

Goal Setting Tutorial

In this tutorial we will show you how to begin goal setting, and convince you why practicing goal setting will see you achieve your goals. This tutorial is designed to teach you effective goal-setting skills.

Why Should You Set Goals?

Saying you're going to have \$5 million by retirement is not goal setting. Although it might sound like you have a goal, not developing a realistic path toward fulfilling it will, unfortunately, turn your supposed goal into what it really is--a pipe dream. And pipe dreams are rarely realized. Goals, however, when properly set can usually be met. Through learning, and practicing, the step-by-step routine of goal setting, your pipe dreams of today will become tomorrow's reality.

Goal setting is the term commonly given for the process of setting and working towards specific, defined goals. Pretty simple really. What is difficult, however, is getting people to sit down and actually do it, even though it fits with human nature. When we want to go on a trip, we look at a map and plan our route. If we get lost, we recheck our map. When we want to build a model, we orderly follow the steps. When the lawn needs cutting, we set aside the time, put on our lawn-cutting clothes, clear the lawn of hoses etc., go to the mower, start it up, and proceed to cut the lawn in a pattern we've previously determined is best. When all is done, our human nature wins out: we reach our destination, the model is correctly built, and the lawn gets cut.

By learning the skills of goal setting, developing success habits, and maintaining a goal-setting routine you will have the map to success. A map that will guide you straight to the achievement of all the goals you desire and deserve.

Where Do You Start?

You can start by getting it into your mind that you deserve success, and that success is something you can achieve. If you believe you can reach what you define as success, and are prepared to determine the path towards that success, you will succeed.

If you don't believe you can reach a goal, it will remain a pipe dream as much as if you didn't bother planning the route to the goal, or do what's required to get there.

If you are willing to accept that you can be successful, that you'll enjoy being successful, and if you are willing to establish and work on an exhilarating, enjoyable, and rewarding path to your goals, then we're confident you'll reach those goals.

So, grab pencil and paper and let us help you draw the map to your success.

Defining Your Objectives

In May of 1961, John F. Kennedy pledged that America would land a man on the moon "before the decade is out."

It was a brave and bold objective, perhaps one of the greatest of all time. Just making the statement, however, did not lead to its achievement. Putting a man on the moon required immense amounts of intelligence, research, planning, money, people, risk, and commitment, amongst other things. The most important step, though, was not Neil Armstrong's, it was John F. Kennedy's setting of the Objective.

We define the Objective as the final goal. It is what all your efforts are going to lead to. In Investing, for example, it could be to have \$5 million by retirement. While some people may want to only have an Objective in one area of their life, most successful people set Objectives in many areas. Career, Family, Financial, Health, Knowledge, Material, Retirement, and Spiritual are just some categories you should set Objectives in. Objectives are generally long-term, sometimes even lifetime, although they don't have to be. They do have to be important to you, and something you feel is worth pursuing, or establishing a goal-setting routine wouldn't be worth doing.

In starting a goal-setting routine, we recommend you set Objectives in one or two areas to begin. As you start realizing small successes, you'll probably add more Objectives as you will want to be successful in all areas of your life. Take a separate piece of paper for every Objective. Clearly write the Objective, and the date you want to achieve the Objective by. Remember, don't hold back. Make your Objectives as large as you can realistically realize.

Defining Your Reasons

On the pieces of paper below where you've written each Objective, write your Reasons. These aren't the reasons you have for goal setting, but the Reasons you have for achieving that Objective.

There is an important distinction between these two different "reasons," as having clear and compelling Reasons for achieving a particular Objective will give you reason enough for undertaking goal setting.

In studying goal setting, and the keys to success, it was discovered that many people fail to achieve success simply because they lack clear Reasons for doing so. Don't let this hold up your success. Give serious thought as to why you want to achieve an Objective, and write down what you've decided. Do you want \$5 million at retirement? Why? You say you want to live in a mansion? Why? The more compelling your Reasons are, the greater your chances will be for meeting your Objectives. Conversely, if you can't come up with "good" Reasons, you might as well set another Objective, as this one won't be achieved.

Remember, every person has different Reasons for wanting something. What one person thinks is vain or stupid, another will think is worthy or great. You must come up with Reasons that are honest, strong, and motivating to you. Write them down below the appropriate Objective, leaving plenty of space to expand or add to them. The more Reasons you have the better. Just make sure they really represent the Reasons you have for desiring something. By constantly reviewing your Reasons, you will find yourself becoming more motivated for striving towards your Objectives.

Defining Your Major Goals

Once you've written an Objective, and your compelling Reasons for achieving it, you must start planning the route towards the Objective. And the first step is to set Major Goals supporting the Objective.

Say you've set an Objective for having \$5 Million by retirement (which could be 20+ years away). First, you must figure out how you can achieve that. Do you need to learn more about investing? Will you have to start saving \$500 a week? Do you have to get a new job? Will you have to more actively watch your existing investments? Whatever needs doing, to progress towards your Objective, will become your Major Goals.

Major Goals can be specific or broad in scope, but they must always lead directly towards the Objective they support. They must also always have an Accomplishment Date. A date you plan to accomplish the Major Goal by, a realistic date that not only motivates you into action but also ensures progress towards your Objective. Usually you will have many Major Goals at a time, and in the case of a real long-term Objective, some of the Major Goals will not be clear at the start, with others coming about when certain existing Major Goals are achieved.

Always write your Major Goals and their Accomplishment Dates down on the paper you've written the Objective on (after leaving some room to keep expanding on your Reasons). Never make your Major Goals too long or too difficult as you don't want to be overwhelmed by them. If a Major Goal is long-term (as in taking a four-year degree towards a larger Career Objective), break it down into smaller parts (each year for example), and revise and/or renew them when accomplished. By making sufficient and reasonable Major Goals, and always accomplishing them on time, you'll find yourself making great progress towards Objectives which may look intimidating, or even impossible, by themselves.

Defining Your Tasks

Just as we break large or long-term Objectives down into smaller supporting elements called Major Goals, we further break our Major Goals down into even smaller elements. These small elements are called Tasks, and accomplishing them is what makes the practice of goal setting really work.

Tasks are usually the simple things you must do to accomplish a Major Goal. If you've set a Major Goal, for example, to have a complete understanding about investing in bonds by next June 15th, you will have to accomplish a number of Tasks for acquiring that knowledge. Choosing to go to the library and get a book on bonds would be a Task. Reading the book for one hour each this Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, could be three separate Tasks. Visiting the Investors Skills' website for their bond information, would be another Task. Calling your buddy who's had success in the bond market would be a Task as well. All of these Tasks, which should be written down on the same paper as the Major Goal they support, must be set with an Accomplishment Date, for if you procrastinate calling your buddy, never get around to completely reading the book, or don't even bother checking the website, you won't reach your Major Goal of learning about bonds, or won't meet it by its Accomplishment Date. And this, unfortunately for you, will turn your \$5 Million by retirement Objective back into the pipe dream it didn't have to be.

By focusing your mind on the easy-to-accomplish Tasks, and completing those Tasks, you'll be making great progress towards your Major Goals and Objectives without feeling overwhelmed. Make sure to write down all Tasks, even those that take only minutes to complete. Then, when they're accomplished, check them off. As more and more Tasks are successfully accomplished, and checked off, you'll find yourself becoming more encouraged, and more confident about your abilities. The more you believe, the more you will strive to accomplish, and the more you will enjoy completing even more Tasks. And the more Tasks you complete on time, the closer you'll be to that success you have real Reasons for wanting. The success you originally defined as your Objectives.

What Are Success Enhancements?

There are really two key elements to achieving success. The first, as we've described, is the practice of goal setting which is simply setting Objectives, developing compelling Reasons for wanting the Objectives, breaking the Objectives down into not so overwhelming Major Goals, and finally, breaking the Major Goals down into easy-to-accomplish Tasks.

The second key element involves training your mind to think positively.

In order to accomplish what you set out to do, you must develop an achievement mindset. While reviewing your Reasons, and checking off completed Tasks, are two things you should be doing to keep your mind focused on the success you desire, there are three other Success Enhancements we recommend you become familiar with: Success Questions, Success Stimulants, and Your Success Creed.

Constantly reviewing these Success Enhancements will keep your mind better focused on what you wish to achieve, and also motivate you into forging ahead with your goal-setting efforts. When you are able to keep your mind on success, you will be virtually certain to reach that success.

Writing Your Success Creed

Your Success Creed is a list of those values, principles, and beliefs that are inherent and important to you.

Having a Success Creed comes in handy as you are confronted with choices while working towards your goals. When a tough decision presents itself, making the choice that best reflects your values, the values you've written in your Success Creed, will in almost every case prove to be the best choice. A Success Creed, while helping to motivate you, reflects the limits you will place on your own ambitions.

Experts believe success comes easier to those who really know who they are. You should, therefore, write down your Success Creed somewhere it can be easily reviewed. Make it as clear, direct, durable, decisive, and positive as you can. And it must be based on beliefs you consider to be strong. Beliefs that form the foundation of who you really are.

Regularly reviewing your Success Creed will help motivate you. You will feel better about yourself and more positive about your prospects for achievement. After reviewing your Success Creed, you should feel proud about your efforts in striving for success, because you'll feel confident with knowing you deserve it.

Writing Your Success Questions

Success Questions are exceedingly powerful, and should be used continuously throughout the life of your goal-setting routine.

These questions effectively control the focus of your thoughts, which should, at all times, be directed towards the goals you've set for yourself. They work by overriding your negative internal questions, so that your subconscious is working with you instead of against you. They will get your subconscious back on the side of success.

Success Questions are simply positive questions you write down to regularly ask yourself whenever you've got spare time, when you start doubting yourself, or anytime you feel the need to focus your thoughts. They should be relevant to your goal-setting routine, and directly related to particular goals you're working on. The following are examples of positive Success Questions:

- What is the most important thing I could do right now?
- What should I be doing at this moment to increase my prospects for making a sale?
- What can I do today to ensure I meet my investment goals?

- How can I earn \$1 Million as a successful Realtor by my 40th birthday?
- Who should I talk to today that will help me learn everything about bonds?

Remember not only to make your Success Questions as positive as possible, but to write them down where you can regularly read them to yourself. And then, do what is necessary to answer them.

Writing Your Success Stimulants

Success Stimulants are motivating statements that, like Success Questions, help keep your mind focused on achievement.

These Success Stimulants can be phrases, biblical passages, inspirational ideas, or positive thoughts you've read somewhere, or came up with yourself. Wherever you find your Success Stimulants, they must be capable of motivating you into action---action that leads toward your goals.

Many successful people post inspirational messages in their workplace, and read them when they find their mind wandering away from the achievement mindset they want. While this is a great idea, you should also write your personal Success Stimulants down on blank business cards, for carrying with you to review whenever you feel the need for a little inspiration.

The following are a few Success Stimulants we like:

- Before everything else, getting ready is the secret of success.
- It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed.
- Happiness is not a destination. It's a method of life.
- You can't build a reputation on what you are going to do.
- If you want to improve your odds, then improve yourself.

While it isn't something you write down, if your Objective is something material, post a photo of the item where you've written your Objective, or somewhere you're likely to see the picture regularly. As a visual image can be incredibly motivating, we recommend using a picture of your Objective just as you would a regular Success Stimulant.

Careful review of your Success Stimulants, combined with regular consideration of your Success Questions and Success Creed, will not only help to inspire you, but help you develop success habits as well. Success habits keep your mind on success, and your goal-setting efforts on the path to success.

Daily Reviewing Equals Success

When a person has listed their Objectives, Reasons, Major Goals, Tasks, and various Success Stimulants, they have made a real commitment towards success. Success, however, as we've said, doesn't just come from writing something down. You have to act--doing what you have to, when you have to. You must also develop the success habit of regularly reviewing all aspects of what we call your goal-setting routine. And it has to become routine.

Assuming you've set some substantial Objectives, you should get in the routine of reviewing your goal setting on a daily basis. Don't worry, the review shouldn't take long.

First, check what Tasks need to be done that day, and organize enough time for doing them. Then, check what Tasks are required for the next few days in case you'll have to do some planning for them today. You should then give consideration as to what other Tasks or Major Goals you might need to write, to keep propelling you towards your Objectives.

Remember, you should always have enough Tasks on your plate to keep you going forward, without wearing yourself out. If you don't, it will either mean not achieving your Major Goals and Objectives, or perhaps that you've sold yourself short by setting Objectives and Major Goals that aren't dynamic enough for you.

You should also try to review your Reasons and Success Questions at least once a day as well. These will keep your mind on what it is you are after and why. When you've got time, or when you need the inspiration, read your Success Stimulants and your Success Creed. It is also a good idea to have a look back, from time to time, at the Tasks you've recently completed. There is nothing more inspiring, or rewarding, than to be reminded of the progress you've already made.

When you've done your review, make sure to complete all the Tasks you're supposed to. Check them off when finished, and write down any new ones that you've come up with. Don't worry if you can't foresee many Major Goals or Tasks when you begin a goal-setting routine, they'll become clearer as you work towards your initial Major Goals, as it's much easier to see what needs to be done once you've started. You'll even, although it might seem surprising now, relish setting more Major Goals and Tasks. And that's because success is pleasantly addicting. Once you've had a little taste for it, you'll want more because you enjoy it, and because you know you can get more.

Weekly Reviewing Lowers Stress

While an effective goal-setting routine combined with daily review, and attention, virtually guarantees reaching success, unfortunately a number of people find the pursuit of success to be extremely stressful. Some even abandoning their goal-setting routines, which they know can help them, simply because they can't handle the pressure they've put on themselves.

Does this have to be something that concerns you? Will you find the pursuit of success too stressful? Although we can't speak for everybody, we're positive that doing a weekly review in advance will allow you to reach the success you're planning, while also lowering your stress as well!

Everybody is busy these days, successful people often more than most. While you can't eliminate the unexpected, you can lower the chances of it affecting you and your goal-setting routine. You do this through a weekly review that is one part planning and one part troubleshooting.

This weekly review should be done before you start your work week, and include input from your family. You should begin the weekly review by going through everything you've entered into your goal-setting routine, giving particular attention to the Tasks you need to accomplish that week. While a daily review reminds you that the Tasks need doing, if you've not planned ahead for them they might surprise you, and that can be stressful. Particularly if you haven't set time aside for them.

By reviewing at the start of the week, you'll be better able to schedule and plan your Tasks, which lessens your stress, ensures successful Task completion, and even reduces the amount of time you'll be spending on each Task.

The family is the source of most people's enjoyment, but they can also be the source of most unexpected demands on your time. The time demands that are particularly stressful when you've got a lot planned. Although it won't entirely eliminate the unexpected, planning your week in advance with your family's input will lower the chances of something unexpected coming up, and also minimize its effect on you.

As you're scheduling your Tasks in advance, ask your family what demands they'll have on your time for the upcoming week, and then plan your Tasks around your family responsibilities, instead of organizing your Tasks first and being surprised, and unprepared, when something else comes up, or leaving your Tasks until you've got a free moment.

Remember though, always ask your family as positively as possible. You don't want them ever feeling concerned about making demands for your time. And it won't be a concern to you. With proper planning you'll have more than enough time for your job, your family, and for completing all your Tasks.