

Setting Goals - The Important Factors

Contributed by Steve Gillman
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A teenager might have a goal to be the best among his peers at playing some video game, and even if he knows nothing about setting goals he can succeed. Why? Because all he probably needs to do is what he loves - play the game a lot. That shows the motivating power of doing what we enjoy. In fact, it has been said that we all have plenty of motivation, just not necessarily where and when we want it. That's a key to this secret of successful goals.

{bot_wrgoogle}Now, a goal to be a successful painter or businessman probably needs to be a bit more structured. Even if you love art or love business, there will be parts of the process that are not so much fun. A painter can't very often just paint. He needs to find galleries to display his paintings, and that means "selling" his vision to other people, which might not thrill him. A business woman needs to do a whole range of things, some more inspiring than others.

Building your goals on things that you are passionate about is a great start, then, because there is a certain amount of inherent motivation that keeps you going. But you also have to do those necessary things that don't necessarily excite you. There are two approaches to this.

First, you can delegate such tasks or sub-goals as much as possible. If you want to invest in rental real estate but you hate dealing with tenants, you could hire a management company. If you want to be a great writer, but aren't thrilled about talking to publishers, try to find an agent. Of course, you won't always be able to delegate distasteful tasks, and even the process of finding such help can be less than exciting. That leads us to the most important way to stay motivated to accomplish your goals.

Make goals based on your true values, then see and feel all the necessary steps as inseparable parts of the process. In other words, start with what is truly important to you, and don't pretend that the necessary steps are separate from that goal. Don't pursue money for it's own sake if all you want it for is to travel or have the time to write. Start traveling or writing! And if that requires making some money, see that as part of the goal, not as an unpleasant task that you wish you could avoid.

Look, if a boy doesn't want to feed a dog and clean the messes in the yard, does he really want a dog? Or does he just like his "idea" of having one? His idea might not include any of the work involved. If you really don't want what is required, do you really want the outcome? Is it a true goal or just a wish?

Start with real values, see the real costs and work involved in various options, and if you still want that goal, pursue it as an integrated process. A runner can't win a race without running, and if you see the necessary steps as just that - absolutely necessary - you aren't tempted to resist them. We put gas in the car not because it's fun, but because we see the necessity clearly. Similarly, we can find the motivation necessary for any goal if we don't allow any mental pretenses. If the goal is truly important and the task truly necessary - and we see this - we act.

Now here are those tips or "rules" for setting goals effectively:

1. Write them down.
2. Make them specific.

3. Make them realistic.
4. Make them measurable.
5. Set clear deadlines.
6. Break them into steps (make a plan).
7. Change your plan as necessary.
8. Take action as soon as the goal is set.

The latter is important to proper goal setting and accomplishment. Once you have a target that inspires you, take any small step in the right direction. This creates a kind of momentum in your mind and in the process.

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