

Go for the Gold! How to Set and Achieve Your Goals

By Kathleen Barton, MBA

How do successful people achieve results? They are intentional about what they do. They know what they want and they go after it. Successful people set goals and develop plans to achieve their goals. How can you go about setting goals?

Before setting goals, revisit your Personal Mission statement. (If you've never created a Personal Mission statement, then refer to ***Finding Your Purpose and Passion in Life*** workbook at www.YourLifeBalanceCoach.com/products.html). Your mission helps clarify what's truly important to you, and provides focus and direction. Connect with your values. Visualize yourself actually living your mission.

Review the significant areas of your life – career, family, health, spiritual, relationships, financial, personal development, and fun & enjoyment. How satisfied are you with each area of your life? Identify three to four areas that you would like to work on this coming year.

Now you're ready to determine your goals. Set a goal for each of these significant areas in your life. A goal is a desired end result. Write your goal using an action verb followed by an end result. Be specific in what you want to accomplish. For example, in the area of "career": "Attain a project management position by the end of the year" or "Increase my client base by 20% in the next six months".

Your goal should also be measurable. Answer the question, "How will I know if I'm successful?" If your goal is to improve your relationship with your spouse, how will you measure that? Will you spend more quality time together? How much time? Will you communicate better? Do you expect better communication to result in fewer misunderstandings?

Finally, your goal should be time-specific. Give a deadline or end date by which you expect to achieve your goal. Identify a specific date or timeframe (i.e., by yearend, June 30th, or on a monthly basis). Make sure that the timeframe is realistic for you.

Now you're ready to determine action steps. What will it take to accomplish each goal? For each goal, identify action steps and dates. For example:

Goal: Lose 15 pounds by June 15th

Action Steps:

- Exercise for an hour 5 days a week
- Write down everything I eat – 6 days a week
- Track calories 6 days a week – limit to 1500 calories a day

Once you have your plan in place, you're ready to take action. Start your day by visualizing achievement of your goals. What would success look like? What would you be doing? How would you feel? Studies show that those who visualize success are more likely to achieve success.

Write your action steps in your planner or on your calendar. Then follow through with your action steps. Monitor your progress as you go. Finally, be sure to reward yourself for your success! Choose a reward when you write your action plan. Your reward will

give you even greater incentive to reach your goals. For example, not only will you look and feel great when you lose 15 pounds, but you'll also be able to buy that new dress that you've wanted.

Get started today! I challenge you to set 3-4 goals in the next week. When you plan to make your dreams come true, they do!

*Kathleen Barton is a keynote speaker, workshop presenter, and life coach specializing in life purpose, career success, and work-life balance. She is the author of **Finding Your Purpose and Passion in Life** audio/workbook. Kathleen can be reached at www.YourLifeBalanceCoach.com.*