

10 Goal Setting Tips

<http://sbinfocanada.about.com/od/goalsetting/a/goalsettingtips.htm>

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Part 1: Goal Setting for Achievement Instead of Disappointment

"I'm going to lose twenty pounds." "I'm going to sell a lot more this year." "I'm going to live a healthier lifestyle."

If you're setting goals like these, you might as well be writing them on little slips of paper and tossing them into the fireplace. This kind of goal setting is good for a little amusement on New Year's Eve, but not much else. It's goal setting for disappointment, not for achievement.

You see, [goal setting](#) isn't just an exercise that you can finish in five minutes; goal setting is a process, a route to achievement. Learn how to set goals that you can and will actually achieve with these goal setting tips.

1) Choose goals that are worthwhile.

You would think it would go without saying but lots of people set meaningless goals - and then wonder why they don't feel any sense of achievement. Remember that the purpose of goal setting is to move us forward and spur positive change. If a goal doesn't have this motivating, transformational quality, don't bother with it. You'll just be disappointed.

2) Choose goals that are achievable stretches.

The fact that goals have to be achievable is standard goal setting advice. Pretty well everyone knows that there's no point in setting a goal that you will never be able to accomplish. All you'll do is get frustrated and abandon it. Less well known is the fact that goals need to stretch you in some fashion. If a goal isn't engaging, you'll get bored and abandon it. (See [3 Rules for Setting Business Goals](#) for more on this.)

3) Make your goals specific.

The big problem with the sample goals I've used to open this article is that they're vague. To decide that you're going to lose twenty pounds, for instance, is nice, but provides you with no guidance for doing that. Think how much easier it would be to accomplish this goal if you knew exactly what you were going to do to lose the weight. So when you're goal setting, [use a goal setting formula](#) that gives your goal a built-in action plan. You'll start accomplishing more than you thought possible.

4) Commit to your goals.

You need to dedicate yourself to accomplish the goal you have chosen. That's why writing your goals down is a common goal setting tip; it's the first step to committing to achieving your goals. But you also have to realize that accomplishing a goal is not an overnight process and that you are going to have to work regularly at transforming your goal into an accomplishment. And you have to set aside the time you will need to work on your goal.

5) Make your goal public.

Making your goal public is a goal setting technique that is really effective for many people. Think of organizations such as [TOPS](#) (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) and their weekly weigh ins. Knowing that others are going to be monitoring your results ensures commitment to the goal and is extremely motivating. You don't have to join an organization or broadcast your goal on a Facebook page to make your goal public; [having a goal buddy](#), a single person interested in your efforts, can be just as effective.

Part 2: Five More Goal Setting Tips

So far we've looked at how you can set the right goals, and the importance of making your goals specific and committing to working on them. Here are five more goal setting tips to help you accomplish what you want to accomplish.

6) Prioritize your goals.

Goals don't have to be huge projects that take months or even years to attain, but because they require commitment and need to be worked on regularly, every single goal that you set will be demanding. So don't sabotage yourself by taking on a bunch of goals at a time. Assuming that you are following all the other goal setting tips presented here and setting goals that are worthwhile, I would recommend working on no more than three at a time, and even then you should choose one goal as your top priority.

7) Make your goals real to you.

Goal setting is basically a way to approach the process of accomplishment. It's a very successful way, if done right, but like all such processes, it's a bit abstract. Using techniques such as [visualization](#) to focus on what actually accomplishing your goal will be like and what it will do for you can be very powerful - and a great help in staying motivated. Choosing and posting pictures that represent successfully accomplishing your goal is another way of doing this.

8) Set deadlines to accomplish your goals.

A goal without a deadline is a goal that you have not fully committed to and a goal you will not achieve. For one thing, if working on achieving a goal is something you can do whenever, you won't. For another, having a deadline will shape your plan of action. To return to the weight loss example, it makes a great difference whether your goal is to lose twenty pounds in four months or in ten. You will have to do a lot more exercising and cutting down of your food portions if you want to lose the weight more quickly.

9) Evaluate your goals.

Remember that goal setting is a process - and evaluation is an important part of that process. Don't just settle for a 'good' or 'bad' assessment; think about what you did, how you did it and what you got out of it. Whether you successfully accomplished your goal or not, there's always something to be learned; what works or doesn't work for you, whether achieving your goal lived up to your expectations, why you failed. Extracting these lessons will increase your accomplishments even more as you apply them to your future goal setting experience.

10) Reward yourself for accomplishment.

Internal satisfaction is a great thing, but external rewards can be immensely satisfying, too. When you accomplish a goal, you've devoted time and effort to your success, so take the time to celebrate your success, too. One caveat; don't undermine your efforts by choosing an inappropriate reward. Eating a huge slab of cheesecake is not an appropriate reward for losing twenty pounds; for example, a new outfit would be a more suitable choice.

Set the Stage for Your Goal Setting Success

So don't defeat your goal setting efforts before you even start to work on accomplishing your desired goals. Set yourself up for success rather than failure by applying these ten goal setting tips and start achieving what you want to achieve.