



The TOP 5 TIPS for SUPER SUCCESSFUL GOAL SETTING

INCLUDES: How to Make “Primary & Secondary Choices”



**The Real
Key to
Discipline!**

**Make the last six months
of your year really count!**

The Top 5 Tips for SUPER SUCCESSFUL GOAL SETTING



It's so important to know how to define our goals for ourselves in a way that naturally motivates us.

When we understand how to most effectively define our goals, we start a chain reaction within ourselves that generates the energy and the follow-through for bringing our goals into being. And there's nothing more exciting than that!

Here are FIVE TIPS on how to successfully DEFINE YOUR GOALS to authentically motivate yourself and greatly improve your chances for success.

Goal Setting Tip #1: Shift to a "Creative Orientation" in defining your goals

Begin by answering the question: "What do I truly want to create?" This will shift you into a "creative orientation," which is very important & very powerful.

To say it in simple terms... *focus on what you want, rather than what you don't want.* Make your goal something you truly value. It's about choosing what's really important to you. And it's best thought of as **something you want to create**, a result or experience you want to bring into being.

This may seem obvious, but many people incorrectly focus on what they'd like to get rid of, rather than what they'd like to create. Focusing on what you don't want, what you'd like to get rid of, is a "problem solving" orientation. And even when you succeed at getting rid of what you don't want, what have you got when you're done?

The answer is... nothing.

It's hard to get motivated, to feel the natural excitement of really wanting to get your work done, when you're problem solving. Because you're not really working to create what you want.

So, Tip #1 is more important than you might think. Get in the habit of asking yourself, "What do I truly want to create?" This will shift you into a creative orientation. And it is from a creative orientation that you'll begin to experience authentic motivation.

Let's look at this a little further...

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> **Here's a question for you:** Each year, what is the most common New Year's resolution?

You guessed it!... to lose weight. To get rid of something we don't want!... a classic problem solving approach. And, as is so common with efforts to lose weight, a problem solving approach will almost always create an "oscillating experience." Don't let the word "oscillating" throw you. I'm talking about that experience best described as "two steps forward, followed by two steps back." First there is some success. You lose 15 pounds. Hooray! But all too soon that is followed by a reversal as you gain back 14 pounds. Oh no! Two steps forward is followed by two steps back. Like a pendulum swinging back and forth. Like going around in circles.

If you've ever had that kind of experience with anything you were trying to accomplish — and who hasn't? — chances are you were engaged in some kind of problem solving. This problem solving approach is an easy habit to get into. Our culture admires it and reinforces it. But it is structurally unsound. And you won't experience natural motivation and follow-through this way.

So, to increase your personal motivation, be certain your goal is something you want to create, rather than something you want to get rid of or eliminate.

Staying with our weight-loss illustration for just a little longer, people who shift to a creative orientation about their bodies, who choose to create a trim healthy body, rather than focus on getting rid of weight they don't don't want, are capable of sustaining action and changes in their behavior that successfully support the creation of long-term excellent health. And, their bodies slim down as a by-product of the choice they have made and the actions they take to create health and vitality.

When we are faced with what we perceive to be a problem, we certainly don't want to ignore it or deny it. Our problems can be very real. However, when faced with a problem, learn to ask yourself *what you would like to create instead*, in this area of your life or work. This way, our problems do not become our primary focus. Our primary focus will be on creating results that are most important to us.

Develop the habit of asking yourself, *"What do I truly want to create?"* This will shift you to a creative orientation. And that is the most powerful and highly motivating approach to living your life.

Tip #2 is also important, and you'll notice it's impact on your energy right away.

Goal Setting Tip #2: Clarify your goal as something specific you want to create or experience

In determining the result you want to create, clarify your goal. Define your goal to yourself as something specific you truly desire to create or experience.



Clarity is very powerful and very motivating.

A good rule of thumb is to make your desired result clear enough and specific enough so you can easily *picture it in your mind*. Also use numbers if you can, to quantify your goal.

A friend of mine wrote a goal to “increase his business volume.” I suggested he create more clarity by getting more specific about the outcome he desired. He finally came up with a goal to obtain “seven new business clients in the next six months.” I could almost see his mind and his energy “switch on” as he created this kind of clarity about what he wanted to create. He immediately began writing action notes for himself.

If your outcome seems vague, continue to think about it until you can define it specifically. Specific goals make it much easier for us to organize our lives and our actions to create them.

My wife and I have health goals around creating a certain waist size measurement for ourselves. We both have a target number as part of our goal. As it turns out, waist size is an accurate indicator of overall health. Of course, we will not be focused on reducing our current waist size measurements. As you recall from our discussion about “shifting to a creative orientation,” it’s important to focus on creating what you want, rather than getting rid of what you don’t want. And so, we have defined a waist size for ourselves we will take actions to create.

And now that you understand this, Motivational Tip #3 comes into play.

Goal Setting Tip #3: Describe your “desired end result” rather than a “process” or “action” for creating that result

This is an important point of motivational wisdom which many people misunderstand.

It's a natural impulse to jump right into an action for creating a result before we're even clear on what that result is. In doing this we can easily confuse a “process” or “action” for creating a result with the result itself.

A close friend of mine began to feel “shortness of breath” when he would walk up stairs. This alarmed him, so he decided to start walking 30 minutes a day. That became his goal. But he quickly found it difficult to keep at it.

Do you see the mistake he had made? He hadn't clarified his *real goal*, which was to create *cardiovascular fitness*. He wanted to be able to walk up stairs and do other activities without feeling fatigued and out of breath. Cardiovascular fitness was what he really wanted to create. And without clearly defining that real goal to himself, he jumped to an “action step” or “process step” for creating his goal, walking 30 minutes a day. And he confused that with his real goal, creating cardiovascular fitness for himself.

He told himself his goal was to walk 30 minutes every day. Actually that was part of the action process for creating his authentic goal which was heart and lung fitness. In his rush to do something about his shortness of breath, he didn't clarify his real goal, and he confused the “action to create a result” with the “result itself.”

All of us confuse ourselves like this more than we realize. And when we do it really damages our natural motivation. It makes it much harder for us to follow through to achieve the goals we really care about.

When you create an action plan for creating a clear result you've chosen, you begin listing action steps for creating your chosen result. Initially it's important for the primary focus to be on the desired result. The actions to create that result are secondary.

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The important thing to understand is this: the result you want to create is your “primary choice,” and the actions you choose to take, to create that result, are your “secondary choices.”

When we begin to clearly organize our goals and our actions in this way, it becomes much easier to take the actions necessary to create the results we want. And it becomes much easier to follow-through with our actions until we completely succeed at creating what we've chosen.

Our desired goals become primary choices we make, about what we truly want. And our actions become secondary choices we make, to create the primary choice we've chosen.

Please read that last sentence as many times as it takes for you to completely understand it. **This is very powerful wisdom about the power of choice, and the effective structuring of goals and actions.**

When you begin thinking this way, and organizing your goals and actions this way, it will be much easier for you to take action because it will always be clearly in support of your desired result. As well, it becomes much easier to take actions (secondary choices) we don't particularly enjoy, if they are clearly in support of creating an outcome (primary choice) we really care about.

I have a friend who hates to exercise, who is in better physical shape than anyone I know. He openly admits that he hates to exercise, and he makes no attempt to lie about it or try to convince himself otherwise. But he exercises rigorously for an hour every day (consistent secondary choice) because he really cares about fitness. What he really wants is to be physically toned and fit (primary choice.)

This is some of the most important wisdom for authentically motivating ourselves in our lives and in our work.



Goal Setting Tip #4: Allow yourself to think about your true aspirations

Sometimes, particularly during challenging economic circumstances, we can get lost in thinking only about what we “should” do or what we “need” to do. I’ve been stuck in that kind of thinking pattern in my life more than once.

Two nights ago on a major television news show I heard a guy say emphatically we “should” – there’s that word again – make goals for helping other people. That sounds good, and I agree with it personally, which means I share that value with him. But without even realizing it, he wasn’t talking about goal setting. He was talking about *his* personal values.



An important thing to keep in mind is, for your goals to be about your values. You get to define what success is for you. Only you can determine what’s most important for you.

The things we think we “should” do, become obligations in our mind. However the power of “choice” is much more productive than

obligation. The good news is, many obligations can become authentic personal choices when we understand the relationship between primary and secondary choices. Yes, we’re going to talk about this some more, because it is so very empowering.

One of my friends – I use my friends for examples about everything! – began chronically complaining about how much he disliked his job. Finally I just couldn’t take it anymore, so we had a discussion to help him consider what were his primary choices and what were his secondary choices in his life regarding his job. It quickly became clear he truly did not enjoy the work he was doing. But he had a good salary, excellent job security, and a really great health plan that included his wife and his two children.

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During our discussion he realized going to his job every day was a secondary choice he was making to support a major primary choice he really cared about, which was providing financial stability and healthcare coverage for himself and his family. His complaining stopped right on the spot. And we spent another hour discussing a plan for evolving his work in possible directions he might really enjoy. He came up with lots of ideas, and is actively working to shape his job in another direction that will be good for him and good for his company.

It's important to take the time to be with ourselves, to think about what we "truly want" to create and accomplish, how we truly want to develop our lives. This is easier once we understand the relationship between primary and secondary choices.

During your goal-setting, goal-structuring sessions, allow yourself to think about goals for the rest of this year, AND some goals for the next two years. Allow yourself to think about a few goals you really want to create and experience, even if you don't currently know how you would ever accomplish them.

Allow yourself to choose and define the "What" of what you truly want, without having to initially know the "How" of how you would go about achieving it. You'll surprise yourself with the action ideas you'll come up with, to invent the path from where you are to where you want to go.



Goal Setting Tip #5: List your goals in a hierarchy, from most important to least important

At the end of your motivational goal-setting session, list your goals in a hierarchy. What I mean by that is, list them in terms of which goals are most important to you and which goals are least important to you. That way your goals won't be competing with each other for your time and your energy.

Of all the things you care about and want to create, **it's important to know what's most important to you.**

So...

- Make a list of goals you want to create by the end of this year – and even the next two years, if you want – using these 5-tips for creating results from a “creative orientation.”
- Write down some simple goals that you really want to create. Accomplishing a couple of these simple goals will help you develop your creative process as a method you use in your life.



Accomplishing some simple goals you care about will also help you gain creative momentum, which is a wonderful thing.

- Feel free to put a couple of challenging goals on your list for creating this year, if you really desire them.
- List your goals in an order from top to bottom. Number them in terms of what's most important. (Put a check mark next to the two most easy-to-create goals, as suggested above.)
- Create action plans for creating your goals, and maintain a clear awareness of your primary choice (desired results) and your secondary choices (actions to create those results.)



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