

GOAL SETTING



“When it is obvious that the goals cannot be reached, don’t adjust the goals, adjust the action steps.”

Confucius

Why Are Goals Important?

Successful people begin with goals then set their priorities to accomplish their goals. Furthermore, successful people are able to manage their time according to their priorities. If our priorities are not lined up with our goals, then it is like “the tail wagging the dog.”

Goal-setting...

- Focuses your sights on something you want to attain
- Deals with the *why*, *when* and *how* of our lives
- Turns your daydreams and fantasies into reality
- Lets you discover the detailed steps needed to reach your dreams
- Helps break down overwhelming larger tasks into smaller manageable tasks
- Helps to manage your time more efficiently
- Leads to a sense of accomplishment and self-fulfillment

The famous basketball player Michael Jordan wrote the following about goal setting in his book, *I Can't Accept Not Trying: Michael Jordan on the Pursuit of Excellence*:

I approach everything step by step....I had always set short-term goals. As I look back, each one of the steps or successes led to the next one. When I got cut from the varsity team as a sophomore in high school, I learned something. I knew I never wanted to feel that bad again....So I set a goal of becoming a starter on the varsity. That's what I focused on all summer. When I worked on my game, that's what I thought about. When it happened, I set another goal, a reasonable, manageable goal that I could realistically achieve if I worked hard enough....I guess I approached it with the end in mind. I knew exactly where I wanted to go, and I focused on getting there. As I reached those goals, they built on one another. I gained a little confidence every time I came through.

...If [your goal is to become a doctor]...and you're getting Cs in biology then the first thing you have to do is get Bs in biology and then As. You have to perfect the first step and then move on to chemistry or physics.

Take those small steps. Otherwise you're opening yourself up to all kinds of frustration. Where would your confidence come from if the only measure of success was becoming a doctor? If you tried as hard as you could and didn't become a doctor, would that mean your whole life was a failure? Of course not.

All those steps are like pieces of a puzzle. They all come together to form a picture....Not everyone is going to be the greatest....But you can still be considered a success....Step by step, I can't see any other way of accomplishing anything.

I Can't Accept Not Trying: Michael Jordan on the Pursuit of Excellence is published by Harper San Francisco, a division of Harper Collins Publishers (ISBN 0-06-25119)

Michael Jordan

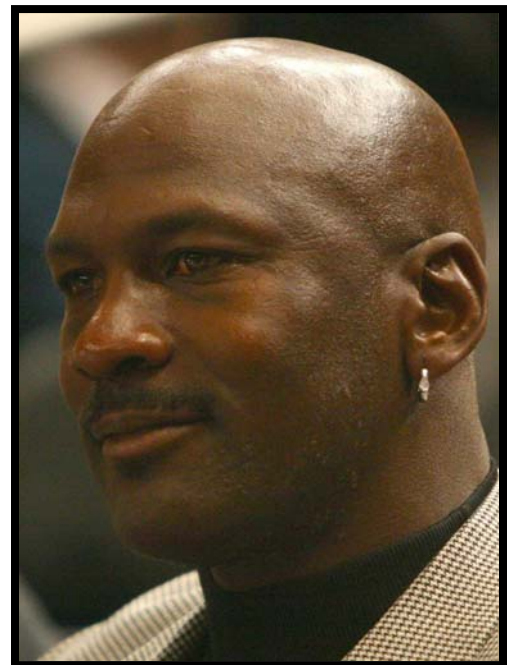


Photo by Joshua Massel

Goals for Your Lifetime

The first step in setting personal goals is to consider what you want to achieve in your lifetime, as setting lifetime goals gives you the overall perspective that shapes all other aspects of your decision making.

To give a broad, balanced coverage to all important areas in your life, try to set goals in some or all of the following:

- **Artistic:** Do you want to learn an instrument? Participate in a play? See the Mona Lisa? If so, how can you make that happen?
- **Attitude:** Is any part of your mindset holding you back? Are there any particular behaviors or habits that are upsetting to you and would like to change? Do you need any outside support to assist you in these changes?
- **Career:** What level do you want to reach in your career? How much education will you need?
- **Education:** Is there any knowledge you want to acquire in particular? What information and skills will you need to achieve your goals?
- **Family:** Do you want to be a parent? Will you wait to have children until you have a good job? After college? After your first million?! How do you envision your family living? If you already have kids, is there anything you would like to do for them?
- **Financial:** How much do you want to earn by what stage of your life? Do you want to understand investments, retirement and 401(k)s? How can you learn that?
- **Physical:** Are there any athletic goals you want to achieve? How do you want to maintain good health into old age? What steps are you going to take to achieve this?
- **Pleasure:** How do you want to enjoy yourself? Would you like to take up a hobby or register for a class? Maybe travel? You should ensure that some of your life is for **you!**
- **Public Service:** Do you want to make the world a better place by your existence? Are you interested in volunteer work? Community service, Peace Corps, Habitat for Humanity? Environmental or animal welfare organizations? How do you want to give back to the world?



Aids to Successful Goal Setting

1. **Brainstorm** - List everything you would like to accomplish.
2. **Prioritize** - Look at your list: decide which goal you would like to work with first. Keep your list of goals so that you can check on your progress.
3. **Describe in Detail** - Be very specific: break your goals into objectives, a step-by-step plan so you can check on your progress.
4. **Identify Your Barriers** - Look for internal and external blocks to reaching your goals.
5. **Develop a Game Plan** - Decide ways to overcome the barriers to your goals.
6. **Develop a Timeline** - Look at your goals and work out a realistic timeline.
7. **Reward Yourself** - Reward yourself for each step you accomplish towards your goals.

The following broad guidelines will help you to set effective goals:

- **State each goal as a positive statement:** Express your goals positively. 'Execute this technique well' is a much better goal than 'Don't make this stupid mistake'.
- **Be precise:** Set a precise goal, putting in dates, times and amounts so that you can measure achievement. If you do this, you will know exactly when you have achieved the goal, and can take complete satisfaction from having achieved it.
- **Set priorities:** When you have several goals, give each a priority. This helps you to avoid feeling overwhelmed by too many goals, and helps to direct your attention to the most important goals.
- **Write goals down:** This crystallizes your intentions and gives them more force.
- **Keep operational goals small:** Keep the low-level goals you are working towards small and achievable. If a goal is too large, then it can seem that you are not making progress towards it. Keeping goals small and incremental gives more opportunities for reward. Derive today's goals from larger ones.
- **Set performance goals, not outcome goals:** You should take care to set goals over which you have as much control as possible. There is nothing more dispiriting than failing to achieve a personal goal for reasons beyond your control. These could be bad business environments, poor judgment, bad weather, injury, or just plain bad luck. If you base your goals on personal performance, then you can keep control over the achievement of your goals and draw satisfaction from them.
- **Set realistic goals:** It is important to set goals that you can achieve. All sorts of people (parents, media, and society) can set unrealistic goals for you. They will often do this in ignorance of your own desires and ambitions. Alternatively, you may be naïve in setting very high goals. You might not appreciate either the obstacles in the way or quite understand how many skills you must master to achieve a particular level of performance.
- **Do not set goals too low:** Just as it is important not to set goals unrealistically high, do not set them too low. People tend to do this when they are afraid of failure or when they are lazy! You should set goals so that they are slightly out of your immediate grasp, but not so far that there is no hope of achieving them. No one will put serious effort into achieving a goal that they believe is unrealistic.

Achieving Goals

When you have achieved a goal, take the time to enjoy the satisfaction of having done so. Absorb the implications of the goal achievement and observe the progress you have made towards other goals. If the goal was a significant one, reward yourself appropriately!

The Goals Worksheet

This worksheet is designed to help you set goals – “an ideal future” – and plan activities and strategies for meeting those goals. As you do this exercise, it is important to consider that your goals are not “set in stone”; they may change and that is expected. Life throws curve balls and we have to adapt. The important thing is that you begin the planning process and dream a little. Let’s get started!

Long-Term Goals

For the purpose of this exercise, long-term goals are those that you set for the time that you will graduate and receive your Bachelor’s Degree.

CAREER: Where do you hope to be in your career development at the time of your graduation?

Examples:

- ❖ I will be starting my career in advertising with an entry-level copywriting position in a large advertising firm.
- ❖ I will be continuing my education in a Ph.D. program in Biochemistry to eventually become a university professor.
- ❖ I will be working as a pediatric nurse in an urban hospital.

EDUCATIONAL: What educational goals do you hope to accomplish with your Bachelor’s Degree?

Examples:

- ❖ I plan to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree. My major will be Journalism – Advertising, and my minor will be Spanish.
- ❖ I plan to graduate with a Bachelor of Science Degree with a Comprehensive Geology Major – General Geology Emphasis.
- ❖ I plan to graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing with a Family Studies minor.

PERSONAL: While at college what would you like to accomplish to make you a better-rounded person?

Examples:

- ❖ I would like to learn Spanish and participate in the Salamanca study abroad program.
- ❖ I would like to take an acting course and act in a campus performance.
- ❖ I would like to run for a Student Government position at Citrus College.

Short-Term Goals

Short-term goals are those specific activities and strategies that move us toward our long-term goals or “ideal future.” The following are questions that can help you formulate your short-term goals.

Career & Transfer Services: What services and programs do Career & Transfer Services offer to help you develop and implement your goals? Check out their website at www.citruscollege.edu/transcntr.

Courses: What specific General Education or elective courses might help you with your career or personal goals? Visit the Counseling & Advisement website at www.citruscollege.edu/counsel or meet with a counselor or advisor.

Long-term Goals and Short-term Goals Are you getting there?

The purpose of this exercise is to look at your goals. Long-term goals require a series of short-term goals to be completed first. Short-term goals may take several years or several months to complete, depending on the ultimate goal. Looking at what is necessary to achieve your long-term goals puts short-term goals into perspective. For instance a person cannot become a nurse (long-term goal) without first taking classes that qualify the student for a nursing program (short-term goals).

Write out what your long-term goals are. Then add a short-term goal that would assist you in achieving that long-term goal.

1. **Long-term Goal:** _____

Short-term Goal: _____

Short-term Goal: _____

What are you doing now to achieve this goal?

2. **Long-term Goal:** _____

Short-term Goal: _____

Short-term Goal: _____

What are you doing now to achieve this goal?

3. **Long-term Goal:** _____

Short-term Goal: _____

Short-term Goal: _____

What are you doing now to achieve this goal?

4. **Long-term Goal:** _____

Short-term Goal: _____

Short-term Goal: _____

What are you doing now to achieve this goal?

What have you **done** in the last two weeks towards attaining your goals?

What are actions **can** you take in the next two weeks towards attaining your goals?

Questions to Ask Yourself

1. **Is the goal achievable?**
 - a. Can I accomplish my goal in the time span I have set?
 - b. Does achieving this goal depend only on me and not on conditions outside of me?
2. **Do I believe I can achieve this goal?**
 - a. Are my skills and abilities equal to this goal?
3. **Will I know when I have reached my goal?**
 - a. Have I set my goal in specific terms?
4. **Do I want to do what it takes to reach my goal?**
 - a. Is the goal one that interests me?
5. **Is the goal presented with an alternative?**
 - a. Have I made a firm decision?
 - b. Am I focused on what I need to be doing?
 - c. Do I have an alternative if I cannot reach my goal?
6. **Am I motivated to pursue my goal?**
 - a. Do I have a support system?
 - b. Have I set up a timeline towards my goal?
 - c. Do I have a reward system in place?
7. **Is the goal of value to me?**
 - a. Is the goal compatible with my values?
 - b. Does my goal have longevity? Do I need to consider more education?



“Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.”

Sir Winston Churchill

EVEN THE EXPERTS MAKE MISTAKES!

Made a mistake? Experienced a failure? Fallen short of your goals? Feeling discouraged? Feeling like quitting? You're in good company. Consider the following blunders:

"Drill for oil? You mean drill into the ground to try and find oil? You're crazy." --Drillers whom Edwin L. Drake tried to enlist to his project to drill for oil in 1859

"Louis Pasteur's theory of germs is ridiculous fiction." --Pierre Pachtet, Professor of Physiology at Toulouse, 1872

"The abdomen, the chest, and the brain will forever be shut from the intrusion of the wise and humane surgeon." --Sir John Eric Ericksen, British surgeon, appointed Surgeon-Extraordinary to Queen Victoria, 1873

"This 'telephone' has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication. The device is inherently of no value to us." --Western Union internal memo, 1876

"Heavier-than-air flying machines are impossible." --Lord Kelvin, president, Royal Society, 1895

"Who the hell wants to hear actors talk?" --H.M. Warner, Warner Brothers Films, 1927

"Airplanes are interesting toys but of no military value." --Marechal Ferdinand Foch, Professor of Strategy, Ecole Superieure de Guerre

"The wireless music box has no imaginable commercial value. Who would pay for a message sent to nobody in particular?" --David Sarnoff's associates in response to his urgings to invest in the radio in the 1920s

"I think there is a world market for maybe five computers." --Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, 1943

"I'm just glad it'll be Clark Gable who's falling on his face and not Gary Cooper." --Gary Cooper on his decision not to take the leading role in "Gone with the Wind"

"We don't like their sound, and guitar music is on the way out." --Decca Recording Co. rejecting the Beatles, 1962

"There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home." --Ken Olson, president, chairman and founder of Digital Equipment Corp., 1977

"The concept is interesting and well-formed, but in order to earn better than a 'C,' the idea must be feasible." --A Yale University management professor in response to Fred Smith's paper proposing reliable overnight delivery service (Smith went on to found Federal Express Corp.)

"So we went to Atari and said, 'Hey, we've got this amazing thing, even built with some of your parts, and what do you think about funding us? Or we'll give it to you. We just want to do it. Pay our salary; we'll come work for you.' And they said, 'No.' So then we went to Hewlett-Packard, and they said, 'Hey, we don't need you. You haven't got through college yet.'" --Apple Computer Inc. founder Steve Jobs on attempts to get Atari and HP interested in his and Steve Wozniak's personal computer

"You want to have consistent and uniform muscle development across all of your muscles? It can't be done. It's just a fact of life. You just have to accept inconsistent muscle development as an unalterable condition of weight training." --Response to Arthur Jones, who solved the "unsolvable" problem by inventing Nautilus

"640K ought to be enough for anybody." --Bill Gates, 1981