

COACH *Notes*



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Newsletter

The Art of the Goal: Part 3 What's So SMART About Goals?

Goals are very exciting and energizing. They drive us to achieve beyond our expectations. They make it easier for us to focus and concentrate, and give us permission to say “no” to distractions. Then dreams really do come true. But unless you spend time to explore, plan and prioritize, setting the wrong goals can lead to disappointment and disillusion. This saps your energy and motivation.

It is crucial that you motivate both your mind (what you think you should do) and your heart (what you value). It is difficult to examine your values, beliefs, and true purpose without a trusted partner such as a coach. Once you have explored with your coach what is really important to you in your life (career, family, community, your values and purpose), it should become clear what you need to do. Your goals are a natural extension of your values.

Goal Setting is Not for Sissies!

If you have prioritized 3 areas or values in your life, you are ready to set your goals. Three is an ideal number, as more than that can disperse your focus and concentration. You should be prepared to spend time, money and energy on achieving these goals. Remember, goal setting is not for sissies! It requires sacrifice. You have to really want to achieve them and be willing to say “no” to distractions.

At this point you're ready to cast those ideas into the form of a SMART goal. A SMART goal is:

- S—specific
- M—measurable
- A—attainable
- R—realistic
- T—time framed

1. Be specific when you write down a goal.

Narrow your focus. “Getting fit” is not a goal, but an outcome. “Exercising regularly” is not specific enough. Write down things like, “Ride bike 40 minutes four times a week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday).”

Start small and start specific. You can always expand goals as you make progress.

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“Turning potential into performance”

Dreamers Welcome

At Herdlinger Associates, I encourage people to dream. And the positive results have been astounding!

When individuals pursue their dreams, their lives percolate with purpose, passion, success, and fulfillment.

As a coach, I don't try to make my clients' dreams come true. That's their privilege...and responsibility.

My role – and my joy – is to stand by their side to encourage, guide, challenge, and cheer them on.

Are your dreams big enough? Let me help you unleash your potential and accomplish more than you ever dreamed possible.

...David Herdlinger

HERDLINGER ASSOCIATES has helped thousands of professionals at all levels in all types of organizations achieve extraordinary success and satisfaction.

We serve clients in North America, Europe, and Asia, ranging in size from individuals and very small businesses to corporations with annual sales in excess of \$40 billion.

Learn more about HerdlingerAssociates at our website:

www.TheCoach.biz

P.O. Box 20389
St. Simons Island, GA 31522
912.634.9300
877.626.2960 (toll-free)
David@TheCoach.biz

Don't try to be all inclusive. Focus on making progress on two or three goals before expanding them. The more you can refine and define, the more specific you are, the easier it is to stay focused. Don't forget to ask for the help of your coach. Your coach can send you email reminders and hold you accountable.

2. Write down your goals and their measures. You will need to track the minutes, the days or the number of times you engage in your goal behavior. If you don't complete the originally defined time or measure, write down the minutes you did complete. This will track your efforts and help sustain you when you lack energy or motivation.

3. Make sure the goal you write down is attainable and realistic. If you know that 40 minutes on the bike will exhaust you, or create stress because of the time involved in showering, changing, or other inconveniences, then change the goal to something easier and more attainable.

Make sure your goal is something you like to do. When you create pleasurable memories when you are engaged in the activity, then you increase your chances of doing it more often.

If running on a treadmill makes you think of sweat and dread, then think about the fun you have when you run outdoors with a friend. One person reads books on a stationary bike, and the memory of reading a good story is associated with exercising. Some people find it useful to reward themselves after goal activity, as long as the reward doesn't sabotage.

"No pain, no gain" is true in many areas of goal setting. Remember, if there is too much pain, you will not gain your goal. Make sure you are willing to pay the price of achieving your goal.

By the same token, you need to evaluate and review your goals so that they are not too easy. If you are well on your way to achieving your goals, then you may have set them too low. Try stretching them 10 or 20 percent. If you are not on track, give yourself permission to reduce them by 10 percent.

You should review them regularly with your coach and look at issues of alignment with your values. If you are not achieving your goals, you may have picked the wrong goals. People usually do what they want to do, and if you are choosing not to follow your goals, there is a reason that needs to be explored with your coach.

4. Your goals need to be time-framed. There needs to be a beginning and an end. This would look something like this: Have a fifteen percent increase in sales by the end of the year. This should be tracked at regular intervals. Furthermore, since sales increase could be a function of number of clients, there might be more specific goals for number of client contacts.

For example, you may have a goal of writing one article a week for your newsletter or ezine to your clients and prospects. This may mean you need to read two books a month, spend one hour a week of internet or library research, and spend an hour writing, editing and formatting each week.

As you track your progress, ask for someone to hold you accountable. Research shows that it is easier to stay on track when you have support and reminders. Your coach is trained and has expertise in this area. Ask for help. You don't have to do this alone.

What to Do When Goals Are Incomplete

There are no failures. With the help of your coach, you can review without judgment and look at your shortages. This is where real learning about yourself takes place. The self-awareness that can be gained when you set a goal that you do not achieve is worth the price of admission.

But these lessons are difficult lessons to learn by yourself. With a coach, reviewing the reasons for incompleteness tells us something about our true values, competing commitments, real priorities and gives us invaluable information about what really matters to us.

If self-sabotage appears, there are reasons that can be examined. Often there are "old tapes" or outdated assumptions and beliefs that can be re-examined and revised.

Our goals bring out limiting beliefs about ourselves. But rather than giving in to them, use your coach to explore them and to revise them into empowering beliefs.

Choosing and planning your goals is hard work. It takes time and commitment. The rewards, however, are great. By aligning your head with your heart you will set meaningful, attainable goals that will help you make progress toward what you truly value in your life.