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**Five Steps to Goal-Setting**

**By Jennifer Minar**

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What would you like to achieve in your lifetime?

Author Basil S. Walth once said, "If you don't know where you are going, how can you expect to get there?" These are words well spoken, because whether you're working toward freelancing full-time or selling your novels, you need a roadmap.

Goals are indispensable. They provide direction, long-term vision and short-term motivation. They separate the important from the irrelevant. Goals also build self-confidence by helping you grow as an individual.

Olympic athletes, successful business people, and (hint...) bestselling writers are goal setters. You aspire to greatness too, don't you? If you do, and you're not already setting goals, now is the perfect time to start.

Five Things to Remember When Setting Goals:

**1. Write Goals Down**

Always jot down your goals—this is powerful. The process of physically seeing your goals helps crystallize them in your mind. This process also better enables you to commit to them.

Interesting Fact: A popular Harvard Business School study once found that only 3% of the population records their goals in writing. Another 14% have goals but don't write them down, whereas 83% do not even have clearly defined goals. More interesting is that this 3% earned an astounding ten times that of the 83% group!

**2. Make Goals Short, Attainable, & Measurable**

## Five Steps to Goal-Setting

Set attainable short-term goals that can be measured. This means setting quantifiable goals.

Here are some examples: Commit to writing a certain number of words each week Submit at least two articles a week Find two new markets each week Take at least one writing course a year Attend at least one writer's conference a year

Make your goals attainable so you won't get discouraged. The short-term goals above are attainable for me, but they may not be for you. Or maybe for you, my short-term goals aren't challenging enough.

Goals are very individual. You have to set your own goals...remember, you're charting your own course to success!

On the other hand, don't set wimpy goals simply because you're afraid to fail. Talane Miedaner, author of *Coach Yourself to Success* (McGraw-Hill/Contemporary Books, 2002) notes: "People sometimes give themselves 'weeny' goals—they play it safe so they don't fail...But the bigger the goal, the more likely you are to achieve it."

### 3. Create Deadlines

Without deadlines, your goals are merely dreams. Set deadlines for both short- and long-term goals, and I promise, you'll get there sooner!

Remember that deadlines can be flexible. Life changes and so do goals. Never be afraid to adjust the timeframe for a goal. What's important is to keep moving forward.

### 4. Look at your goals everyday!

Visual aids are an effective way to program your brain.

Reading and re-writing goals are two very effective visual aids. By physically rewriting your goals and pasting them in places you regularly frequent, you make them more real in your mind.

I read an article in this month's *Shape* magazine that inspired me. The author mentioned that before Sarah Ban Breathnach, author of the bestselling book & Oprah Pick *Simple Abundance: A Daybook of Comfort and Joy* (Warner Books, 1995) became a bestselling author, she pasted her name on the #1 spot of the New York Times bestseller list and posted it on her computer. Visual Aids like these give you that extra ammunition that will make a difference.

### 5. Make Goal Setting a Routine

Begin every morning with a "To Do" list. This will help you organize and better manage your time. Plus, your goals will be right smack under your nose every day. Do not get discouraged over any unfinished items. Simply transfer them to the next morning's list.

The above said, keep your goals front and forward in your mind. Remember...you only get one chance

to live your dreams!

In the words of Cecil B. De Mille: "The person who makes a success of living is the one who sees his goal steadily and aims for it unswervingly. That is dedication."

Jennifer Minar is a freelance writer in the health & fitness and writing markets. She is also the founder & managing editor of Writer's Break (

), a web site and ezine for fiction and

creative non-fiction writers.

### **The Kaizen of Goal Setting**

#### **By Ke o agile**

There is an old way of goal setting and a new way of goal setting!

The old way of goal-setting involved setting your goals, preparing a list of sub-goals, and then carefully checking them off one after another (as and when they were being accomplished). Am I trying to pour cold water on the goal setting method many of us grew up on?

Not necessarily

While I am not saying the step-by-step approach does not work, I am advocating a flexible-goal setting approach.

The flexible goal-setting approach acknowledges the presence of chaos and unpredictability of our modern times, where change is rapid and conditions shift in an instant.

What's more, a tiny weeny change nowadays has the potential to create major upsets and instability.

Enter the flexible goal-setting system. And, this is how it operates.

Set big-picture, life-enhancing goals with flexible sub-goals that you can adjust to fit in with shifting conditions. The simplest way of putting this into practice is to build into your goal-setting, daily incremental steps that aggregate into your vision. Add to this sub-goal A, sub-goal B, sub-goal C, maybe sub-goal D.

Remember, each sub-goal must be flexible enough to respond adequately to the requirements of the shifting conditions.

You don't want to throw your hands in the air in desperation because your plans and goals have been derailed, do you?

## Five Steps to Goal-Setting

Well, the 'Kaizen of Goal Setting' is about knowing the difference between the old and the new, and applying it to your goal setting.

Ke o agile is an NLP Coach and Publisher of In TheZone, an NLP focused ezine for capacity builders in the personal and professional skills development areas. In TheZone can be accessed freely at

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