



Work/Life Services Newsletter January 2019
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Goal Setting for Everyday Success

In a garden, you plant seeds, nurture them with water and fertilizer, work at keeping the weeds out and trust the plants will accomplish your goal of growing strong and productive. The same processes can be used to plan for progress in your life and work.

"Setting goals gives direction to life," says Jack Ensign Addington, author of "All About Goals and How to Achieve Them." "If you don't have goals, you have no direction. You're going to drift and get nowhere. Setting a goal creates a mold into which the energy of life flows. It's a law of the mind -- that which you can conceive of, believe in and confidently expect for yourself, must necessarily become your experience."

Follow these steps and you'll soon be reaping a bountiful harvest.

Put it in writing

Writing down your goals is like planting seeds. To do so, write a detailed description of each goal -- the more detailed, the better. Most goals fail to materialize because they're too vague. So, instead of writing "I want a new car," describe your new red convertible with the black leather seats.

Make sure your goals are realistic and not in conflict with each other. You should believe they're attainable.

Next to each goal, write the feeling you hope to get from reaching it. You might want excitement from the red convertible, for instance. A feeling of success or accomplishment may come from the purchase of your first home. Other goals might give you feelings of security, respect, social acceptance, love, fun, happiness, adventure or power.

Act as if

"Goals should be thought of as already accomplished. Never allow yourself to feel anxious about them. This will impede your progress," warns Mr. Addington.

When you feel in your heart you deserve your goal and will do whatever it takes to achieve it, you have won the biggest battle -- the battle with your mind.

Close your eyes and visualize yourself as if you already have attained the goal and are experiencing the feelings that go along with it. Feel the joy and satisfaction of owning your new home, the prestige of earning a college degree, the excitement of driving a new car.

Then start acting as if you already have achieved your goal. If your goal is a new home, start shopping for furniture. If your goal is to become a lawyer, attend some trials and apply to law school.

Make daily lists

Now that you're clear about your goals, nurture them. Decide which tasks must be done and the tools and training you'll need to achieve them.

Each evening, ask yourself, "What can I do today to get closer to my goal?" Then make a list of six things to do and schedule time to do them. Don't beat up on yourself if you don't accomplish them all in one day. Simply carry over the unfinished tasks to tomorrow.

At the end of each day, write down what you accomplished in a notebook or calendar, so you can track your progress.

Be careful about sharing

Don't discuss your goals with friends or family members who don't share your enthusiasm. They may cause you to doubt your goal, or they may feel threatened and subtly sabotage your success. Most of the time it's best to quietly go about pursuing goals, only giving people information when a goal will affect their lives. That way, you won't have the added stress of accounting to other people about your progress or making explanations if you change direction.

On the other hand, encouragement can be motivating. You can get it from the people who teach you the new skills you need. They have a personal interest in your progress and will be thrilled about your success.