

Setting SMART Objectives

Smart Objectives -- The desire to meet a challenge and succeed has been a part of many cultures throughout history. The ancient Peruvians used to draw out their goals in symbols and paint them in primitive colours on the walls of caves. The Egyptians used to create elaborate rituals to move from one state of desire to actualisation. They believed that writing out a dream in advance would assure a positive outcome.

Likewise, we moderns have an innate need to live a fulfilling and meaningful life. You need to have a vision, as it is the first step towards having the life you want.

Your purpose provides intention and direction for who and what you want to be and do. To live out your life vision and purpose, set goals, and then focus on results. If you are not getting the results you intended, find the reason and adjust your strategy.

To ensure your success, be sure to set **S.M.A.R.T. Objectives**.

Specific: The goal is clear, you know precisely what you are going after.

Measurable: The goal is able to be measured, you will know when you have achieved it.

Attainable: The goal is something you can take tangible action on.

Realistic: The goal is something that can be done, you will be able to do it.

Timely: The goal is limited to a certain time frame, you will have parameters as to when you will have completed it.

To reach your goals, you must take a proactive, committed approach to making it happen. What follows are nine ways to maintain your focus and increase your energy and optimism while pursuing your goals.

1. Know What You Want: When you are clear about what you want, you build excitement. When you are excited, more effort is put forth, and your enthusiasm helps to overcome obstacles.

2. Write Your Goals Down: When you write about what you want, it becomes indelibly written not only on the paper, but also upon your consciousness.

3. Visualize What You Want: "See" in your mind's eye your goal already achieved. What does it look like, feel like? The more real your image, the more powerful it will be, operating much like a magnet drawing forth more of what you want to you.

4. Affirm What You Want: Speak your goals into existence. An affirmation is a present-tense, positive statement of your intended outcome. For example, "I am a successful_____." The more sensory rich you make your affirmations, the more effective they will be.

5. Develop a Strategy to Get What You Want: To achieve your goals, you need to create an action plan. Planning bridges the gap between where you are now and where you want to be in the future. What are the steps you must take to move you forward?

6. Measure Your Progress: Create mechanisms that will allow you to evaluate your progress. Use charts, write to do lists, track your actions, etc. Use anything that will encourage you to stay on track and to help you to see when adjustment is needed.

7. Develop a Support System: Use the buddy system. Surround yourself with people who encourage and challenge you to get what you want. Be accountable to someone other than yourself.

8. Commit to the Personal Growth Process: Success will not come over night, so allow the process to unfold. Know that there will be times when you feel like quitting, but remember that "winners never quit." Commit to doing whatever it takes to make your dreams come true.

9. Celebrate Your Success: As you achieve smaller goals, stop and acknowledge it! Appreciate yourself for coming as far as you have! Build on your successes, and take bigger risks the next time.

Now is the time to start setting goals for yourself so that you can begin creating life as you would like it! Good luck and Go For It!