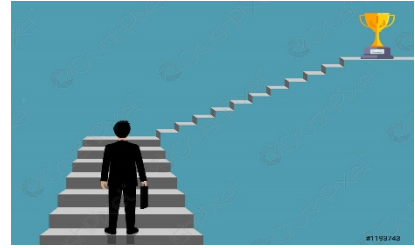


## Want To Rise? Set Inspiring Goals

Whether it's for your career, your business, or your life, something magical happens when you set a goal that you really want to achieve. It inspires you to become your best self; it focuses and releases your energy, and it directs your efforts in the direction of your dreams. But remember, your goals must be authentic. They should reflect your personal history, who you are now, and who you want to become, not who others want you to be.



My acronym for setting goals uses the word "inspire":

**Inspiring.** To be truly motivated, you need to be personally inspired.

**Noble.** Select goals grounded in your highest moral principles.

**Specific.** The more detailed a goal is, the better. Don't be vague.

**Personal.** An authentic goal will align with your strongest values.

**Immediate.** Think about what you can start doing now.

**Realistic.** Reach high, but set goals you know can be achieved.

**Expected.** Make clear what you expect of yourself, and commit.

### Set "Become" Goals

It is better to focus on the quality of what you want to become rather than just the quantity involved in getting there. I call these "Become Goals." For example, instead of saying you want to lose 10 pounds, say you want to become a person who eats healthy and is in great shape. Or, instead of saying you want to earn \$100,000 in income this year, set a goal to become the best salesperson in your company.

Appeal to your own nobler motives. If I say, "I want to make a million dollars," that's not appealing to a nobler motive. But if I say, "I want to become the best homebuilder in America," that's an inspiring goal. That's uplifting, personal, and authentic.

Deciding on your goals also teaches you what your goals are not. Knowing what you want helps you figure out what you don't want. If your goal is to be a great husband and father and be financially independent and your friend calls

and says, "Hey, let's go to Mexico and lie on the beach," you'll know that's what you don't want.

## **Write Your Goals Down**

A dream or a goal can't become real if it never leaves your head, and the process of putting pen to paper can help us figure out exactly what we want to do.

The very process of turning your vague thoughts into specific words and writing them down for future reference can help shape your actions to achieve them.

Once you write your goals, take a hard look at them and ask, "What can I do to make this better?" "What am I missing?" Then revise. And revise again. After three or four iterations of thinking and rethinking, you'll end up with something more clear, more inspirational, and more actionable.

## **Use Multiple Time Frames**

It's best to set goals for several different timeframes. My favorites are Daily, Monthly, Annually, and Someday.

Daily goals emphasize the importance of today. Monthly and annual goals help you focus on what is really important versus urgent. Someday goals become your North Star and will keep you focused on your dreams. I suggest using only the five most important goals in each category. Using different timeframes for your goals can also help motivate you to work toward them steadily.

No goal has to be permanent. Sometimes giving up or changing a goal is the best decision. Use your judgment. Those someday goals can also shape your immediate activities. Whether your someday goal is living on a farm and fishing every day or owning your own company, it will be a hint as to what you should be doing today.

## **Make A Realistic Stretch**

How hard should our goals be? Finding the right level is key to our success. Consider a story I once heard about a research experiment on goal setting and risk-taking:

Researchers set up a 24-inch dartboard in a basketball gym and gave people five darts apiece. The goal was to hit the bulls-eye. Each person was sent into the gym with no further instructions and no one else around. No one told the

participants how far away from the dartboard they should stand. The point of the research was not to evaluate their dart-throwing ability but to understand different attitudes toward risks when trying to achieve a goal.

Some people stood a foot away and placed the dart in the center of the bull's eye. These were the low risk-takers. Others stood 50 feet away and missed the board completely. These were the lazy ones who wanted to believe it was impossible to hit the bull's eye, so they set themselves up for failure. But most people stood about 10-15 feet away and gave themselves a fair chance. These were the competitors. They set a realistic but achievable goal and did their best.

The lesson is clear. How we set our goals greatly affects our level of achievement. If our goals are too easy, we accomplish little, and we don't have much to be proud of. If they're too hard, we undermine our confidence and set ourselves up for failure. If we set "stretch" objectives that challenge us but are realistic, we give ourselves a fair chance of success while building our confidence. Challenging but realistic goals will encourage us to continue to set more goals for even higher levels of achievement.

To give our lives meaning and purpose, we all need a mountain to climb. And it all starts with a noble goal.

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