

Your Guide to PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL LIFE

by Lin Stone

Introduction

Every person in the world has devoted countless hours to dreaming about their future. "When I get grown --" "Someday the boss --" "There will come a day when my family suddenly realizes --"

Dreams like this are necessary. They are escape hatches that let us funnel the steam of frustration off into harmless pursuits. It's better than taking up booze and other drugs. It's better than foaming at the mouth over our present situation in life. It's better than flipping pop corn and watching mindless movies where the RIGHT ANSWER comes automatically to the hero or heroine. But, as far as really CHANGING anything? No, Forget It! You're on the wrong trail. Not one of the dreams, hopes, wishes, or fleeting desires that you ever have will give you the power to change your life.

Everyone wishes there was a magic wand they could wave and PRESTO, their life would change overnight and they would be successful, beautiful, happy. There is an easy way to change your life, but as long as you persist in chasing after some magic wand to wave, you'll never find that road to success.

If you are ready to grow up then let me show you the trail already hacked through the jungle that leads to the Seven Cities of Gold.

Our Exculpatory Clause

Please be advised and forewarned: All information, suggestions, techniques, ideas and resources are provided "as is".

The publisher doesn't claim to know everything there is to know about this subject, nor does the author. Inside this book we have tried our best to be as helpful as possible in the suggestions we make, but in the final analysis your results are entirely up to you.

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Let's start off with expressing certain truths

that should be self-evident.

1. You are already rich. Don't believe it? Look at all the things you have that King Solomon never even dreamed of. He was the richest man in the world but he couldn't afford air conditioning, and he didn't have a GameBoy, or even a cheap cell phone. If someone made you trade lives with him for just a few days you'd be screaming about bed bugs and living without a refrigerator for the rest of your life!
2. You already have EVERYTHING it takes to be successful. Maybe you don't know what those tools are and maybe you don't know how to use them, but you do have EVERYTHING you need to be happy and successful.

King Solomon didn't know what he was missing so even though he accumulated a thousand wives and tons of gold and he was still bored. Many people of today are facing the same problem, nothing they have satisfies them. If they became Vice President of the United States tonight they would be chomping at the bit for a step up in prestige tomorrow. They need to take a lesson from Paul:

*We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed;
we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but
not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed.*

Paul, KJV

Paul had a mission; Paul was happy. Viktor Frankl said that as long as man could find a purpose for his suffering he could endure anything. Sometimes just passing through suffering is enough to refine our lives and purify our souls. The Chinese people have endured tyranny for thousands of years but even under the crushing ignominy of communist imperialism there remain sparks of spiritual greatness and incredible achievements. Even while shackled in the chains of slavery there were American Negroes whose spiritual souls were the unstained equal of those who called themselves "masters".

Should we plead with the powers of heaven for more trials then? God forbid. We can't even handle the trials and frustrations we heap upon ourselves, how then can we hope to endure the trials and tribulations that God would give us? Still, we could find hope in that course by looking to the spoiled brats that went into the Iraq War and compare them with the steady nerved veterans who return. But wishing for the bite of that whip? No, God forbid.

If you want to be a success all that is required of you is to grow up, and go to work. You can achieve greatness, find happiness and wrest success from life simply by working consistently towards the righteous goals you set for yourself.

Goal Setting Also Helps Self-Confidence

By setting goals, and measuring their achievement, you are able to see what you have done and what you are capable of.

The process of achieving goals and seeing their achievement gives you the confidence and a belief in yourself that you need to be able to achieve higher and more difficult goals.

Providing that you have the self-discipline to carry it through, goal setting is also relatively easy. The following section on goal setting will give you effective guidelines to help you to use this technique effectively.

How to choose the right goals to focus on

Sometimes setting goals alone is not the only problem that you must face. Sometimes, choosing the right goals to begin with is harder.

Basically, you can choose to work any goal that you feel is necessary for your health, stability and happiness.

Goal setting is nothing more than a formal process for personal planning. By setting goals on a routine basis you decide what you want to achieve, and then move in a step-by-step manner towards the achievement of these goals.

The process of setting goals and targets allows you to choose where you want to go in life. By knowing exactly what you want to achieve, you know what

you have to concentrate on to do it. You also know what nothing more than a distraction is.

Goal setting is a standard technique used by professional athletes, successful business people and high achievers in all fields. It gives you long term vision and provides you with short term motivation.

It helps to focus your attention and knowledge which helps you to organize your resources. By setting sharp and clearly defined goals, you can measure and take pride in the achievement of those goals. You can see forward progress in what might previously have seemed a long pointless effort.

By setting goals, you will also raise your self confidence, as you recognize your and ability to meet the goals that you have set. The process of achieving goals and seeing this achievement gives you confidence that you will be able to achieve higher and more difficult goals later on.

Goals are set on a number of different levels. In the first place, you decide what you want to do with your life and what large scale goals you want to achieve.

Second, you break these down into the smaller aims that you must hit so that you reach your overall lifetime goals.

Finally, once you have your plan, you start working towards achieving it.

Beginning your goal setting plans

This section explains how to set personal goals. It starts with your lifetime goals, and then works through a series of lower level plans culminating in a daily to-do list.

By setting up this structure of plans you can break even the biggest life goal down into a number of small tasks that you need to do each day to reach the lifetime goals.

The first step in setting personal goals is to consider what you want to achieve in your lifetime, as setting lifetime goals that gives you the overall perspective that shapes all other aspects of your decision making process.

To help give you a broad, and balanced coverage of all important areas in your life, try to set goals in some or all of the following categories:

Artistic:

Do you want to achieve any artistic goals? If so, what is it? Do you want to write a book; paint a masterpiece, or write a song?

Attitude:

Does your own mindset hold you back from making progress? Is there any part of the way that you behave that upsets you for example, do you talk too much? If so, set a goal to improve your behavior or find a solution to the problem.

Career:

What level do you want to reach in your career? Is it your goal to be the boss or own your own company someday, or do you want to be the president of someone else's company?

Education:

Is there any knowledge you want to acquire in particular or some area of study that you would like to pursue? What information and skills will you need to achieve these goals?

Family:

Do you want to be a parent? If so, how are you going to be a good parent? How do you want your partner or family members to see you?

Financial:

How much do you want to earn by what age in your life? What can you do to make that come about?

Physical:

Are there any athletic goals you want to achieve, or do you want good health deep into old age? What steps are you going to take to achieve this?

Pleasure:

How do you want to enjoy yourself? You should ensure that some of your life is geared toward making yourself happy for no reason other than being happy

Service

Do you want to make the world a better place by your existence? If so, how?

Once you have decided your goals in these categories, you have to assign a priority to them if you want to succeed.

Then review the goals and re-prioritize until you are satisfied that they reflect the shape of the life that you want to lead.

Also, you should ensure that the goals that you have set are the goals that you want to achieve, and not what your parents, spouse, family, or employers want them to be.

Success only happens when you are working for your own well being because doing it for others will ensure that you sabotage your own success.

How to begin to achieve your Goals

Once you have set your lifetime goals, the best thing that you can do is set a 25 year plan of smaller goals that you should complete if you are to reach your lifetime plan.

From there you can just shorten your overall goal spans for example, you set a 5 year plan, 1 year plan, 6 month plan, and 1 month plan of progressively smaller goals that you should reach to achieve your lifetime goals.

Each of these should be based on the previous plan. It is the best way to begin to achieve a lifetime that is filled with and results in a life without any failed wishes. It results in a life without regret.

You see, by starting out slowly, you are giving yourself the chance to realize and work on achieving the goals that you set out to.

Nobody ever succeeds at attaining a goal that was forced through. Those that tried never really got what they were hoping for. In rushing through and trying to achieve your goals quickly you will likely miss a few key aspects that can really change your outcome.

Think of it this way; if you were to run a 10K marathon and decided to take a cab for half of the journey; have you really achieved that goal? Would you be satisfied when you crossed the finish line?

It would be a hollow victory that could only provide a moment's happiness.

Finally set a daily to do list of the things that you should do today to work towards your lifetime goals.

At an early stage these goals may be to read books and gather information on the achievement of your goals. This will help you to improve the quality and realism of your goal setting and in effect; make it easier to achieve them.

You also have to review your plans, and make sure that they fit the way in which you want to live your life.

Once you have decided what your first set of plans will be, keep the process going by reviewing and updating your to-do list on a daily basis.

You have to periodically review the longer term plans, and change them to reflect your changing priorities and experiences in your life.

Setting your Goals Effectively

There is a difference in setting your goals and setting them effectively. Anyone can set a goal, but doing it effectively means that it will actually get done.

There are so many things that you can do to better your life, but if you don't know how to go about it you are stuck.

The following guidelines will help you to set effective goals and help you manage

your time in an efficient manner that will cause those goals to become reality.

State each goal as a positive statement

Express your goals in a positive way. That is a key component to setting goals that you can attain.

How often have you been excited to accomplish a goal that didn't even sound good when you brought it up? If you are not comfortable or happy with the goals that you have set, the likelihood of you succeeding is pretty low.

If you want to express your goals in a positive way, you simply have to first think of a goal that puts a smile on your face when you imagine it completed. Why would you want to set a goal that made you frown, cringe or cry?

When you are beginning to set your goals it helps when you are talking about them to others in a manner that states your actions as positives because it will have others seeing it as a positive as well.

That will garner you a great deal more support. In the end, don't we all need a little support when we are trying to do something positive in our lives?

Be precise

Set a precise goal that includes starting dates, times and amounts so that you can properly measure your achievement.

If you do this, you will know exactly when you have achieved the goal, and can take complete satisfaction from having achieved it.

Being precise in setting your goals is no more than setting them with exact details. It is easier this way because then you can follow a step-by-step format. That's all there is to it.

Set priorities

When you have several goals, give each a specific priority.

This helps you to avoid feeling overwhelmed by too many goals, and helps to direct your attention to the most important ones and follow each in succession. Setting priorities will force you into the step-by-step format above.

By doing the most important first and moving to the least important in succession, you are enabling each task to be easier than the last. It causes the accomplishment of each task to get easier and easier which will encourage you to complete your goal.

Write goals down

This crystallizes your goals and gives them more force.

In writing your goals down, you are better able to keep up with your scheduled tasks for each accomplishment. It also helps you to remember each task that needs to be done and allows you to check them off as they are accomplished.

Basically, you can better keep track of what you are doing so as not to repeat yourself unnecessarily.

Keep operational goals small

Keep the low-level goals you are working towards small and easy to achieve. If a goal is too large, then it can seem that you are not making progress towards it.

Keeping goals small and incremental allows you more opportunities for reward. Derive today's goals from larger ones. It is a great way to accomplish your goals.

Set performance goals, not outcome goals

You should take care to set goals over which you have as much control as possible. There is nothing more dispiriting than failing to achieve a personal goal for reasons that are beyond your control.

These could be bad business environments, poor judging, bad weather, injury, or just plain bad luck. If you base your goals on personal your performance, then

you can keep control over the achievement of your goals and get satisfaction from achieving them.

Set realistic goals

It is important to set goals that you can achieve.

All sorts of people (parents, media, and society) can set unrealistic goals for you which is almost a guarantee of failure. They will often do this in ignorance of your own desires and ambitions or flat out disinterest.

Alternatively you may be naïve in setting very high goals. You might not appreciate either the obstacles in the way, or understand quite how many skills you must master to achieve a particular level of performance.

By being realistic you are increasing your chances of success.

Do not set goals too low

Just as it is important not to set goals unrealistically high; do not set them too low. People tend to do this where they are afraid of failure or where they simply don't want to do anything.

You should set goals so that they are slightly out of your immediate grasp, but not so far that there is no hope of achieving them. No one will put serious effort into achieving a goal that they believe is unattainable.

However, remember that your belief that a goal is unrealistic may be incorrect. If this could be the case, you can change this belief by using imagery effectively.

Achieving your Goals

When you have achieved a goal, you have to take the time to enjoy the satisfaction of having done so. Absorb the implications of the goal achievement, and observe the progress you have made towards other goals.

If the goal was a significant one, you should reward yourself appropriately. Think

of it like this, why would you choose to ignore any accomplishments that you have made?

In doing that, you are downplaying your accomplishment which will convince you that it wasn't that important in the first place.

With the experience of having achieved each goal, you should next review the rest of your goal plans and see them in the following manner:

- If you achieved the goal too easily, make your next goals harder
- If the goal took a disheartening length of time to achieve, make the next goals a little easier
- If you learned something that would lead you to change other goals, do so
- If while achieving the goal you noticed a certain lacking in your skills, decide which goals to set in order to fix this.

You should keep in mind that failure to meet goals does not matter as long as you learn from it. Feed lessons learned back into your goal-setting program.

You must also remember that your goals will change as you mature. Adjust them regularly to reflect this growth in your personality. If goals no longer hold any attraction for you let them go.

Goal setting is your servant, not your master. It should bring you real pleasure, satisfaction and a sense of achievement.

If it stops, there is no longer a point. Let's look at an example.

The best example of goal setting that you can have is to try setting your own goals. Set aside two hours to think through your lifetime goals in each of the categories. Then work back through the 25-year plan, 5-year plan, 1-year plan,

6-month plan, and a 1-month plan.

Finally draw up a To Do List of jobs to do tomorrow to move towards your goals. When you do, you will soon realize that you will be on your way to using your goals setting on a routine basis.

What are the Key Points in Goal Setting?

Goal setting is an important method of accomplishing any lifetime achievement. However, there are some key points that you should consider before setting your goals. Let's take a look at what those are.

- Deciding what is important for you to achieve in your life and making your choices based on this knowledge
- Separating what is important from what is irrelevant so that your focus is in the right place
- Motivating yourself to achievement to ensure their accomplishment
- Building your self-confidence based on the measured achievement of goals
- Ensuring that your goals are your own and no one else's

You should allow yourself to enjoy the achievement of goals and reward yourself appropriately. You must draw lessons where they are appropriate, and feed these back into future performances. In learning from mistakes and errors, you are guaranteeing future success.

You would think that there would be more than five key points to goal setting, but truly there are only five. Everything else is just a branch of the main five points. Let me show you what I mean.

Your Goals
What is important to you?
Motivation
Your goals are your own
Self Confidence
Do for yourself not others
Get started, keep going
Lifetime achievement
Feel better about yourself

What this diagram shows you are the key points in setting your goals. It shows that they are the key points in the setting of your goals.

If you continue to add more branches to those four, you will see that they are all manifestations of what you are already seeing. As you continue to add more branches you will find that all these things will tie into the first branches.

How Goal Setting can go Wrong

Goal setting can go wrong for a number of reasons. When these things happen, it can be a great bit devastating to the self esteem and can make the idea of setting any new goals mute.

Before we can look into what we can do about solving these goals setting problems, let's see what the problems can be. This section is really no more than a more detailed explanation of the above section, but I felt that it needed a section of its own to help you set your sights solely on how setting your goals can

go wrong.

If it seems repetitious, it is because it is! But it is very necessary for this guide; especially for quick referencing later.

- Outcome goals can be set instead of performance goals because it forces you to focus on the end result immediately instead of taking your time to go through the steps of goals setting. When you set goals properly you will be doing it in a step by step manner. Where you are using outcome goals, and you fail to achieve the goal for reasons outside your control, this can be very dispiriting and can lead to loss of enthusiasm and feelings of failure. Always set performance goals instead as this will give you a higher chance of succeeding.
- Goals can be set unrealistically high. When a goal is perceived to be unreachable, no effort will be made to achieve it. Set realistic goals so that you can best decide how to go about achieving them.
- In retrospect to the above, goals can be set so low that you feel no challenge or benefit in achieving the goal. Setting goals has been a waste of time. Always set goals that are challenging enough to be worth the effort, but not out of reach.
- Goals can be so vague that they are useless. It is difficult to know whether vague goals have been achieved. If achievement can't be measured against your expectations, then your self-confidence will not benefit from goal setting, nor can you observe progress towards a greater goal. Set precise and quantitative goals.
- Goal setting can be unsystematic, sporadic and disorganized. In this case certain goals will be forgotten, and the achievement of goals will not be measured and feedback will not occur into new goals. The major benefits of goal setting have been lost. Be organized and regular in the way that you use goal setting.
- Too many goals that aren't given priority may be set, leading to a feeling of overload. Remember that you deserve time to relax and enjoy being alive and not

solely focused on your goals and achievements.

Where goal setting does go wrong, not only are the benefits of goal setting lost, but the whole process of goal setting can fall into disrepute.

By avoiding these problems, and setting goals effectively as described in the previous section, you can achieve and maintain a strong forward leap into your future.

The 'Quantum Leap' Approach to Goal Setting

One approach to goal setting for yourself and other people is the 'Quantum Leap' approach. This tries to force intense activity by setting a goal that will need a 'quantum leap' in activity to achieve it.

This is a dangerous technique that should be used with a great deal of care. It is very easy for the whole process of goal setting to fall into problems where quantum leap goals are not met.

Similarly if you are really not convinced that a goal is attainable, you will not put effort into achieving it. Doesn't all of this sound repetitious!

Business Managers using this approach should take care that they are not shot down by someone that is firmly requesting information on how a quantum leap goal should be achieved because then everybody suffers.

Getting Specific in Goal Setting

Although the concept of setting goals in general is a great one to learn; which was explained in the above sections, it helps to be able to set goals in specific areas of your life separately.

For example; if you want to better your career options, you will be setting goals that specifically cater to your career. Of course, career goals aren't the only goals that most people are looking to set. Other areas of goals include:

- Relationships
- Family
- Health and fitness
- Spiritual
- Social/cultural

Let's take a look at all of the most common goals that you should consider and how best to go about each one.

What would be the point in learning how to set goals in general and not give specific examples and instructions on the most common goals that are set? Let's get started now.

First of all what do you think stops most people from achieving what they want out of life? Perhaps it is a lack of talent, lack of ability, personal circumstances, and upbringing. I'll tell you this much; it's none of those.

The single biggest reason for an inability for reaching goals is a lack of action, or not setting them in the first place or doing anything about it.

If you don't start in the first place, then how do you expect to move forward? Many a life long adventure started with the smallest of steps. Action is

the first step to achieving your goals.

Most people are fine at choosing a goal to set, but are inept at reaching them. You can achieve everything you want by making one step.

One step is all you need to make. One step today, one step next week or tomorrow, whichever is more convenient to you. The important thing is to keep making steps once you have started.

The trouble is, often the first step is the hardest, and the next step is just as hard. It is only after you have made a series of steps that it gets easier.

You need to know the truth about what is really holding you back. Motivation and goal setting go hand in hand. The goal is your journey and the motivation your fuel to get there.

You may have many goals, but no fuel to get there. You may have gallons and gallons of fuel, but no journey to go on.

What can prevent you from going on that journey? There are many more things holding you back than you realize.

YOU are probably the biggest cause. The way you approach a goal will ultimately affect whether you will achieve it or not. The good news is that you can break free from whatever is holding you back.

Friends and family are next in line. They may have your best interests at heart, but often their inaction is what lies behind their advice to you.

It is really common for those around to hold you back simply because they are not doing anything themselves. For example, if you are losing weight, some of your support system will inadvertently sabotage you by offering you food or alcohol.

I'm not saying that all advice is bad, it's just that sometimes the most well meaning of comments can empty your fuel can faster than, well a very fast thing.

You need to spot these things when someone or something is draining your fuel and put a stop to it, either mentally or physically. You need to break free from whatever is holding you back. Now that you know this, let's get started.

Setting career goals

One of the toughest issues in making a good career choice and career goal setting is identifying what it is that you want. Even when it seems that you know what you want, you may still have doubts on if your career choice is the right one for you.

Reaching clarity in those issues may be the most important thing you can do in your career planning and goal setting. Here are a few career goal setting guidelines that can help.

Most people, even very successful ones, have some periods in their career path when they seem unsure about their career choice and goals. It is totally human to feel that way.

Often, such periods just come and go. For example, they come when you face some overwhelming obstacles on your way. It is all over as soon as you get through these obstacles.

That situation by itself is not a problem of choosing a career, only a test of your perseverance in seeing it through but what if those doubts persist, or if they always live somewhere in the background of your thoughts? If it just does not feel right?

If this is the case, then it is time to look more carefully at your career choice and overall career objectives.

Often we choose or are placed in a career because it just seems like the right step to make or that is what your studies have focused on.

The only problem is that sometimes that passion that we once had as a young

adult are now gone, or the realism of the job has taken the interest and joy out of it.

That is when it is time to set a new career goal or objective. Choosing the right career goal to sink into requires a great deal of soul searching. You need to ask yourself these questions beforehand:

1. Am I making the kind of money that I want to make?
2. Do I want to make more money?
3. Does money even matter to me?
4. Do I like what I'm doing right now?
5. What am I passionate about?
6. What could I be doing that would make me happier than I am right now?
7. Would I be happier simply switching positions or getting a promotion; or would I be happier changing careers all together?
8. Why am I still working here?
9. What is stopping me from leaving this job or getting that promotion?
10. What is stopping me from leaving this job?

These are all vital questions that you have to ask yourself before deciding what your career goals are going to be. If you are honest with yourself, you will know exactly what direction you should be going in.

Without being honest with yourself you can't expect to better your life, you can only expect to have to ask yourself these questions all over again until you find happiness.

Career Goal Setting Plan

The following table provides you with a simple outline of the factors you may want to consider and identify when setting and analyzing your career goals in a step by step format.

Career Goal You must Define and write them down in order of priority	Benefits and Advantages of achieving this goal Listing these may help to motivate you	Key Steps That you Need to Take	When Will I do This? Give Yourself deadlines	Support and Resources (What support and from whom do I need, what resources, such as time, money, contacts)	Outcomes and Reflection (Record whether you achieved the goal and what worked or did not work along the way for future reference)
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The above table sort of shows you the who, what, where, when, and how of career goal setting. It is just like finding the facts for a story. Journalists have to answer all of these questions in order to get the full story.

That is the same thing that you have to when setting career goals. Let me show you in exact detail in the next diagram.

<u>Who</u>	<u>What</u>	<u>Where</u>	<u>When</u>	<u>How</u>
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Who will I ask for help?	What do I want the outcome to be?	Where should I start?	When should I begin?	How should I begin?
Who will benefit from my career goal?	What will I do to get started?	Where will my career goal put me in 10 years?	When Do I want these goals to be reached?	How will these goals affect my future?
Who will I work with to accomplish my goal?	What will really make me happy?	Where will I apply my resources?	When will I apply my knowledge to begin attaining my goals?	How do I really feel about the goals that I have chosen?

Do you see what I'm talking about now? All of these questions have to be directed before you can begin to work on your career goals.

They will take some real thought and honesty to set them properly. When you have answered these questions you next have to begin to prioritize them. Let me show you an example.

John Smith wants to be the President of his company one day. Right now he is a mere data entry clerk. His company is a large corporation that works with computer repairs and security. John knows everything there is to know about computer repairs and can fix almost any computer he will ever look at.

He is efficient at using and finding hackers and securing computers are not hacked into. His boss is currently ignoring his advice so John is not so sure how to go about getting his dream of being president of the company someday which he

is more than capable of doing already. What should he do?

This is a time when John should begin to prioritize and decide how he can get to his goal. His ultimate goal is to be company president and he wants to accomplish this in 10 years.

John is currently 26 years old. Since he knows the what and the when; he must decide everything else. I opted to show you his possible steps in an easy to read table.....again.

	Steps for How	Steps for answering what	Steps for why	Steps for When	Steps for where
1	I will make a to-do list	I will put my ideas for improvement in it	I want to move up the next position at work	I will do this today!	I will do this in private
2	How can I get noticed	I will make a presentation showing my idea for improvement	Because I can't move up if no one knows I'm there	I will do this the day it is finished	I will do this at work
3	How can I let my work be seen	I will now show my superior my presentation	I know my work is good and strong	I will do this when I know my boss can't ignore me	I will do this in my bosses office or invite him to my house

4	How can I get the higher ups to see my work?	I will schedule time with a major company player to give my ideas	I can't move up until I make friends with higher ups	I will invite colleagues and higher ups to a cocktail party this weekend	I will do this during a meeting
5	How can I keep moving up?	Now that I'm getting closer to higher ups I will share my ideas verbally & get impression		I will do this after 3 months of making friends with higher ups	I will bring these up at meetings with backup presentation ready if requested

This is just a sample of the first 3 months of John executing his goal to get higher in the company.

Naturally becoming president will take a lot longer than 3 months but getting closer to superiors and colleagues at work is a great start as long as you don't step on anyone's toes and build their trust. Over time, you can introduce your ideas and present them in a professional manner at the right time.

When you see that your company needs help on something work in secret and bring in a finished product at the right time or schedule private meetings with your boss.

This shows that you are not only ambitious but also motivated and determined. It is a great way to move up in the company. In order to do this properly, you must take the steps in succession and not try to become a president in 1 year. That is unrealistic.

Although John will want to begin working for his long term goal of being company president, he should also begin by setting short term goals that will lead him there.

The first goal can start with moving up one position at work and continue on in this method. That way he can celebrate each promotion and advancement separately rather than focusing only on his inability to make president right away.

From here, John should just follow the step by step methods mentioned in the above sections for exact steps to attaining and setting goals. Just remember that you have to develop an action plan if you are going to succeed.

Four strategies can help you to develop an effective action plan.

- State your goal in very specific terms that you can accept
- Plan backwards from your goal for the best results
- Confront your fears and expectations immediately and progressively
- Put your plan on paper and into action as soon as possible

Your goal

Planning a career move is much like mapping your route for a road trip.

If you don't know where you are going, you can't decide how to get

there, but if you do know where you are going, you'll get there faster.

Goals like "Go back to school" are too general and not specific enough. You have to translate these goals into specific statements such as "Enter a college accounting program by next fall" or "For the next two months, search for work in the computer securities field." You have to know exactly what you want to do and when to go about it.

Plan Backwards

One of the best ways to move forward is to plan backwards. Start by asking yourself if you can accomplish your goal today. If you can't why do you think that is? What do you have to do first? Is there something you have to do before that?

Keep thinking backwards like this until you arrive at tasks you could do today. This will help you to attain the goal's starting point.

For example, if your goal is to take a two-year business administration program, could you start today? No, you have to be accepted to the program first. Could you be accepted today? No, you have to apply first. Could you apply today? No, you have to decide which post-secondary institutions to apply to. Could you decide today? No, you have to do some research first and so on. I could do this all day but you get the point.

Don't worry if your list of things to do becomes several lists.

Deal with your fears and expectations of yourself

Look over your list of things you will have to do to achieve your goal. Do you believe that you can do it? If you have doubts, take some time to think

them

through

first.

Are your expectations realistic? Have you succeeded or failed at tasks that were similar to this before? What can you do to improve your chances of success this time around? For example, if there is a good chance you will not follow through with your plans, you have to ask yourself why.

Are you a professional procrastinator? If so, what can you do to make sure that you will keep going until you reach your goal? Are you afraid of failing?

If so, work at improving the skills you will need. Or test the waters by taking an evening or distance education course before you sign up for a whole program. If you are having trouble identifying your fears or figuring out how to deal with them, talk to people you trust. Ask for their suggestions, but always make your own decisions.

Put your plan into action from to do list

By this stage, you probably have more than one list of things to do and, if it is necessary, some plans for avoiding or dealing with potential problems. Now you need to put them all together into one comprehensive plan. You must list tasks in the order in which you must complete them and set deadlines for the completion of any major plans. Successful career planners keep themselves on track using a variety of methods, such as:

- marking tasks on a monthly calendar (noting important dates such as application deadlines or action plans)
- making weekly or daily lists of things to do and cross off tasks as they are completed
- using a computer program to create timeline charts which give you your time limits for task completion
- Using a commercial appointment book or a notebook; even a palm pilot with a new page for each day or week.

Use whatever methods work best for you. If it is absolutely necessary, ask a friend to check on your progress occasionally or question you on your successes because you are more likely to get things done if you know you'll be asked about it.

Now you have learned all that you could want to set successful career goals. If you follow the things in this section and have remembered the previous sections, you will do just fine because there is nothing to hold you back now.

Setting Goals for Fitness/health

Before beginning any fitness program, you need to decide what it is you want out of it. Do you want to improve your appearance, your physical skills; build endurance, flexibility or strength; are you trying to lose weight?

Make sure the activities that you pick meet the goals for what you want to get out of it.

Set Yourself up for Success

It's important not to undermine yourself with goals that are too long-term or impossible to attain.

For example; "I want to lose all my extra weight before summer" is too unrealistic; particularly if you have a great deal of weight to lose and summer is 3 months away.

Too often goals are an end result of whatever program we choose, and not a part of it. You have to make goals an active part of your life by creating goals that

lead to the next goal works best.

It is just like the backwards technique mentioned in the above section. For instance, setting a goal to lose 10 pounds puts the goal at the end without putting too much pressure on you right away. You can add to this goal once it is achieved and so on.

Setting a goal to join an aerobics class and attend it three times a week makes the weight loss goal a part of the program.

You will have set a goal that is achievable almost immediately. This gives you a sense of accomplishment, which is an incentive to setting and achieving the next goal.

Keep a Record

Write your goals down so you have something to look forward to as well as back on. To begin, map out no more than eight weeks of activities towards your first fitness goal.

Working within your lifestyle, decide on a regular program. It's not necessary to work out every day, especially when beginning a new program as your body is not used to the stress. Our bodies become tired if expected to do hard work seven days a week.

Exercising every other day is a safe and realistic goal. Keep track of how much time you want to spend doing an activity, followed by how much time you will actually spend on it.

Not everyone is looking at fitness and health to lose weight. Perhaps you are just looking to better your health.

In this case you should think of this; we tend to focus most on the area of our health in our lives, when our health is already failing or less than stellar.

Unfortunately, it may sometimes take a life threatening event, illness or some type of physical rehabilitation to give us a wake up call to make tough changes in our current health habits.

We try to follow through on sound health principles such as enough sleep, a healthy diet and plenty of exercise, yet we may not have the time in our busy schedule or have strong enough will power to implement a balanced and healthy lifestyle.

With the pressures of the fast pace world in which we live, stress can set in and can take its toll. These days we are on the road more often.

What that means is that we are eating on the road as well, which doesn't always offer us the best or healthiest choices.

We are lucky to get six, maybe seven hours of sleep per night while we now work at least six days per week.

The old saying, "At least I have my health" is finally starting to mean something to a great deal of people. You might be wondering what you can do to improve your health.

The first thing to do is to prioritize what is most important to you in your own individual lifestyle. You can begin by asking yourself these questions:

1. What is my current exercise goal this month or do I even have one?
2. What gets in my way when starting or continuing a balanced health maintenance program?
3. What is my target weight and my plan and timeframe to get there?

3. How can I improve in getting more sleep?
5. What is my ideal overall appearance hopes?
6. Would a personal trainer help me develop and reach my goals more effectively and can I afford one?
7. Of the meals I eat each month, how can I eat healthier, and what can I change in order to eat healthier without getting bored?
8. What books and classes can I take to improve upon my health?
9. Is it time for me to go in for a complete physical and when the last one was that I had
10. How can I reduce or completely eliminate alcohol, chemical dependencies and/or smoking in my body?
11. What ways may I be able to cook in a healthier manner?
12. How can I improve my current heart rate, blood pressure, and cholesterol count?

The fact of the matter is that it doesn't matter what your fitness/health goals are. If you have read the above sections on setting goals properly, and this section about fitness and health, you are ready to go.

You have to be honest with yourself at all times when it comes to your personal goals. If you are unsure as to what constitutes good and balanced nutrition, visit <http://www.foodguidepyramid.com> for the correct nutritional information.

You should also consult a doctor before making any changes to your diet or exercise regimen to ensure that you will not harm yourself. That is all there is to it!

Setting Relationship Goals

In order for a relationship to be satisfying those involved in it must set clear goals for it. Most people go into relationships with a vague idea of what they want out of it. When pressed, they often are unable to specify their goals for the relationship in the long term.

Goals can be stated or written, but they should be agreed upon by the partners at the beginning of the relationship.

Relationship goals sometimes are dictated by behavior. However, for a relationship to work, the goals stated should be only those on which both partners can agree.

The relationship goal should be kept in a safe place and reviewed annually as our needs tend to change annually. During the annual review the goals can be modified, and the objectives to be achieved for the next year can be identified.

Relationship goals should be long term, but they should be general enough to give the partners enough latitude to be satisfying and easy to achieve. Annual objectives based on these goals can be more specific and short term, motivating the partners to successfully achieving them within the year.

Relationship goals should be developed to cover key issues involved in the relationship, but they can cover any area of human behavior. In order to best know how and what goals need to be set, you have to ask yourself a variety of questions to get to know yourself and your partner. It is a little quiz and it goes as follows:

Relationship Goal Setting Quiz

1. How can we best nurture our support for one another?
2. How will we communicate with one another on a daily basis?
3. How dependent will we be toward one another and is it healthy?
4. How can we give our mutual intimacy a boost in the relationship?

5. How long do we intend our relationship to last for example, do we want to get married?
6. How will we ensure that we respect each other's rights in this relationship?
7. How will we help one another "grow" in this relationship?
8. How can we keep the fun in our relationship?
9. How will we include others in our relationship without losing our support for one another?
10. How should or will we approach problems in our relationship?
11. How will we solve problems?
12. How are we going to handle various differences of opinion?
13. How will we handle irritation with one another and is it worth the effort?
14. How are we going to handle fights and bring them to a healthy resolution?
15. At what point will we seek help for ourselves if our fighting gets out of hand or will we even bother, for example will we seek counseling together?
16. Will we agree to disagree?
17. How can we ensure mutual growth in this relationship?
18. How open are we to taking joint and individual responsibility for our relationship?
19. How can we ensure that our individuality doesn't get lost in this relationship?
20. How open are we to being assertive in our relationship?
21. How can we use our unique, individual personalities to help each other and our relationship to grow?

22. What steps will we take if one or both of us begins to feel smothered by the relationship?
23. What steps are we willing to take if one or both of us has the need for mental health assistance?
24. How are we going to promote each other's physical health and will we be supportive of each other?
25. What steps can we take to handle jealousy, a sense of competition, or resentment toward one another?
26. How are we going to make time to do all the things we want to do?
27. How are we going to arrange our schedules so that we can pursue our unique, individual interests and still spend quality time together?
28. How free are we to pursue our distinct interests and friends?
29. How committed are we to setting up long range relationship goals and short range objectives to reach those goals?
30. How committed are we to setting up times in which we can nourish one another and keep our relationship on track?
31. How can we structure ways to get the "required" relationship maintenance tasks.
32. How can we delegate the maintenance tasks so that neither of us feels that we are doing too much?
33. What place will religion, hobbies, sports, and outside interests have in our relationship?
34. How important are those things to our relationship?
35. Can we nurture our differences?

I know that this sounds like a lot of questions, but seriously; if we are all realistic all of these questions matter. If you cannot honestly take this little quiz seriously; how can you expect to take the relationship seriously?

How to Score: For every same answer give yourselves 1 point, and for every different answer, take 1 point away.

If you and your partner score below 17, that doesn't mean that you should break up, it just means that you both have to sit down and decide on your personal relationship goals together and form a compromise that you can both agree with.

All relationships require compromise by both parties if it is going to succeed. You just need to re-evaluate what your goals are going to be.

If you and your partner scored above 17, it simply means that you are on the right track and are likely looking to get the same things out of the relationship.

You will still have to compromise a bit (you are human) to keep the relationship going, but you are heading in the right direction.

What you need to realize is that setting relationship goals is best when both parties are involved in the process. If only one is working for the betterment of the relationship, it is doomed to fail anyway because one partner will always feel overworked in the relationship.

Setting relationship goals is no different than setting up any other type of goal. The largest difference is that you generally have to set your goals with the other person involved.

Setting relationship goals work for all types of relationships; be they friendships, family relationships, colleagues or partners.

You can try to set the goals and work on them yourself, but it will be very difficult and quite unsatisfying. That is why the key to setting relationship goals is

to have the full co-operation and support of those whose relationships you would like to get the most out of.

Other than that, you can simply follow the steps by method of achieving your goals as is mentioned in the above section entitled, "How to set goals effectively".

Setting Financial Goals

The first step in personal financial planning is learning to control your day-to-day financial affairs to enable you to do the things that bring you satisfaction and enjoyment. This is achieved by planning and following a budget.

The second step in personal financial planning, and the topic of this section, is choosing and following a course toward achieving your long-term financial goals.

As with anything else in life, without financial goals and specific plans for meeting them, you will just drift along and leave our future to chance. A wise man once said: "Most people don't plan to fail; they just fail to plan."

The end result is the same and it is a failure to reach financial independence.

The third step in personal financial planning is learning how to build a financial safety net, which is like to having a retirement fund for when you are no longer generating any income.

FOUR SIMPLE STEPS FOR SETTING FINANCIAL GOALS

Step 1: Identify and write down your financial goals, whether they are saving to send your kids to college or University, buying a new car, saving for a down payment on a house, going on vacation, paying off credit card debt, or planning for you and your spouse's retirement.

Step 2: Break each financial goal down into several short-term (less than 1 year), medium-term (1 to 3 years) and long-term (5 years or more) goals; which will make this process easier.

Step 3: Educate yourself and do your research. Read Money magazine or a book about investing, or surf the Internet's investment web sites. Do not be afraid of the stock market.

Yes, there is a potential for loss, but if you do your research and get a trustworthy broker, you can ensure your financial future. Just remember not to put all of your eggs in one basket.

Diversify your portfolio. With a little effort you can learn enough to make educated decisions that will increase your net worth many times over. Then identify small, measurable steps you can take to achieve these goals, and put this action plan to work.

Step 4: Evaluate your progress as often as needed. Review your progress monthly, quarterly, or at any other interval you feel comfortable with, but at least semi-annually, to determine if your program is working.

If you're not making a satisfactory amount of progress on a particular goal, re-evaluate your approach and make changes as necessary.

There are no hard and fast rules for implementing a financial plan. The important thing is to at least do something as opposed to nothing, and to start NOW.

Sometimes when people write down their goals, they discover that some of the goals are too broad in meaning and nearly impossible to reach, while others may seem smaller in scope and easier to achieve.

It is okay to dare to dream about riches, but be realistic about what you can actually do. A good idea is to break your goals down into three separate categories of time.

One more thing to remember: by placing a time frame on your goals you are motivating yourself to get started and helping to allow you the chance to succeed. Just remember that you can adjust the time frame whenever you want to.

Long-term goals (over 5 years) are those things that won't happen overnight, no matter how hard you work to achieve them.

They make take a long time to accomplish (hence the reason they are called long term goals), so give yourself a reasonable amount of time, that are based on your best estimates of what it will take to achieve them.

Examples of long-term goals might include college education for a child, retirement plan or purchasing a home. Whatever the case, these goals generally require longer commitments and often more money in the end.

Intermediate-term goals (1-5 years) are the type of goals that can't be executed overnight but might not take many years to accomplish. Examples might include purchasing/replacing a car, getting an education or certification, or paying off your debts like credit cards etc. (depending on the amount).

Short-term goals (within one year) generally take one year or less to achieve, based on the date the task is needed, the total estimated cost, and the required savings.

What are your goals? To find out, you need to make up a list, decide which timeline your goal fits into, detail the steps necessary to achieve your goals, then take action toward reaching those goals. It's that simple.

You might be wondering where to start when deciding how to go about to start your financial goals. These are some basic tips to help you in making the best choices for you.

After looking at these tips, it is best for you to go out and do some research to find the method(s) that suit you best.

- Begin by taking 5%-10% out of each pay check and put it in a savings account
- Look into different investment strategies such as IRA's, stocks, RRSP's, mutual Funds, personal investments etc. There are many more and all can assist you in short and long term goals.
- Start making a budget for yourself that leaves you with some extra money and follow it
- Use your coupons that is why they are there. It seems like small savings, but add together you could save 20-30 dollars at each trip to the market
- Shop around for bargains
- Do not live outside of your means
- Work with a credit counselor to get help in lowering your monthly expenses and get rid of your debt

These are just some of the things that you can do when beginning to realize your financial goals. Of course, you also have to follow the steps in the above sections on how to successfully set goals.

The steps to setting goals successfully don't change, only the methods that you use to go about it. By that I mean; when it is career wise, work to get noticed;

for relationships, work on maintaining your intimacy or getting it back; in financial matters, work to save and invest money etc. It really is that easy.

Setting family goals

Every family could use a little bit of help in setting family goals. Perhaps your family wants to take a really fantastic vacation together this year; That three day romantic getaway just for the parents that never seems to happen; the home improvement project no one ever seems to have time for.

Most families live in a certain budget. Living within budget can help your family pay off those credit cards once and for all and realize your child's dreams of going to college or your dream of getting a bigger and better house.

Perhaps your family's goal is to see your kids go from a C average to a B or have more quality family time together. Maybe you want to start your own home-based business so that you can spend more time with your family.

Yet, each and every one of these worthy goals can be easily achieved in a somewhat remarkable and FUN way.

In fact, when you know how, working toward a goal can be more fun than achieving the goal can. If you want to add some real teamwork in your family and deepen your familial relationships, you must set goals with your spouse and with your kids.

Just make sure that anyone who participates in the goal setting process is motivated enough to follow through. Anyone who is not fully committed to achieving the goal should not be allowed to participate or reap in the rewards.

If you really want to teach your kids something worthwhile that will help with every aspect of their lives as long as they live, teach them how to set goals.

Here's the goal-setting system that seems to work for everyone who's tried it. It will work with basically any goal you can imagine and in specific, family goals that

you can achieve together.

It is a great way to get the whole family working together toward a positive environment. If nothing else, your family will have a great time trying.

1. Dream the goal.

Make a list of everything that you each think you want... all the goals you think you want to achieve. They may involve money, or material things, or better relationships, or a special vacation, or a change in your personal attitudes or habits.

Get some paper and a pen and go somewhere where you can be completely alone and uninterrupted. Write down everything that comes to mind, being careful not to judge or dismiss any of your ideas. Remember that every member of the family should do this as well. You will all compare and agree to compromise on which goals to work toward first etc.

After you have this long list of goals written down, put the list away for a few days. Some of the things you wrote may begin creating a burning energy in your mind.

Review your list in about a week and see which of the goals you're still interested in. Anything that you don't feel strongly about should be removed from the list. Goal setting will not work if you're not really motivated to achieve the goal. Have your family members do the same.

After you identify the goal or goals that you want to work on start writing everything down. A spiral notebook just for your goals might be very helpful. Write down your goal on the first page of your notebook and you can all start formulating them in order of the least to most important.

2. Identify the obstacles that may prevent you from achieving the goal.

After you've set your goal, make a list of things that may threaten the successful achievement of the goal and what you can do to remove those threats.

For example, are you and your spouse or child fighting over some of these goals? Write down ALL the obstacles that you feel may prevent you from reaching your goal.

This is a particularly magical part of goal setting because it takes all of the obstacles that seemed so huge before and reduces them to little letters that form words on a piece of paper. Once the obstacles are clearly defined, they are more often than not, easily solved.

3. Identify the things you need to help you achieve the goal.

After you've identified the obstacles, make a written list of the things you will need in order to achieve your goal.

This list should also include the people whose cooperation can help you work toward your goal. Some of the items on this list may include some things that will represent solutions to the problems you wrote down earlier.

4. Set a date for the achievement of your goal.

Setting a date for the attainment of your goal is the ignition for the goal-seeking missile in your mind. Make sure that your date is realistic... not so soon that it's impossible, but not so delayed that it's not interesting.

Make sure you write the date of your goal down next to your goal. Once you've set this date, you should never change it unless it is absolutely necessary.

5. Write down the goal. Review it often.

Once you have your goal and the date in writing, make more reminders of your goal. Put these reminders all around your house, your car, your bathroom.

They will remind you of your goal and the date that the goal will be achieved by, and each time you see this information you will be programming your mind to take action toward your goal. This is an important step.

WRITE IT DOWN. REVIEW IT OFTEN.

5. Make a step-by-step plan.

First, let's review: You know what you want and you know you want it badly.

You have identified the problems you need to remove before you can achieve your goal and you know whose help and cooperation you will need. You know the date for the attainment of the goal.

Now, make a step-by-step action plan. Write down every little thing, no matter how small, that you must do in order to reach your goal.

Break the project into the tiniest of pieces... If you have a complicated list, jot down all the ideas that come to mind and then put them in date sequence later.

If necessary, number them and then type them into a word processor or re-write them in date sequence. Each item should also have a deadline for accomplishment so you can see you're on target along the way.

This is an important part of your goal achievement so don't cut corners on your plan, especially if it is a complicated goal or there are a lot of obstacles to overcome.

6. Follow your plan!

This is the fun part, because after you've set and hit your first goal, you'll know that all you have to do to achieve your goal is to follow your plan!

Review your plan every single day. Work on something on your list every single day.

Stay on schedule. Don't fall behind. Review your goal and the deadline. Mark off items off the list as you accomplish them.

You can't control every aspect of your future, of course, but you will be surprised how many things you really can control with these effective goal-setting techniques. This is a great way to get the family working together doing something positive that is for the benefit of all. If nothing else it will give you all the time spent together to achieve one or more goals and you will definitely be together.

Setting Artistic Goals

Are you the kind of person that always admired the artistic people of the world like singers, actors, writers, poets, and painters? Have you always wondered what masterpieces you could create if you only had the time?

Chances are, if you are looking to set artistic goals, you already have the passion, interest, and talents. If not, perhaps part of your goal is to go to school for it.

Whatever the reason or skill level you are at, you too can make an artistic achievement, if you know how to set the goal and how to apply it.

Before trying to achieve your artistic goals, you should first be certain that you know all of the steps needed to begin. You should also know what your personal skill level is so that you begin chasing that artistic goal on the right track

from the beginning.

Ask yourself these questions before sinking into it.

1. What style of art most interests me, for example music, painting, writing etc.?
2. What is my current skill level?
3. Do I want to pursue it as a hobby or possible side career?
4. Do I need to go to school or a training course?
5. Am I looking for certification or just basic skills?
6. Do I have the time to go to school or a training course?
7. Am I just trying to relieve stress or create a masterpiece or salable work?
8. How much does doing this meant to me?
9. Is this really something that I want to pursue?
10. Will doing this make me happy?

When deciding on setting artistic goals, you must follow the steps by step method in the above sections. The most important thing that you can do to help you set and reach your artistic goals is to stick to it.

That's right; the best thing that you can do to achieve your artistic goals is to persevere.

Art consists of 90% inspiration and 10% perspiration. Just inspire yourself in the best ways that suit you. If you follow our guide and keep your focus on your goals, you will succeed. I guarantee it.

Get Motivated To Achieve your Goals

How could I write a guide to setting and achieving goals if I didn't actually give you a few tips on the most important part of setting goals?

The key to successful goal setting is your ability to motivate yourself and stay motivated until you have achieved your goals.

Getting and staying motivated is not as difficult as it may seem. It just takes discipline. Let's look at the thing that you should do in order to get and stay motivated.

First, let's take a look at what motivation really is.

- Motivation is not a product of outside influence; it is a natural product of your desire to achieve something and your belief that you are capable of doing it
- Positive goals that are geared toward your pleasure are much more powerful motivators than negative ones that are based on fear. The right combination of both is the most powerful and motivating mix.

Now let's look at what you can actually do to motivate yourself and stay that way.

1. Start with visualizing your future success and model the feelings you'll experience when you achieve it
2. Mentally walk the path towards this success and base your feelings at different milestones on the way
3. Assign a high priority to each task that you must achieve which will give each task a priority in your mind
4. Set a target for the amount of work you will do each day toward your goals
5. Visualize the desired outcome: Create a picture of what the desired outcome will look like, and have this vision in your mind at all times

6. Set milestones of the things you like to do and the things that you are good at
7. Use visual indicators to monitor progress and complete the task
8. Give yourself affirmations to remind yourself of how capable you are at reaching your goals
9. Watch movies that motivate you
10. Listen to music that motivates you
11. If you work better with competition, make a deal with a friend or family member to compete for the goal for example who gets there first! It can be hypothetical and doesn't necessarily have to be for real
12. Get help and support from people around you or from a professional in the field for example a personal trainer, finance manager etc.
13. Define your own version of success, don't let others define success for you
14. Ignore any negative influences or responses to your efforts
15. Make a conscious effort to do better than you have ever done in the past
16. Focus on the positive achievements and not the negatives
17. Share your successes with others as this will keep you focused and help you voice your accomplishments which will realize your achievements for you
18. Acknowledge your strengths and weaknesses and work on them both
19. Train yourself to finish what you start by refusing to quit until you are done
20. Don't be afraid to make mistakes and don't punish yourself for making them

Goal setting Do's & Don'ts

For the purposes of this guide I thought that a good do's and don'ts category could help you get to the nitty-gritty in a nice and quick manner. Think about it; if you are reading this, you want to start setting goals and achieving them now not later. This can be a quick guide for re-reading later.

<u>Do's</u>	<u>Don'ts</u>
Visualize your desired outcome	Go into your goal with a defeatist attitude
Write down your course of action in an easy step-by-step format that can be checked off with each accomplishment	Try to memorize all of the steps as most will be forgotten
Think positive all the time	Let yourself be overcome with the negatives or set backs
Surround yourself in motivating factors and keep them in easy to spot locations	Forget the reason why you have set up your in the first place
Set your plan of action as soon as you know what you want and start right away	Procrastinate in beginning your course of action
Be realistic in your setting your goals	Set your goals too high to achieve them
Be specific in the goals you choose	Set goals that are too vague
Learn to be organized in your thinking patterns	Let anything stand in the way of achieving your goals
Make an effort to keep track of all of your achievements	Downplay your achievements, you are keeping yourself motivated
Share your achievements with those around you	Let yourself get off track, stay focused on your goals!

Increasing Time Management Skills for Achieving Goals

Effective goal setting begins and ends with time management. You must be

able to balance your time in the best way possible in order to achieve your goals. Most of us fail to achieve goals because we “lack the time”. That is why this section needed to be included in this guide.

The concept of time management has been in existence for more than 100 year believe it or not. Unfortunately the term "Time management" creates a false impression of what a person is able to do.

Time can't be managed, time is uncontrollable and we can only manage ourselves and our use of time. That is all that can be done. Time management is actually self management.

For effective time management we need the ability to plan, delegate, organize, direct and control every aspect of our lives just to find 30 minutes a day that is devoted to something productive that is just for us.

There are common time wasters which need to be identified

In order for a time management process to work it is important to know what aspects of our personal management need to be improved. Otherwise what is the point in trying?

Below you will find some of the most frequent reasons for reducing effectiveness in and around our lives. You might want to check the ones which are causing to be the major obstacles to your own time management. These are referred to as your time stealers.

Identifying your time stealers

- Interruptions for example the telephone or TV (these are also distractions)
- Interruptions, for example, guests
- Meetings

- Tasks you should have had someone else do for you
- Procrastination and indecision
- Acting with out total information
- Dealing with other people's issues or problems
- Some sort of personal crisis, for example, family member is sick or injured.
- Unclear communication
- Inadequate knowledge
- Unclear objectives and priorities
- Lack of planning
- Stress, anxiety and fatigue
- Inability to say "No" to anybody with a request
- Personal disorganization

There are quite a few isn't there? Fortunately there are strategies you can use to manage your time in a better way and be more in control and reduce stress, but you can analyze your time and see how you may be both the cause and the solution to your time challenges.

Below, we will look at time management issues in more detail

1. Shifting priorities and crisis management. Management guru Peter Drucker says that "crisis management is actually the form of management preferred by most managers." What is ironic is that actions taken before the crisis could have prevented it in the first place.

2. The telephone. Have you ever had one of those days when you just had to answer the phone with "grand central station, how can I help you?" The telephone can be our greatest communication tool can be our biggest enemy to

effectiveness if you don't know how to control its hold over you.

3. Lack of priorities/objectives. This is probably the biggest and most important time waster. It affects all we do both professionally and personally. Those who accomplish the most in a day know exactly what they want to accomplish beforehand, just ask Donald Trump.

Unfortunately too many of us think that goals and objectives are yearly things and not daily considerations. These results in too much time spent on the minor things and not on the things which are important to our lives

4. Attempting too much. Many people today feel that they have to accomplish everything yesterday and don't give themselves enough time to do things properly. This leads only to half finished projects and no feeling of achievement as all things are done in a hurry and appear rushed to others.

5. Drop in visitors. The five deadliest words that rob your time are "Have you got a minute?" Everyone does it; colleagues, the boss, your peers, and your family and friends.

Knowing how to deal with interruptions is one of the best skills you can learn.

6. Ineffective delegation. Good delegation is considered a key skill in both managers and leaders of homes and work.

The best managers have an ability to delegate work to staff and family members to ensure it is done correctly. This is probably the best way of building a team's moral and reducing your own workload at the same time.

The general rule is this; if one of your people around you can do it 80% as well as you can, and then delegate it.

8. Procrastination. The biggest thief of time is not decision making but decision avoidance. By reducing the amount of procrastinating you do you can substantially increase the amount of active time available to you.

9. The inability to say "no!" The general rule is; if people can dump their work or problems on to your shoulders they will do it.

Some of the most stressed people around lack the skill to 'just say no' for fear of upsetting people. Get over it because these people can do it for you.

10. Meetings. Studies have shown that the average professional person spends about 17 hours a week in meetings and about 6 hours in the planning time and untold hours in the follow up.

There are many ways we can manage our time. I have listed some strategies you can use to manage your time in a better and more efficient manner. They are noted below.

1. Always define your goals as clearly as possible.

Do you find you are not doing what you want to do just because your goals have not been set properly yet?

One of the factors which make successful and happy people stand out is their ability to work out what they want to achieve and have written goals which they can review them constantly.

Your long term goals should impact on your daily activities and be included on your "to do" list. Without a goal or objective people tend to just drift off personally and professionally

2. Analyze your use of time.

Are you spending enough time on the projects which although may not be urgent now but are things that you need to do to develop yourself or your career?

If you are constantly asking yourself "What can I do to make things easier for me right now?" it will help you to focus on 'important tasks' and stop reacting to tasks which seem urgent (or pleasant to do) but carry no importance towards your goals.

Try getting and using a personal calendar, setting reminders on your computer, cell phone or palm pilot.

3. Have a plan.

How can you achieve your goals without a plan? I don't even think that is possible.

Most people know what they want but have no plan to achieve it except by sheer hard work. What's the point in doing hard work when you don't know how to apply it?

Your yearly plan should be reviewed daily and reset as your achievements are met. Successful people make lists constantly.

It enables them to stay on top of priorities and enable them to remain flexible to changing priorities. This should be done for both personal and business goals.

4. Action plan analysis.

Problems will always happen when you set a plan. The value of a good plan is to identify them early and seek out solutions immediately.

Good time management enables you to measure the progress towards your goals because "What you can measure, you can control".

Always try to be proactive in the achievement of successfully managing your time.

Time management is not a hard subject to understand, but unless you are committed to building better time management techniques into your daily routine you'll only achieve partial (or no) results and end up right back where you started.

You have to commit to managing your time better and remember to include time for yourself.

The lesson that you need to learn is that the more time we spend planning our time and activities the more time we will have for those activities.

By setting goals and eliminating time wasters and doing this everyday you may find you will have extra time in the week to spend on those people and activities most important to you.

Managing Stress for Goal Achievement

Stress management wouldn't seem like something that would be a part of setting goals but it could be the difference between you achieving them and not achieving them.

There is positive stress and negative stress. Positive stress adds anticipation and excitement to life, and we all thrive under a certain amount of stress. Deadlines, competitions, confrontations, and even our frustrations and sorrows add depth and enrichment to our lives.

Our goal is not to eliminate stress but to learn how to manage it and how to use it to help you achieve your goals. Insufficient stress acts as a depressant and may leave you feeling bored or dejected; on the other hand, excessive stress may leave you feeling all mixed up inside.

What you need to do is find the optimal level of stress which will individually motivate but not overwhelm each of us.

How Can I Tell what is Optimal Stress for Me?

There is no single level of stress that is optimal for every person. We are all individual creatures with unique requirements. As such, what is distressing to one may be a joy to another.

And even when we agree that a particular event is distressing, we are likely to differ in our physiological and psychological responses to it. That's just human nature.

The person who loves to arbitrate disputes and moves from job site to job site would be stressed in a job that was stable and routine, whereas the person who thrives under stable conditions would very likely be stressed on a job where duties were highly varied.

Also, our personal stress requirements and the amount which we can tolerate before we become distressed changes with our ages. It has been found that most illnesses are related to unrelieved stress; for example, anxiety disorders, bowel disorders etc.

If you are experiencing stress symptoms, you have gone beyond your optimal stress level; you need to reduce the stress in your life and/or improve your ability to manage it.

Stress symptoms include, but are not limited to:

- Hair falling out
- Anxiety attacks
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Increase of appetite

How Can I Manage Stress Better?

Identifying unrelieved stress and being aware of its effect on our lives is not sufficient for reducing its harmful effects. Just as there are many sources of stress, there are many possibilities for its management.

However, all require work in order to be effective. Changing the source of stress and/or changing your reaction to it. So you might be wondering how do you do it?

Let me show you.

1. Become aware of your stressors and your emotional and physical reactions.

- Notice your stress and its beginnings. Don't ignore it. Don't gloss over your problems.
- Determine what events stress you out. How much do these events mean to you?
- Determine how your body responds to the stress. Do you become nervous or physically upset? If so, in what specific ways?

2. Recognize what you can change.

- Can you change your stressors by avoiding or eliminating them completely?
- Can you reduce their intensity over time?
- Can you shorten your exposure to stress by taking a break, or leaving the physical premises?
- Can you devote the time and energy necessary to making a change (goal setting, time management techniques, and delayed gratification strategies may be helpful here)?

3. Reduce the intensity of your emotional reactions to stress.

The stress reaction is triggered by your perception of danger and/or fears physical danger or emotional danger, and fears of failure etc.

- Are you viewing your stressors in exaggerated terms and/or taking a difficult situation and making it a disaster?
- Are you expecting to please everyone because I'm telling you that you can't?
- Are you overreacting and viewing things as absolutely critical and urgent all the time? Do you feel you must always come out the winner in every situation?

- Work at adopting more moderate views; try to see the stress as something you can cope with rather than something that overpowers you.
- Try to temper your excess emotions. Put the situation in perspective. Do not labor on the negative aspects of everything find a positive in them if you can
- Take personal time to evaluate your surroundings clearly
- Take a deep breath when overly stressed and count backwards from 10
- Exercise a little bit or take a walk daily

5. Build your physical reserves.

- Eat well-balanced, nutritious meals.
- Maintain your ideal weight or appearance.
- Avoid nicotine, excessive caffeine, and alcohol.
- Mix leisure with work. Take breaks and get away when you can.
- Get enough sleep. Be as consistent with your sleep schedule as possible.

6. Maintain your emotional reserves.

- Develop some mutually supportive friendships/relationships.
- Pursue realistic goals which are meaningful to you, rather than goals others have for you that you do not share because they won't succeed.
- Expect some frustrations, failures, and sorrows and let them go.
- Always be kind and gentle with yourself be your own best friend.

Summary

Now that you have read this entire manual you have learned the skills that you will need in order to design and achieve any and all of the goals that you set out for yourself. In this manual, you have learned:

- How to create a successful goal setting strategy
- How to set goals effectively

- How to deal with stress that can hinder your efforts
- How to motivate yourself
- How to set goals in all aspects of your life
- How to manage your time toward achieving goals
- A step by step method for setting up and achieving your goals

Hopefully you have realized just how simple achieving your goals can be if you set your mind to it.

Setting goals properly doesn't have to be the most difficult thing that you can do because it can be very stimulating. If you challenge yourself right and set time aside to set your goals you can and will complete them successfully.

You have learned that procrastination is your enemy when you trying to achieve something in your life, and you have learned that goals can be set for just about every aspect of your life including family, relationships, finances, carrier, health/fitness etc.

Why should you waste your time dreaming and hoping for a better life when you can go and get one right now? You don't need to know anything other than what you have learned here on your way to a better future.

Get yourself on the right track and start setting your goals today!

