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Three Steps for Positive Goal Setting

By Dr. Donald E. Wetmore

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As I conduct my Time Management Seminars all over, my audiences consistently tell me they want more out of life. Almost everyone I speak with has a yearning for improving several aspects of their lives. They have dreams and goals about their future as yet unrealized.

Many come to the end in life with those visions unrealized, pictures in their minds only.

Achieving goals helps us to get the "want to's in our lives. Life ought to be more than just achieving the "have to's".

I offer three important tips to help increase the probability of achieving your dreams, getting more of what you want in your life.

1. Put your goals into writing. There is something powerful about writing out what you want, getting your dream out of your head and on to a piece of paper. It then seems more realizable. It's a stonger affirmation of what you are working towards rather than having a vague, wispy notion floating around in your head.

An even stronger tool is to prepare a goal scrapbook. Nothing fancy. Get a three-ring binder and fill it with notebook paper. Then get a picture of each your goals and paste them into your new goal scrapbook. You ca go to the car dealer and get a brochure of the new car you want. Visit a travel agent and pick up brochures of your ideal vacation's destination and add that. Clip a picture of your dream house out of the newspaper's real estate section and add this as well.

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Then, each night, review your goal scrapbook and see a picture of what will surely be coming to you. It's like viewing a crystal ball and seeing your future.

2. Quantify your goals. Many do not get what they truly want in their lives because they are too vague about what they want. It is not enough to say, "I want more money" or "I want to be rich". Instead, if you write, "I want \$10,000", you now have a clear target to shoot for.

3. Set a deadline. Did you ever set a New Year's resolution and never achieve it? Most people have. And most people fail to achieve their dreams because they did not include a deadline with their goal. Deadlines move us to action.

When we fail to include a deadline for our goal, when we commit to achieving it "as soon as possible", the goal winds up in our "as soon as possible" pile of things I will do another day, which is probably never. Why? Because we all too much to do and not enough time to get it all done. The items that have deadlines for completion tend to bubble up in priority and importance so that we take action and achieve them.

Having written out the goal, placed a picture in our goal scrapbook, quantified it, and set a deadline, we can now break that goal down into its little component pieces so that achievement becomes realistic and manageable.

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. No goal achievement is a leap across some huge canyon. Many are intimidated and driven away from going after what they really want in their lives for fear they will have to take a giant leap across that canyon and, hey, what if I don't leap far enough? Disaster.

Let's say you have a goal to get an additional \$10,000 in savings two years from today. Make up a picture of your new bank statement two years from now showing the additional \$10,000 in your account. The goal is in writing. It is quantified and a deadline has been set. Now you can break that goal into its little steps for achievement.

To get \$10,000 over the next two years requires getting an additional \$5,000 per year. A year is made up of twelve months, so that means you need to get approximately \$400 per month. A month is made up of four weeks, so that's \$100 per week. And a week is made of, let's say, five business days. That's \$20 per day. (I have not added in interest to these calculations just for simplicity.)

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I don't know about you, but the notion of going out in the world tomorrow and getting an extra \$20 is a whole lot more realistic and certainly a whole lot more doable than getting \$10,000. Getting the entire \$10,000 is the leap across the canyon. It scares me. \$20 is the single step. That's something I can handle. Now the goal seems realistic and is realizable.

But until you write out your goal, quantify it, and set a deadline so that you break it down to its small steps, it will forever appear to be too big a stretch and therefore unattainable. But every time you follow these three steps and break the goal down, you will always find that you have within your control what it takes to accomplish that next step. And once you begin, you are on your way!

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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

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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?

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

The Kaizen of Goal Setting

A Goal Without A Schedule is Just a Dream

I Know I Can, I Know I Can

The 12 Commandments of Goal Setting

Setting Goals - Things to Think About

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