed at the adrenaline rush you'll get!
6. It should be **ACTION** oriented. State all of your goals in an active sense. "I will do....."

## CHARACTERISTICS OF OUR GOALS

7. Finally, it must be **ATTAINABLE** or **REALISTIC**. Do you have, or can you get the skills necessary to reach the goal?

We've covered the characteristics of goals with the exception of the most important part. You have to write them down. The difference between a goal and a dream is seeing it on paper.

You'll be amazed how clear things will be to you when you see them on paper. I'm not sure of the science behind the difference of just thinking about something, and putting a pen to paper. They say it has something to do with the sub-conscious, but I know it works!

If you're really serious about establishing goals for yourself, check out this website:

<http://www.goalpro.com> This is a really neat software that will help you establish your goals, and keep you on track.

As you go through the next couple of days see if you can remember your "Resolutions" from last year. I'd make a pretty high wager you can't. Use the information in this article, and next year you'll be sending me an e-mail telling me what wonderful things you've accomplished! Happy Goal Setting.

Jill Lambert is the publisher of Kidz Plan Newsletter, a bi-monthly publication aimed at helping people reach their financial goals. To subscribe to this inspirational newsletter, please visit:

<http://www.kidzplannews.org>



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