
Criteria for Achievement

“Decide what you want, decide what you are willing to exchange for it ... establish your priorities, and go to work.”

– H.L. Hunt

Many people are effective at setting goals but not as many people are effective at accomplishing their goals. It's important to set goals, but the step that many may miss is the ability to develop the detailed plan needed to achieve the goal. Goals, whether personal or professional, need to be written, harmonious, yours, specific, measurable, attainable, realistically high, and time bound.



Many of us spend a considerable amount of time and effort planning a vacation. We will figure out exactly where we want to go and what type of things we want to do while we are there. We'll make reservations, schedule appointments, and prepare a list of all of the appropriate things we need to pack. This planning is usually very detailed, somewhat tedious, and time consuming. But, because we want the trip to be hassle free we will plan these occasional trips right down to the very last detail.

When you think about your life, your daily journey, how well do you plan and organize it? Your life's journey is the MOST important trip you will ever take. Why is it that we spend so little time planning our lives? Many of us have little or no idea where we are going!

Criteria for Setting Goals

It's important that as you dream about the things you want in life that you set up some criteria to make sure that those dreams come to fruition.



Your goals will provide direction and motivation, and serve as tools for measuring your results. For maximum effectiveness and accomplishment, make sure your goals meet the criteria of *WHYSMART*. These goal-setting guidelines will help you stay on target as you continually work on the accomplishment of your goals.

Your goals must be:

WRITTEN

Put your goals in writing to help ensure that they are clear and specific.

“The weakest ink is better than the strongest memory.”- John Rickenbacker

Do you want to dramatically increase the likelihood of meeting your goals? One of the simplest yet most powerful actions you can take is to write them down. It’s so easy to get caught up in the busy-ness of every day life that it then becomes all too easy to forget about your goals. I think the saying is, “When you are up to your rear-end in alligators, it’s easy to forget that your original intention was to drain the swamp.”

Put your goals down on paper. Keep them where you will see them everyday. Doing this will prevent you from saying around this time next year, “Oh yeah, I remember those ...”

HARMONIOUS

Harmonize your goals with your personal vision and purpose in addition to your other goals, so that all elements of your plan are complementary and mutually reinforcing. Unaligned goals pull you in different directions, hampering productivity and creating tensions.

YOURS

You will be most motivated to achieve goals that reflect your important personal desires and values. Resist the urge to conform to the expectations of others. If your goals are not your own, you can’t own them. Be aware of what motivates you and tailor your goals to fit your personality.

SPECIFIC

Vague goals cause confusion and frustration. In order to provide clear direction and strong motivation, make your goals specific. Stating your goals positively will help create the mental picture of you doing what you want to do.



MEASURABLE

Measurable goals provide benchmarks for gauging progress and evaluating performance. Attain annual sales of 4 million dollars is a measurable goal; developing a goal of increased sales is vague and not at all measurable. Go out to dinner once a week with my spouse is measurable. However, spend more time with my spouse is not. Goals that are not measurable lack direction, value for motivation, and celebration. If they are not measurable, it is impossible to know when and if you have achieved them.

ATTAINABLE

Attainable goals spark excitement and action. Goals that are beyond reach produce frustration and discouragement. Attainable goals should also provide a challenge.

REALISTICALLY HIGH AND RESULTS ORIENTED

Challenging goals stimulate creativity and commitment. Goals that are set too low result in underachievement and apathy. Be clear about the end result your goal is designed to accomplish and focus on results, not just the necessary activity.

TIME BOUND

Dates for accomplishment are critical for planning, decision making, operational coordination, and evaluation. Goals that do not specify target dates have a tendency to get lost in the shuffle of business and life. “Goals are dreams with deadlines.” – Diana Scharf Hunt

If you do not set “achievement dates” for your goals you’ll get caught in the trap of “someday.” As in, “Someday, I’ll do that.”

Take a look at your calendar. You will find: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. What you will not find is Someday. So not only does someday never come, it doesn’t exist!

WHYSMART is an excellent criterion to make sure that you are maximizing the goal setting process to your professional and personal advantage. Make sure that all of your goals, tangible and intangible as well as short or long-term, are evaluated against *WHYSMART*, and you will see a distinct difference in your ability to accomplish anything you desire.

