

Achieving Life Balance 2 – Goal Setting

Being 'in balance' is closely linked to having a sense of achievement and the feeling of somehow 'making progress'. This can be given shape and definition by creating and achieving clear goals.

Why not allow yourself some time and space to think through your personal goals, perhaps using one of the methodologies outlined below?

Goal Setting – Method 1: Using the Life Balance Wheel

Phase 1, Step 1: Review the scores that you gave yourself in each section of 'The Life Balance Wheel', in the Hint & Tip: 'Achieving Life Balance 1'.

Phase 1, Step 2: Using a pack of stickies, brainstorm (one idea per sticky) what you would like to achieve under each of the section headings on the wheel. Try to get at least 3 ideas per section.

Phase 1, Step 3: Divide a large sheet of paper in half, horizontally. Label the top half: 'Must have goals' and the bottom half: 'Nice to have goals'. Transfer your stickies onto the paper, placing them either above or below the line, looking for clusters, sequences and any other links as you go. Add new stickies whenever they seem appropriate and discard those that seem to be less important to you as you progress the exercise.

Phase 2, Step 1: On a separate piece of paper, create a time line stretching between 5 and 10 years ahead – (use whatever scale seems appropriate to you). Transfer your goals one at a time, so that you can see by when you would like to have achieved each one.

Top Tips:

- Apply SMART thinking (below) to each goal.
- Use the questions on the checklist over the page to help clarify your thinking, to further ensure that your goals are workable and that you really are setting yourself for success.
- Look out for 'elegant solutions' – things that will help you to achieve what you need in the short-term, but which will also position you to move forward in the medium to long-term.
- Keep perspective – don't be tempted to focus only on short-term urgent goals, at the expense of longer-term, proactive goals. Having a balance of targets and beginning to achieve them will give a feeling of making progress, which is essential to developing a strong sense of personal wellbeing.

S pecific

Make the words of your goal as specific as possible, basing it on specific actions and definite results. This will make it easier to measure achievement, to re-plan and to measure success.

M easurable

Ask yourself:

- 'What will be different as a result of achieving this objective?'
- 'How will I know that I have achieved this objective?'
- 'When will I know that I have achieved this objective?'

These three questions will enable you to achieve clarity and ensure that relevant success factors are in place.

A ction orientated

By choosing language carefully and giving an action focus to your goal description ('To achieve...; To deliver...'), you can also ensure that you focus on being proactive.

R ealistic

The goals that you set should be relevant to **you** and **your** aspirations. They should incorporate reasonable stretch – something that is within the reach of a successful performer, but which will still pull you forward.

T ime-bound

Establish a start date, milestones, review and a finishing date. This is an essential pre-requisite to tracking progress and evaluating performance.

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Use the checklist below to check that your goals are well set.

Question:

- Does this goal describe what you want in an accurate way?
- Where are you now in relation to the goal?
- When will you start working on the goal?
- What are the first steps?
- How will you know that you have achieved this goal?
- What will the outcome allow you to do?
- Is it really what you want?
- What resources will you need?
- Will achieving this goal prevent you from doing anything else?
- What are the things (personal or external) that might stop you from achieving your goal?
- What do you need to do to overcome these obstacles?



Goal Setting – Method 2: Looking Back to Look Forward

The date is 5 years from today.

Imagine that you are moving on from your current job, perhaps taking a promotion or an opportunity that has been created because of the success that you have had at work over the last several years.

As it is your last day and you clear your workspace, think back over these last 5 years.

- What has changed most about the way that you have organised yourself over the last five years?
- What have you contributed to the organisation or to your team?
- What proactive business opportunities have you created?
- What is the area of expertise that you are known for?
- What new skills have you learnt?
- What have you done that makes you most proud?
- Who have you worked with to best effect?
- What are your colleagues likely to say about you now?
- How have you been most able to help your colleagues and peers to be successful?

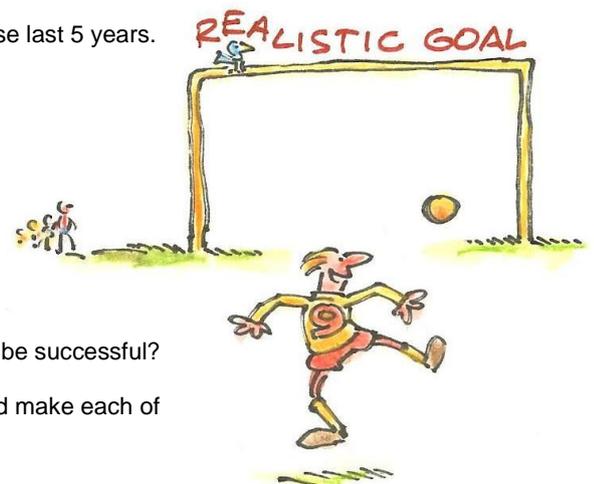
Returning to the present day – how can you set yourself for success and make each of these aspirations a reality?

Goal Setting – Method 3: The First 100 Days

Many politicians and business leaders think that their first 100 days in role are really important – so what about your next 'first 100 days'? What could you have achieved in 100 day's time?

Think about your key areas of responsibility and decide what you would like to achieve in each one during the next 100 days. In some areas you might simply be re-enforcing an existing strategy or attempting to use a different style or approach, whilst in others you will have the opportunity to bring about root and branch changes.

Imagine if you took control of your own destiny, what might you be able to achieve in the next 100 days?



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