

Goal Setting for Personal and Professional Excellence

Why set goals?

Science has shown that goal setting is the most effective performance-enhancing strategy available.

How it Works

It helps in the discovery of new strategies and techniques. "Without goals, and plans to reach them, you are like a ship that has set sail with no destination."—*Fitzhugh Dodson, Author*

Goals direct attention and energy on the most important thing. "Man is a goal-seeking animal. His life only has meaning if he is reaching out and striving for his goal."—*Aristotle, Philosopher*

Setting goals helps sustain effort and motivation by focusing on short-term objectives. "I learned that if you want to make it bad enough, no matter how bad it is, you can make it."—*Gale Sayers, NFL Hall of Famer*

Goals provide a measure to evaluate progress and success. "You measure the size of the accomplishment by the obstacles you had to overcome to reach your goals."—*Booker T. Washington, Civil Rights Leader*

Define your goal-setting mission.

This article will assist you with being successful and understanding the importance of goal setting, and it will guide you through the steps of setting effective and meaningful goals.

Goal setting is a process that builds from figuring out what you want to accomplish and continues to guide how you get there. The steps in the goal-setting process encourage action and commitment for pursuing meaningful goals in many areas of your life, whether physical, social, spiritual, emotional, family, or otherwise:

- Understand the importance of setting meaningful and relevant goals.

- Understand the steps involved in setting meaningful and relevant goals.
- Take time to reflect on what values and dreams are important to you.
- Put effective goal setting into practice.
- Understand the importance of spending time thinking about and seeing yourself accomplishing your goals.



Steps for Setting Effective Goals

Goal setting is a process that builds upon itself. The process below encourages action and constantly changes as you change. Once you set a goal it is not set in stone; you can always come back and reassess or change your goals. True goal setting is a dynamic and fluid process that should continue throughout your life.

1. **Step 1:** Define your dream.
These are your *outcome goals*.
2. **Step 2:** Know where you are right now.
3. **Step 3:** Decide what you need to develop.
These are your *priorities*.
4. **Step 4:** Make a plan for steady improvement.
Include *actions* and *affirmations*.
5. **Step 5:** Set and pursue short-term goals.
These are your *daily to-dos*.
6. **Step 6:** Commit yourself completely.
What is your commitment strategy?
7. **Step 7:** Continually monitor your progress.
Ask yourself questions like these:

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Discussion:**

GPS!

**Charting a course to
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that create barriers

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Did you accomplish your daily goals? Take pride in these accomplishments.

If not, what obstacles did you face? Can you plan ahead for those obstacles the next day or week?

Do any of your priorities or daily actions need to be adjusted? Setting and achieving goals is an ongoing process, so take time to enjoy the journey.

U.S. Army, Joint Base Lewis-McChord. (2013, July). Introduction (pp. 3–6). In *Goal setting for personal and professional excellence*. Retrieved April 12, 2018, from <http://www.lewis-mcchord.army.mil/>

Five Dimensions of Strength

Five key dimensions, identified by the U.S. Army's Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness program, will serve as anchors to support your individual achievement throughout this planning process. These are as follows. (**Note:** Use them as a guide only; feel free to adapt them to reflect your own personal goals.)

Physical

Perform and excel in physical activities that require aerobic fitness, endurance, strength, healthy body composition, and flexibility derived through exercise, nutrition, and training.

Emotional

Approach life's challenges in a positive, optimistic way by demonstrating self-control, stamina, and good character with your choices and actions.

Social

Develop and maintain trusted, valued relationships and friendships that are personally fulfilling and foster good communication, including a comfortable exchange of ideas, views, and experiences.

Family

Aim to be part of a family unit that is safe, supportive, and loving, and provides the resources needed for all members to live in a healthy and secure environment. (Note that "family unit" can be expanded beyond a traditional family to include any network that counts as *family* to you.)

Spiritual

Spirituality refers to one's purpose, core values, beliefs, identity, and life vision. These elements, which define the essence of a person, enable one to build inner strength, make meaning of experiences, behave ethically, persevere through challenges, and be resilient when faced with adversity. An individual's spirituality draws upon personal, philosophical, psychological, and/or religious teachings, and forms the basis of the person's character.

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