

Goal setting for success



Setting goals is a common practice of highly successful people. You can set goals in any area of your life. Select an area related to your vision of well-being. Your vision should identify a gap or need that exists between how your life is at this time and how it can be in the future. For maximum motivation, the gap should be large enough to encourage change but not so large as to seem overwhelming or be demoralizing.

The five steps of goal setting can help you achieve your vision of well-being. It will likely require more than one goal to get to “where you want to be.” Your goals determine the specific actions you will need to take to move toward your vision.

Five steps of goal setting*

Step 1: What do you want to have happen?

- Identify as many responses as possible to “What do you want to have happen?” and then select one response to develop as a goal. Think about how the goal relates to your vision of well-being.
- Break general or large goals into smaller, specific short-term goals.
- Consider if your goal is realistic. Could you expect a friend or family member — someone like you — to achieve the goal?
- Avoid goals that are commandments you give yourself, such as “I will never...” or “I will always....” These statements suggest that you must be perfect — which is unrealistic.

Step 2: How will you know when you have achieved your goal?

- Identify the specific criteria to determine that you have achieved your stated goal to your satisfaction.

Step 3: What are you willing to do (or give up) to achieve your goal?

- Be honest with yourself. Note that the question is: “What are you *willing* to do?” not “What *should* you do?” to pursue and attain the goal.
- Select a different goal if you are not actually willing to do or give up what is necessary to pursue and attain your goal.

Step 4: When do you want it to happen?

- Begin working toward your goal now. Don’t delay unless a waiting period is truly necessary.
- Give yourself plenty of time to prepare. Your chances of long-term success increase if you maintain a steady momentum toward your goal.
- Establish small goals for the week, month or six months rather than looking too far into the future.

Step 5: What is stopping you?

- Identify any potential road blocks so that you can plan ahead to avoid setbacks.
- Commit to increasing awareness of your “pros” or benefits and “cons” or barriers.
- Share your goals with people who really care about you and want to help you.
- Remember to congratulate and reward yourself for starting as well as completing goals as you pursue your vision of well-being.

Make a contract with yourself

A personal contract is similar to a business agreement. Two parties are involved – you and another person who is willing to support you. The other person may be involved to a minimal degree by only signing your contract as a witness. Or, he or she may help you set your goal, develop your plan, decide upon your reward or share the reward with you. The degree of involvement and support you want is your choice.

The contract below provides a format for the five-step goal-setting process. Written contracts seem to be more powerful than spoken ones, so write out your agreement.

Activity: My personal contract for goal accomplishment*

My goal (what I want to have happen and how it relates to my vision of well-being):

Evidence of accomplishment (how I will know when I have achieved my goal):

My plan (what I will do):

Timeline (when I want it to happen):

Potential barriers (what's stopping me):

For support, I will involve (who) to help me as follows:

Rewards (how I will reward myself):

I commit to working toward this goal (write this statement below as a promise to yourself):

Your signature _____

Date: _____

Signature of witness _____

Date: _____



Encouragement:

Believe in yourself and believe in your goals. Consider every step you make as forward movement. Remember that the first step is often the most difficult.



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