



How to Create Effective Goals

How to Create Effective Goals

We all have things we want to accomplish in life and, for the most part, we do our best to achieve those goals. Sometimes, however, we manage to set goals that aren't effective or achievable and this can cause us a great deal of strife.

How do you know if your goals are effective and achievable?

The first thing to do is jot down the resources you'll need to attain your goal, both physical resources and mental ones. If there's something you need to complete before you can make your goal a reality, prioritize the steps you must take to complete that task first.

Once your resources are in place, you've opened up the highway for achievement. Let's see how to enter the *on-ramp* so you can be on your way!

Here are some strategies you can use to create effective goals *you can* achieve:

- 1. Make sure your goal is specific.** Set a measurable goal so you can reach it and succeed. ***Determine exact numbers and dates*** of whatever it is you want to accomplish.
 - Saying your goal is to be a faster runner or a better cook doesn't work since there is no specific end target. You won't be able to judge if you've ever reached that goal because, no matter what, there's always room to be better at something.
 - On the other hand, saying your goal is to "increase your running speed by shaving 10 seconds off the time it takes you to run your course" is specific and you can tell when you've reached it.

2. Your goal must also be attainable and realistic. You wouldn't set your goal to lose 30 pounds in the next 5 days, because it's just not realistic. Setting a goal to lose 30 pounds over the next 10-12 weeks is a real and attainable goal.

- ***Unattainable goals are counterproductive.*** Not only can you never complete an unattainable goal, but it can also prevent you from even trying. By setting a goal you cannot possibly meet, you're setting yourself up for failure.

3. Give yourself a time limit for your goal. Setting a deadline makes the goal a priority, keeps it in your mind, and makes it easier to achieve. If you know you only have a specific time in which to achieve something, you tend to focus more time and energy on that task.

- If you have a big goal, then ***divide it into smaller goals, or steps.*** Smaller goals keep you focused on attaining the bigger goal as long as they're related to each other.
 - For example, if your goal is to be promoted in six months, then establishing six one-month goals designed to improve your work performance will contribute to the overall goal.
- 4. Write down your goals.** Most people have more than one goal at a time. You can set goals in many different areas: family, work, health, education, hobbies, or any part of your life in which you'd like to make changes.

The question is how to handle all these goals at the same time. ***Writing down each goal can help you organize them and better motivate you to work toward achieving them.***

- Once you have them written down, you may see ways they connect to each other and can devise ways to work on them at the same time.
- For example, let's say one goal you have is to get a job making more money and another is to continue your education. Once you complete your education you should be able to land a better job. See how one goal feeds another?
- Perhaps one goal is to spend more time with your family and another one is to workout. Well, if you exercised as a family once or twice a week, you'd accomplish both goals at the same time.

Using these goal-setting tips will make your goals more effective and achievable. Once you've created your objectives, make a plan of action steps and stick with it. In time, you'll achieve these goals and you will have a system in place for any endeavor!