

# Goal Setting for Leaders

*"If you don't know where you're going, you'll probably wind up somewhere else"*

## The Power of Goals

As leaders navigate through unending demands, it's easy to feel pulled in different directions, risking a loss of focus and veering off track. Without a clear sense of direction, achieving desired outcomes becomes challenging. However, by embracing the power of goal setting, leaders can regain control and increase their chances of reaching their intended destinations.

Goals act as powerful motivators, providing vision and encouragement, while offering a roadmap to guide leaders towards their desired outcomes. By engaging in goal setting, leaders gain clarity about their future, empowering them to take proactive steps, regardless of the scale or complexity of their goals. To support you in this process, this guide simplifies the goal setting process, enabling you to define and accomplish both short-term and long-term objectives. This practical resource will equip you with the necessary tools to pave the way for future success.

## Are Your Goals SMART?

What are **SMART** goals?

**S**pecific

**M**easurable

**A**chievable

**R**elevant

**T**ime-Bound

- **Specific** — Your goal must be clear to you. What do you aim to accomplish? What action will you take? Who needs to be included? Why is this a goal?
- **Measurable** — State your goal in a quantifiable manner, allowing you to clearly evaluate it. What metrics will measure your goal? How can you measure your progress to know you've met your goal?
- **Achievable** — Goals should be difficult, but also achievable. Use an action plan to be sure of this. Is your goal doable? Do you have the proper resources? Do you have the necessary skills? Is it worth the amount of effort required?
- **Relevant** — Your goal must be associated with skills that will add value. Why now? Why is the result important? Does it align with your overall objectives?
- **Time-Bound** — Set a date of completion for your goal with checkpoints to evaluate your progress. What is the time frame for accomplishing your goal?

## Types of Goals:

When thinking about your goals, it's important to consider the various types of goals that exist. Goals can create, improve, increase, reduce, save or develop, but they come down to three types of goals: **process, performance, and outcome**.

These three types of goals have a linear relationship, moving from one to the other.

### 1. Process

- Process goals are specific actions you aim to take. Some simple examples are aiming to send 10 emails per week to new networking contacts or carving one hour of every day into your schedule for deep concentration work. These goals are completely in your control.

## 2. Performance

- Performance goals are set to your own standard, based on how well you do. For example, you could aim to land a new client or hit a quarterly sales quota. These goals are mostly in your control, by your own actions.

## 3. Outcome

- Outcome goals are based on succeeding. This could be landing a big promotion or winning a large deal. Outcome goals are affected by outside influences making them very difficult to control.

*Remember the three types of goals are linear. If you accomplish your process goals, you are likely to accomplish your performance goals. When you accomplish your performance goals, you will have a greater chance of accomplishing your outcome goal.*

## SMART goals exercise:

Writing your goals brings clarity. Treat this document as a living guide. Keep it accessible, refer to it regularly, and adjust as needed. Be concise, realistic, and positive in your goals.

For this exercise, state a current goal as your starting goal. This may be something you're already working towards or are just considering as a goal. Answer the questions in each section of the SMART framework. Once completed, restate your goal as a SMART goal, which will be a much clearer, defined, and a strategic plan of how you will achieve your objective.

## Starting Goal:

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**Specific** — What do you wish to accomplish? What action will you take? Who needs to be included? Why is this a goal?

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**Measurable** — What metrics will measure your goal? How can you measure your progress to know you've met your goal?

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**Achievable** — Is your goal doable? Do you have the proper resources? Do you have the necessary skills? Is it worth the amount of effort required?

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**Relevant** — Why now? Why is the result important? Does it align with your overall objectives?

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**Time-Bound** — What is the time frame for accomplishing your goal? Is the deadline realistic?

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## SMART Goal (Final):

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Repeat this process for every goal.

## Important Considerations

### Milestones

Setting milestones for each goal is an important of your overall process. Having short and mid-term markers provide a sense of accomplishment and show progress in what might seem like a long road. Milestones also provide built-in checkpoints on where you stand with your goals overall. Do they still reflect your true wants and needs? Has something changes where you need to reevaluate?

### Overachievers...choose wisely

There is an interesting phenomenon with overachievers and goal setting. Some will set stretch goals that are high and achieve them. Others will set their stretch goals impossibly high and never come close to hitting them. The difference between the two is the first group who puts serious consideration into their goal planning. The third group of overachievers are those who actually do the opposite of these first two. This group typically will set goals that are too low. For these individuals the fear of failure, of not achieving a goal, is so profound that it impacts their goal setting to reach for more.

## Accountability

Lastly, once you have set and documented your goals, the key to success lies in holding yourself accountable. Staying aligned with your goals is crucial for turning them into reality. Keep in mind that your goals worksheet is a dynamic tool, continuously evolving with your progress. By embracing a proactive approach, you ensure that your journey towards achieving your goals remains on track and in sync with your aspirations.