

How to Create Empowering Goals

Your Road Map for Life



Goal setting is a process of intentionally laying out the want or need for a new skill or project in a step-by-step manner. Once the goal is clearly identified, a plan of action is created to accomplish it.

Goal setting requires a thoughtful plan and a set of steps to be successful. It requires hard work and dedication. Goal setting is essentially deciding to take control of your life by identifying where you want to go and working toward that goal.

Why Having Life Goals Is Important

Having life goals to some may sound like a waste of time, but overall, it is a critical practice to adopt. Any expert will suggest it to help you assure your success. Whether you like where you are now or you are having trouble in your life, set out some life goals that are important to you so that you can work toward them.

This method works because, beyond the goal itself, the experience of working toward the goal provides so much more joy and excitement and fabric to your life. Without goals, you essentially have nothing to look forward to and it's easy to fall into despair. But when you know where you're going and how you'll get there, life becomes fun, exciting, and worth living. In a sense, setting life goals is setting your plan or road map to life and how you plan to ride it.

A Sense of Purpose

Goal setting provides a sense of purpose. It redirects your focus to completing something – whether it be daily, monthly, or yearly. It motivates you to continue your daily life. Each goal you set is another day to look forward to. For example, if you know that walking 30 minutes a day leads to better health, and you check off each day over a year, it helps you understand why you're doing it.

Essential to True Happiness

When you set life goals, you are essentially making a life plan: a life plan to true happiness. For each goal you set, no matter what steps it has, the end goal is happiness because you know once you accomplish that goal, you will be happier in the end. Each goal you set allows you to get more of what you want out of life.

Focus and Motivation

Setting goals provides a sense of focus and motivation to an everyday life that generally may be convoluted. With each goal that is set, there is also a clear end in sight, which motivates you to continue and accomplish each goal.

The desire to achieve the goal and seeing the finish line provides the determination and drive to get it done. Without goals, your time could likely be wasted on pointless tasks that lead nowhere. You may be busy, but you won't be productive without goal setting.

Sense of Pride

Nothing feels better than working hard and accomplishing a set of goals. Achieving your goals will fill you with a sense of pride in yourself and what you can do. Setting goals is also another way to track your accomplishments because they are all written down, and you can check off each milestone as they are completed. As these goals are accomplished and then visually represented by the marks on your calendar or the weight you've lost or the degree you've earned, your confidence will rise as well.

Why Some People Achieve Goals, and Some Don't

The practice of setting life goals has a process that is important to follow, which includes goal setting, action scheduling, and implementing. Of course, there is also testing and tracking periodically to ensure your ideas are working, but in general, goal setting includes more than just writing down some dreams.

Writing down a goal does not mean you will accomplish that goal. It only means that it is what you want out of life. But to achieve the goal, you must do the work required to achieve it.

For example, if you wrote down a goal to write a 100K-word novel within the next year, you'll have to realistically plot how much time you need to accomplish your goal in the time you have set – ending up with a daily task list that will ensure the job gets done if you do the tasks.

There are plenty of reasons why some people achieve goals and some don't. Understanding these reasons is essential so that you can be sure to be one of the people who do achieve theirs through SMART goal setting (more on SMART later).

Fear of Failure and Rejection

For most people, the fear of failure and rejection alone will prevent them from trying. Don't let this happen to you. Research shows that failure and rejection is the best way to learn something new. As Robert F. Kennedy once said, "Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly."

Not Knowledgeable about How to Set and Achieve Goals

Probably the second most common reason why people fail to achieve their goals is that they don't know how to set them up correctly in the first place. Goals need to be clear and as specific as possible to work. Most experts suggest that you use SMART goal setting to help yourself succeed. That means a goal needs to be specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely or time bound. Basically, that just means that you need

to know precisely what you want to accomplish, how you're going to get there, how you'll know you got there, and that it's possible to do it.

For example, a goal that is as vague as, "Make \$10,000 a month" doesn't tell you anything, nor does it provide a sense of direction.

How do you want to make \$10,000 a month?

You may want to make \$10K a month, but can you really do that in your current career path or educational path?

When you set out goals, make them very clear and visualize yourself completing them as you go along. If something along the way doesn't feel right or you feel lost, you need to keep redefining these goals to make them even more clear. You should be able to look at your calendar today and see what you've scheduled to do, and know that if you achieve those small tasks, which goal it's advancing you toward.

Sense of Unimportance

The difference between someone completing a goal and not achieving a goal is often not what you know, but the confidence you have in your ability to achieve your goal. The person who completed the goal knew they had a path to get it done, and because of that, they did the work to ensure success.

Don't let doubt and a sense of unimportance prevent you from accomplishing a goal. It only leads to a lack of confidence and self-sabotage that you don't need to feel.

Too Much Too fast

Often, people avoid goals altogether because they become overwhelmed. Sometimes succeeding is scary. Alternatively, you may have bitten off more than you can chew, and due to that, you didn't set your schedule realistically.

Slow down and realize time is on your side and one of the reasons that we set goals in the first place. It breaks down a seemingly impossible task into small chunks or steps that you can take each day until you finally reach your main goal.

Just because something is hard doesn't mean you can't do it either. The harder it is, the better it will feel in the end when it is over. As you accomplish each goal, you will gain new skills and knowledge that will only make it easier to accomplish your next goal.

How to Create Empowering Goals

Setting goals is not as easy as thinking of a couple of goals and just moving on. To fully accomplish these goals and truly get the value from them, you need to change your

ways and practice it daily. Setting goals is not something you should forget about. It needs to be well thought out and planned.

Search within Yourself

Set goals that are right for you and what you truly want out of life. If you are setting goals that are against your values and who you are as a person, you are unlikely to finish them or feel happy while doing it.

Believe it or not, it is easy to get into other people's goals and think it's what you want yourself to make them happy. If you find yourself struggling to accomplish something, take a step back to see if it's genuinely what you want out of life before moving forward.

Write Them Down

This might sound a bit obvious and silly, but when you write something down, you are telling yourself that it is vital to you. Writing it down creates a visualization of the goal in your mind. Once you visualize something, your brain sees it as more attractive and therefore makes the desire to get it done, especially when the steps have been written down clearly.

Set Daily Goals

Practice daily goal setting by waking up each morning and setting five to ten small goals each day based on your bigger goals. For example, if losing 30 pounds is a goal for you, set actions within the goal, like eating a salad before each meal, so you get full from nutrient-rich food and eat fewer calories.

The goals can change as your life goes on, which is essential. This practice alone will exercise your brain into knowing what you want. As these goals truly change to your interests, they will become more empowering and achievable to you.

Create a Vision Board

A vision board is a collection of pictures, words, and/or stories that help you visualize what you want out of your life. Creating a vision board puts your goals into your imagination in a realistic way that you can truly see happening.

The vision board creates a visible image in your mind that makes you desire that goal more. This vision board prevents you from forgetting about the goal because you will be forced to see it every day when you look at your calendar. Not only that, but you will also have the memory of putting it together. Taking time out of your day to create something puts yet another layer of desire, giving you more motivation.

Believe It Can Happen

If you ask any professional athlete or successful person, the number one advice they'd likely give is to visualize your success or, in other words, "fake it until you make it." This is because the feeling of already achieving what you want out of life gives you the confidence and determination to keep going and therefore accomplish the goal. The more you want something and believe it can happen, the harder you'll work at achieving it.

Focus on Your Progress

Create a system that allows you to track your progress. Again, this is another tool to enable you to visualize your goals more. The more you can imagine your future and the success you are working toward now, the more you will want to continue.

Be SMART

No discussion about goal setting can leave out the example of George T. Doran, a consultant and former director of corporate planning for the Washington Water Power Company, who published a paper on the idea surrounding the acronym SMART for goal setting.

Creating SMART goals ensures that any goal you set has a higher chance of being seen to fruition. Let's go over quickly what the acronym means. Use this every time you set a goal to ensure that there is a path to success created for you from the process.

Specific: Goals need to be specific

Who, what, when, where, and why do you want to accomplish this goal? The more transparent the intention, the more apparent the plan to achieving the goal. Instead of saying, "I want to start a YouTube channel," get more specific about what the channel is about and when you want to start publishing.

Measurable: Goals need a way to be measured

What will you use to determine that this goal has been accomplished to make the goal more tangible and measure progress?

This might be as simple as yes or no, or a number. For example, if you want to lose weight, you know the number you want to lose. Instead of saying, "I want to lose ten pounds," you might say, "I want to lose ten pounds in five weeks starting on November 1st. I'll lose weight by walking 30 minutes a day at the park and eating nutrient-dense food with at least 1500 calories per day.

The idea is to make sure that whatever you are using to measure it will accurately reflect success to provide motivation. From the earlier example, if you only lost five

pounds out of the ten, you have now estimated how far you have come along and can see how much longer you must go.

Achievable/ Attainable and Actionable: Your goal needs to include how and be attainable

What do you need to do to able to do the goal? Do you need to acquire more skills or more time for it to be achievable? Maybe one of your goals is to receive a promotion at work in two years but to accomplish this goal you'll need to acquire a certificate or, in other words, obtain more skills first to be prosperous. Just add that step to your goal to make it happen.

Relevant and Realistic: Your goal can't be pie in the sky or have nothing to do with your life

Is the goal relevant to what you need right now? If you're a 42-year-old with severe arthritis, it's not realistic to say you're going to climb Mount Everest, but you may be able to do something else smaller.

Is the effort worth the value you will receive in the end? To know if you are truly working on the most relevant goals, order them from the most valuable reward to the least. Then you can see which goal on top should be the one you work towards the most.

Timely and Time-Bound: Is your goal time-bound?

Your goal must be time-bound because if there is no set time or date of completion, chances are you won't get it done. Setting a time and date provides an incentive to keep going and provides a way to measure.

The time factor also helps with planning. From the weight-loss example earlier, if you know you want to lose ten pounds in ten weeks, then you can break that down into a more natural, more attainable goal of one pound a week. That alone will make it seem more manageable, and due to that will provide you with more willpower to get it done since the changes in your life will be relatively small.

SMART goals are beneficial for most people, no matter if they're goal setting for life or business. Goal setting that is done this way will produce much better results for you throughout your entire life.

Strategic Planning and Prioritizing

Setting goals requires strategic planning and prioritizing. If you just write down a bunch of goals without any real thought or plan of action, it may take a while to accomplish them, or unfortunately, you may not accomplish them at all. It is easy to forget without an actual plan, but a real system is essential to your success.

Set a Personal Goal

What do you want, and why do you want it? Take time to visualize why you want to accomplish this goal. Is there a real meaning behind it? Is the meaning behind it truly worth your time and energy? Is the why about you or someone else?

To prioritize your time and plan to achieve your goals, you must be honest with yourself and figure out the why to these goals as well – this is how you will know the next steps for every goal that you set.

Break It Down

Determine the steps necessary to make it happen. Break down this big goal into baby steps or small daily goals that will ultimately allow you to achieve the big, hairy goal.

For example, if you want to complete a triathlon in a couple of months, what would you need to do? How would you break down your daily schedule to ensure you have the training and skills to succeed at completing the triathlon?

Most likely, you will schedule in good sleep and eating habits, while also creating daily tasks that will increase your swimming, running, and biking times slowly but surely during the training period.

Set Habits

Determine the necessary habits to achieve your goal. Setting habits will make achieving your ultimate goals easier. What can you do every day so that one day you will do it without thinking? That's the power of habits. Just like you can have a bad habit, you can also create good habits.

Maybe your goal requires you to get in eight hours of sleep each night, or you want to meditate each night before bed. Whatever it may be, there are little things you can set to make it easier. You just need to be a bit creative and be willing to turn everything you want to do into a habit.

Map Out the Process

Be specific in how you will take each step and create each new habit. Determine what obstacles might get in your way and figure out the solutions to these obstacles. Identify which steps are a priority and which are secondary. Document steps, deadlines, and the success of each as you go along.

Create Your Daily Plan

Set out the specific actions you need to take every day to reach your goals. Each day before you start your day, create a daily plan of action. Remember, even very small

daily tasks can make a huge difference. Want to get more steps in every day? Set the intention and put it in your schedule.

This way, you have a visualized plan of action and know what you need to do each day before it even starts. There may be some roadblocks along the way, but at least you have a roadmap to guide yourself back to the right path if needed.

Only you hold the key to unlocking your full potential, setting proper goals can help get you there. While this may seem overwhelming and easier said than done, it is as easy as plotting your realistic course and following it. Eventually, achieving your goals will seem second nature to you.

You and Only You Hold the Key to Unlocking Your Full Potential

The truth is, all the power resides with you. If you follow the process of goal setting and implement your plans, you really will see a lot more success than if you just sat back and waited for something to happen. Let's look at the ways you can take control of your life with goal setting.

Take Baby Steps

Set small goals that you can do and perform daily. Even if they sound too easy or are repetitive, if these baby goals get you to achieve your ultimate goal one day, it'll be worth it. You may feel silly trying to do a plank for one minute each day, adding 20 seconds each day, working toward a goal of a 15-minute plank. But in the process, you'll see how small daily actions get results.

Alternatively, what if your ultimate goal was to become a successful YouTuber? What are some daily goals you would set each day to do this? You might come up with a list of content to create, then from that, create a list of activities you need to do each day to produce one video a week. Each of these steps from your list is necessary daily to reach this goal.

Create New Habits

Set yourself up to create new habits that will allow you to reach your goals automatically. Habits are one of your most powerful tools to achieve results because once you set a habit, it's hard to break.

Researchers say it takes 21 days to make a habit of something. Once you create a habit, you won't feel like you need to try so hard anymore because it will become second nature to you.

On the other hand, you may have developed some bad habits that need to change for you to accomplish your goals, and that is a little harder, but you can do it by replacing the habit with a good habit.

Have and Foster a Positive Mindset

Change your mindset so you are continually thinking and talking about what you want to achieve, and the good things you're doing, over the things you don't want to do or can't do.

Don't continue to dwell on why you aren't getting the results you want. Even if you make a mistake, learn to move on and stay positive. The more you focus on the negative and what you can't do, the more likely you are to waste your time and not get anything done. If you have the confidence to continue to do something, ultimately, you will be successful.

Reward Yourself

Ideally, if you are setting the right goals for yourself, you don't need much motivation to get you to achieve them. However, we all have some rough days and need a little push to keep going.

An excellent way to do this is to set up rewards after each goal is accomplished. Make these rewards something you know you will look forward to. After all, if the prize isn't so exciting, what is the point? But don't make the prize something that will sabotage any of your goals. For example, if you want to be healthy, don't make these rewards about food.

Overall, the objective is to realize that achieving your goals in life is all about you and what you do to get there. Your actions or lack of actions speak volumes. If you don't achieve your goal, chances are that you are not doing enough to get there. Look deep inside yourself and see what you can truly change about you and in your daily life to make it easier.

Charting Your Progress

While you are setting goals, it is also essential to keep a chart of your progress so that you know you're on the right path. Charting your progress allows you to stay focused, and it also quickly helps you to identify areas on your path that need improvement.

If you don't keep track of your progress, you could just be wasting your time. If you don't chart, how do you know where you are and if you are indeed improving? Also, how will you know if the action you're taking is correlated to the result you achieve?

Charting your progress allows you to evaluate your actions over time and making sure you are doing what needs to be done to get there. Without assessing your efforts and making changes likely, it's hard to achieve anything. And you won't be able to easily repeat your success if you do have it.

Reasons Why Charting Works

- **It's your accountability system** – Charting your progress can be used to keep you accountable for your actions. Providing visuals incites motivation. If you see daily that you are accomplishing something, more than likely, you will continue that streak and not break it.
- **It keeps you motivated** – As you see your results each day, and a task gets marked off your to-do list, you will want to continue to do more because you'll start to realize you are going to succeed.
- **It keeps you consistent** – Creating a chart provides consistency because each chart lists the same sort of criteria to follow each day. Doing the work towards your goal daily is the key to success.
- **It gives you a sense of fulfillment each day** – Filling out your progress each day will provide a sense of accomplishment and purpose. As your day ends and you fill out your chart, you will see all the hard work you have done to get closer and closer each day to your ultimate goal.
- **It allows you to see and fix bad habits quickly** – As each day is finished and filled with information, you will learn over time what habits are preventing you from reaching your dreams. Charting down your accomplishments, thoughts, and feelings each day will highlight areas that need to be improved faster than if you weren't keeping track from the start.

What to Chart

- **Goals** – Keep a running chart of your goals, big and small. Make sure it is clearly visible and can be edited daily as goals can change as time goes on. Make one list for your ultimate goals and one for goals you can achieve daily. Trello.com or even Basecamp.com are great tools to use for charting goals.
- **Daily habits to achieve your goals** – Chart any habits that you need to practice to achieve your goal. Even include bad habits you would like to kick that are preventing you from reaching your goal. Putting these in a calendar that is also shared with your smartphone is helpful.
- **Feelings about your progress** – Include a section that allows you to express your feelings about your progress, whether it be negative or positive. Any opinions you have, express them. Get them out on paper or video so you can physically hear and/

or see it. It is important to note that while goals should be challenging, they should also be fun and exciting to go through rather than unbearable. If it's intolerable, you need to change something.

- **Reactions to progress** – As you complete each day of action, record your response to it. Did you feel excited that you completed the goals you had for today? Do you feel sad or overwhelmed? Again, this is important so you can re-evaluate the goal. See if after days or weeks of working towards that goal, it's worth it after all.

Ways to Chart Progress

- **Planner** – A great way to keep track is by simply adding it to your planner as if it's a date. Not only will it be a great resource to look back on, but it will also ensure you accomplish it because you already blocked out the time to do it.
- **Journal** – If you love to write, then just use a daily journal or diary. At the end of your day, write down what you achieved and how it made you feel.
- **Video Diary** – Start recording at the end of your day any helpful information -for example, your feelings about your goal and why you would like to achieve it. These video diaries could even be uploaded to YouTube to keep you accountable or also find like-minded individuals who could provide motivation.
- **Applications** – In today's vast world of technology, there are several smartphone and computer applications you can download. You can even use Excel to make charts and lists of information to keep track of.

Note: [Joe's Goals](#) is a great web-based tool that allows you to keep track of goals easily. It even provides a daily score to gauge your success and other tools that help you kick bad habits.

Ways to Practically Guarantee Your Success

Believe it or not, we all have the power within ourselves to practically guarantee success. By researching and examining what is realistic and attainable, you can first make sure you only set goals that you can reach, and only the goals you really want to spend time on.

Succeeding is honestly as easy as doing. In the moment, it may seem hard – probably because you're looking at the giant hairy goal's result instead of the small daily tasks you need to do to succeed. But, for overall success, whatever the victory may be, it just needs a series of steps and activities that lead to the result. Without action, there is no success.

Practice Daily Gratitude

It might seem backward, but success starts with gratitude. Practicing gratitude gives you a moment to break away from all the daily stress life brings and just be happy.

Happiness, it turns out, provides determination and motivation. Each morning, use gratitude to start your day off with positivity by thinking of something that you are grateful for right now at this moment. Even if it's only that you can breathe or drink coffee, that is good enough. Your day will be joyful when you are filled with gratitude.

Live with Intention

Determine what you want out of life and live it with intention. This means to live your life as though you mean it, with purpose and aim, and act like you want something out of it. If you want to achieve this goal, it's time to prove it to yourself.

Realize you are the only one who can change your life and make it happen. Be mindful of your time and create a clear plan of action to achieving your goals. Look deep within yourself and see what needs to be fixed or updated to get you to where you need to be. Maybe your routine needs a change, or just your mindset.

Banish Negativity

Anytime you think of something negative, replace it with positive thoughts. Stop justifying your negativity; stop making excuses; stop trying to rationalize or explain away or make light of something you feel bad or unhappy about.

Wherever possible, remove the negative thing and/or people from your life and replace it with people and things that encourage positivity and growth. The feelings you have inside determine your next actions. And believe it or not, you control your feelings because feelings are reactions, and you are 100 percent in control of your responses.

If you are upset, angry, sad, frustrated, or something else, it is likely your next move isn't going to be a good one. Better to take time to get through it than make decisions at that point.

If you are feeling confused and angry when you try to do something, you will probably not do it as well as if you were happy and excited to do it. Take steps to make sure you change your negative thoughts into positive ones by creating a habit of switching negative thoughts to positive ones (or at least neutral ones).

Keep Track

Keep track of your goals. Keep track of your plans to achieve those goals. You are your progress and any results as you go along with it. Seeing your goals daily, as well as you the proof of accomplishment, will give you the motivation you need to keep going.

Make sure this information is readily available and something you will see and/or will read each day. For example, train yourself to look at your diary or planner every day at certain times. Anything with a thought-out plan with steps to achieve it will see success.

Getting Started

Now that we've looked at the importance of goal setting and how to do it, it's time to get started. The only thing left to do is to act. Remember that action is essential with any goal to ensure it comes to fruition. Take control of your life and start setting goals.

Dream Big

If you could do, have, or be anything, what would it be? Don't let others cloud your judgment if you have a passion to go after it. Ask yourself what activities give you the highest sense of purpose and feelings of wellbeing. Once you answer these questions, figure out how you can do more of those activities. Life is about doing and being what you love.

Make Changes

How have your thoughts and habits directed and affected the life you have right now? What do you need to do or change to get on the path to reaching your goals? Making changes in your life is healthy. It might be scary at first, but usually, a change is happening because it needs to happen. How can these changes help you reach your goals?

Make Sacrifices

What are you willing to give up so you can be successful in achieving those goals? Start giving those things up today. For example, if one of your goals is to graduate college with a 4.0 GPA, you are going to have to give up a lot of social time and activities to study.

Make sure your sacrifices are worth the reward that you are reaching for the end. No goal achieved is made without sacrifices. Giving up a little partying is beneficial in making good grades. But, giving up time with your child might be going too far. Be realistic and make sure each sacrifice you make is worthwhile.

Take Action

Get moving and doing on the actions you've set up in your calendar. What actions do you need to take now, immediately, to get started?

This has been stated before but needs to be repeated – a goal that you want to achieve, no matter what the goal is, requires action.

If you don't act, you won't be successful. Start now, not today, or Monday, or after your partner does something, or you lose weight, or you grow your hair out. Do it now. The only thing we have promised is today. Figure out what you can do or change right this minute to get you one step closer to your goals.

Conclusion

Goal setting is a gratifying process but takes work and determination to be successful. Thankfully, with proper goal setting, you can practically automate your goals and achieve more than you ever thought before.

There are plenty of reasons to practice goal setting but out of all, the most rewarding is the feeling of control. When you set SMART goals using a process, you intentionally decide to take control of your life and to be aware of every single action it takes to get where you want to be.

Goal setting requires being conscious of your actions. To be successful, you must plan, keep track, and, most importantly, make sure the goals you are setting are loyal to you.