

Before formulating a plan to reach your destination, you must first have a starting point.

Let's take a moment to assess where you are today. Think through the answers to the following questions:

1. Am I making as much income as I'd like? _____ What is the gap between what I'd like to make and my current salary?
2. Am I in the job or career that I'd most like to pursue? _____ If not, what is it I would like to be doing?
3. Am I working to my potential?
4. Do I know all there is to know about the field in which I work?
5. Do others see me as "the expert?"
6. What are some of the things that I do very well?
7. What opportunities for development exist? (Note – this sounds a lot better than "what are my weaknesses?")

Now that you've assessed where you are, let's explore your vision for the future.

Indicate your vision of where you see your career in 5 years.

In 3 years _____

Next year _____

Once you've crystallized your vision, it's time to set goals and timelines to bring the vision to life.

"Goals are dreams with deadlines."

Steps for Creating Strategies for Success

1. **Identify** what it is you want to achieve. Have a **SMART** goal
2. **Determine** what is interfering with your ability to achieve your goals
3. **Define** an acceptable level of behavior
4. **Develop** a plan of action
5. **Implement** your plan
6. **Follow up** – measure the success of your plan
7. **Adapt** and **adjust**

SMART Goals are:

Specific – exactly what is your goal? What do you want to achieve?

Measurable – how will you know you’ve met it? Increased income, more time, better efficiency...

Attainable – must be a stretch

Realistic – possible to achieve

Time bound – when do you want to achieve it?

Set the goal.

State it in the form of a result.

Use strong action-oriented verbs; avoid weak ones such as “would” “could” “should” and “like.”

Creating Strategies for Success

This **Professional Goal Worksheet** belongs to _____

List three goals I wish to achieve within the next twelve months. (Indicate which is most important.)

Let's use the **SMART** test on the most important goal.

1. Is it **Specific**? Can you clearly state it in one or two sentences?

2. Is it **Measurable**? What is/are the result(s) that will come from the goal?

3. Is it **Attainable**? Can you achieve it? Does it make you stretch a bit?

4. Is it **Realistic**? _____

5. Is it **Time Bound**? The goal will be attained by _____

My revised goal statement is:

Identification of Tools and Resources

Tools and resources are those people and things that will help in meeting your goal, such as study materials, co-workers, boss, workshops, etc.

List those tools and resources that are readily available:

Organizing One's Time

Decide how much time you are willing to devote to meeting your goal and build that time into your plan.

What gets in your way?

Creating the Action Plan

Once you've clearly stated the goal, identified resources, tools, time, and challenges, the next step is to develop an action plan to achieve it - and commit to the plan. In order for the plan to be effective, it's important to begin with the end in mind. That is, think in terms of the goal's having been achieved. Then work backwards from there to set accurate targets and measures.

Steps to Meet My 12-Month Goal

At six months

- *
- *
- *

At 3 months

- *
- *
- *
- *

The next 30 days

- *
- *
- *

The first step I will take towards achieving my goal is:

Celebrate Success

Meeting goals and making progress leads to a great sense of empowerment, well being, and personal satisfaction. What makes you feel a sense of accomplishment?

How will you celebrate your successes along the way?

Staying the Course

Just with any journey, there can appear detours or temporary roadblocks along one's path. Rather than letting them cause frustration, one must be flexible and ready to adapt. For each Plan A you have, it's good to have a backup or Plan B.

Accountability and Follow up

Making one's goals public help to create accountability.

Review the check points in your plan to ensure you are on target or need to make adjustments.

Action Plan Resources

Canfield, Jack, M. V. Hansen, and L. Hewitt. *The Power of Focus: How to Hit Your Personal and Financial Targets with Absolute Certainty*. Deerfield Beach, FL.: Health Communications, Inc. 2000.

Covey, Stephen R. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, 1989.

Gallagher, Carol Ph.D. *Going to the Top*, New York: Penguin Books, 2000.

Gilman, Cheryl. *Doing Work You Love: Discovering Your Purpose and Realizing Your Dreams*, Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1997.

Hewitt, Fran & L. Hewitt. *The Power of Focus for Women. How to Live the Life You Really Want*. Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc. 2000.

Shaw, Deborah Rosado. *Dream BIG!: A Roadmap for Facing Life's Challenges and Creating the Life You Deserve*, New York: Dream BIG! Enterprises, LLC, 2001.

Tracy, Brian. *Goals! How to Get Everything You Want – Faster Than You Ever Thought Possible*, San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. 2003.

Zander, Rosamund Stone and Zander, Benjamin. *The Art of Possibility*, Harvard Business School Press, 2000.