

## Effective Goal Setting

For most people, learning how to establish goals is the root of their motivation system. A firm belief in the importance of goals as the cornerstone of personal success is the vital first step in putting those goals to work for you. Below are some guidelines for creating goals that will enhance your success:

1. **Conceivable**
  - You must be able to conceptualize the goal so that it is understandable and then be able to identify clearly what the first step or two should be.
2. **Believable**
  - You must believe you can reach the goal. You need to have a positive, affirmative feeling about yourself. Bear in mind that few people can believe a goal they have never seen achieved by someone else.
3. **Achievable**
  - The goals you set must be possible with your given strengths and abilities. For example, if you were an obese, fifty-year-old man, it would be unrealistic for you to set the goal of running a four-minute mile in the next two months.
4. **Controllable**
  - If your goal includes the involvement of anyone else, you should first obtain in the permission of the other person or persons to be involved; or the goal may be stated as an invitation. For example, if a person's goal is to take someone to a movie on a Saturday night, the goal would not be acceptable as stated because it involves the possibility that the second party may turn him/her down. However, if the person is merely to invite someone to the movie, it would be acceptable.
5. **Desirable**
  - Your goal should be something you really want to do. Whatever your ambition, it should be one that you want to fulfill, rather than something you feel you should do. The "want" factor is vital to changing one's style of life.
6. **Stated With No Alternative**
  - You should set one goal at a time. A person who says they want to do one thing or another-giving him/herself an alternative-seldom gets beyond the "or". They do neither. At the same time, however, there should be flexibility. Flexibility in action implies an ability to be able to make a judgment that some action you are involved in is either inappropriate, unnecessary, or the result of a bad decision.
7. **Growth Facilitating**
  - Your goal should never be destructive to yourself, to others, or to society. Some of the simplest, uncomplicated experiences may be the ones that are most meaningful in building positive relationships and enhancing growth.
    - Allows you to express your legitimate wants, needs, feelings, and ideas and creates honest relationships with others.
    - Gives other individuals a right to respond to your assertiveness with their own wants, needs, feelings, and ideas.
    - May involve negotiating a new solution with another individual. Assertiveness does not imply I win/you lose.
    - Concerns not only what you say but how you say it.

- Includes asking directly for something you want.
- Can be learned and maintained by constant practice.

### **Three Techniques for Assertive Behavior**

1. Rewrite your script. Picture a time when you weren't assertive. Rewrite the scene, outlining what an appropriate assertive response would have been.
2. Set limits. Decide how you are willing to expend time and energy. Be clear about the limits, be firm and don't constantly back down.
3. Say No. Consider your reasons for saying yes (guilt, pleasing others). Give an honest and direct answer if you are unable or unwilling to follow through.

### **Traits that Reduce Your Assertiveness and Leadership Effectiveness**

- Arbitrariness
- Arrogance
- Indecisiveness
- Lack of frankness and sincerity
- Failure to delegate responsibility
- Failure to show appreciation or give credit
- Failure to see another person's point of view
- Bias; letting emotions rule
- Failure to use gestures and facial expressions

### **Stress Reduction Techniques**

- Relaxation
  - Slow your body down, both mentally and physically. This includes such techniques as meditation, mental imagery, and deep breathing.
- Physical Wellness
  - Good nutrition and exercise are important and help to reduce tension.
- Sleep
  - Sleep lets your body reenergize. Completion of dreams is also important.
- Rewards
  - Give yourself a pat on the back for following these stress reduction techniques. Remember the learning how to deal with stress is a very important life skill. In order to lead a healthy, happy life, you must learn to accept, define, and cope with the stress in your life. Practice is the key.