

Achieve More in 2004

Another year is upon us and if you are like most people you have hit the floor running without planning a clear objective for the upcoming year. However, top performing sales people make the time to establish clear targets. Setting goals is not a complicated process nor does it take a lot of time. Use the techniques outlined in this article to help you achieve your targets.

Ensure each of your goals follows the SMART concept: **S**pecific, **M**otivational, **A**ction-oriented, **R**elevant to your situation, and **T**ime-bound. For example, "I will increase my sales by 15% compared to last year." Be as specific about your goal as possible. "I will start my own catering business" is a lot stronger than "I want to go into business for myself." Challenging goals are motivating. Set goals that will push beyond what you usually think you can accomplish. Remember to set a deadline. A goal without a deadline is simply a dream. Attach a realistic yet challenging deadline for accomplishment and post this where you can review it regularly.

Phrase your goal in the present tense and assume success. Don't say, "I want to." Say, "I will." This subtle technique tells your subconscious that you have already achieved your goal which means it will go work at helping the goal become a reality. It will attract the people, places, and situations you need to achieve that goal.

Put them in writing. This simple act helps you clarify your goals and will allow you to visualize them more effectively. I recommend that you record each goal on a separate index card and review them twice a day – once in the morning (when you first wake up) and again before you go to bed. This process reinforces your goals, acts as a reminder and drives your goals deep into your subconscious. In fact, this is one of the most powerful strategies you can use to achieve your targets.

List the benefits you intend to receive by achieving each goal. This will keep you focused and strong particularly when you face the inevitable roadblocks and barriers. Years ago, when I chose to quit smoking, I listed 75 benefits and when I felt the urge for a cigarette I would review this list to help me get past that craving. The more benefits you can list for your goals, the more motivating those goals will become.

As you review your goals each morning and evening, picture yourself achieving each of them. The more you can "see" success in your mind's eye, the more likely you can translate this into reality. Create a perfect picture in your mind and replay it frequently. Developing a picture board can help with this. This is a very effective tool that allows you to see the visual impact of achieving your goals. When my wife and I bought our first house we clipped photographs and pictures of what we wanted our house to have and pasted them on to a large sheet of poster board. We hung this near the front door of our apartment so we

could see it every time we left or entered the apartment. We also created a thermometer of "down-payment savings" to help us track our progress. We had a clear deadline and were able to surpass this deadline by almost 30 days. I now keep track of my annual revenues, speaking engagements and book sales in the same manner. I post these sheets on my office wall where I can see them everyday and they allow me to track my progress with a quick glance.

Anticipate the challenges you will encounter and plan how you will overcome them. This will prepare you for them and help you overcome the obstacles easier and with less stress. In fact, the simple act of planning for obstacles will often prevent many of them from occurring.

Surround yourself with successful, motivated people who also set challenging goals. I share my goals with several friends and associates. When we get together, we motivate each other by talking about our success, our challenges, and our goals. A word of caution: Be careful who you share your goals with. People who are not goal-oriented will not support you, and in many cases, will actually try to dissuade you from your goals.

Use affirmations. If you plan to quit smoking repeat statement such as, "I enjoy the lifestyle of a non-smoker," "I'm glad I'm a non-smoker," "I enjoy the taste of food more as a non-smoker." Stating affirmations aloud reinforces your goal to your mind and will help you achieve your goal much faster.

Take action. Don't procrastinate. All the planning in the world will not help you achieve your goals. You **MUST** take action. Once you have determined a goal for yourself, take action within 24 hours. This will set the wheels in motion and create the necessary momentum you need. I once heard a speaker state, "We are either moving toward or away from our goals." Develop the habit of taking action on a daily basis.

Achieving greatness and a higher level of success is not that difficult. However, it does require discipline, focus and a clear idea of what you want to accomplish. Follow these steps and have your best year ever!

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