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## Goal Setting for Success



### Being Prepared Through Planning

Being successful often requires goal setting and achievement. However, in order to be successful in your career as well as your personal life, you have to do more than simply create goals. You have to have a plan that drives you from one goal to the next, and challenges you to continuously improve your skill set.

There are two ways to plan for success. First are the long-term plans which look at what you want to accomplish every quarter and over the course of the full year. And second are the short-term plans which cover what you expect to accomplish from one week to the next and month to month.

### *Long-Term Plans*

#### **Create Goals**

What do you want to accomplish? Before you can make a plan of action, you need to look internally and identify what it is you want to make happen for yourself. This should be something of high priority and something you have a passion to achieve.

#### **What Do You Need for Success?**

You can't achieve your goals if you don't have the tools and resources in place to support your efforts. These resources include additional help, emotional support, schooling, transportation and other elements. Be sure you think this through and have the proper support systems in place before you begin.

#### **Assign Responsibilities**

If you have others helping you reach your goals, what are their responsibilities? Who's going to be doing what? Take the time to clearly define everyone's roles so they know what's expected of them and how you want them to support you.



## Action Steps

What needs to happen to put your plan into action? Outline a process for each step and decide which steps should be part of your short-term plans.

## Create a Schedule

When you know what it will take to accomplish your goals, you need to set up a schedule so those action steps are taken care of on-time. Look at yearly, monthly, and weekly calendars.

## Select Start Dates

Create a timeline that gives you control over your goals and puts your project into perspective. Be sure to be realistic and leave yourself some flexibility in case something interrupts your plan. Life events can often get in the way of our ideal process, however, if you leave some time to account for these interruptions you will be more likely to stick with it.

## Short-Term Plans

### Weekly Goals

A weekly plan is developed to help you recognize what you need to do from one day to the next. A weekly plan should support your monthly goals and should be developed all at once for each month.

### Daily Plans

In order to meet your weekly goals, you have to consider what it's going to take from one day to the next to stay on track. Your daily responsibilities are your "to do" list. They should be prioritized so that you're focused on taking care of the most important action items first. However, you should also look for flexibility in your daily schedule, as some needs might suddenly arise that require you to reorganize your priorities.

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## Exercise Goals for Healthy Living

You know it's important to stay active but still find yourself falling back on old habits. What can you do? Planning for exercise isn't hard if you make it a priority. To do that, you need to develop goals and an exercise plan that matches your needs and interests.

Knowing that you should exercise 30 minutes three to four times a week is not enough; you actually have to DO the exercise. Learn to keep up your motivation by setting exercise goals that fit your lifestyle.

### Step up to exercise

These steps can help you define your personal goals and put them into action.



**Step One:** Figure out why you want to exercise. It sounds basic, but not all of us exercise for the same reasons. Knowing what motivates you can help you stay focused. Write down a list of what you hope to get from exercising. You may be unhappy that your clothes fit tighter than last fall. You may want to reduce your risk of heart disease. You might hope to play with your kids without getting winded. Or, you may want to work out your stress, feel more relaxed and sleep better.

**Step Two:** Design an exercise program that will meet your goals. If your goal is endurance, gradually build up the amount of time you work out. If you want to lose weight, you need to do an aerobic exercise, such as walking or running, for at least 45 minutes at a time. If you are concerned about osteoporosis, weight-bearing exercise, such as walking, will help build strong bones. If you're not sure what exercise is best for your needs, talk with a trainer at a local gym. The ideal is an exercise program that incorporates aerobic exercise on some days, exercises to improve strength on other days, and balance and flexibility exercises on most days. The key is to find an exercise routine that you enjoy, then commit to doing it.

**Step Three:** Choose your workout time wisely. One key to success is what time of day you plan to exercise. If you schedule your workout for the morning, but you are not a morning person, you may be setting yourself up for failure. Pick the time of day when you have the most energy and enthusiasm. Do you enjoy getting up early and starting the day off with a brisk walk? Or do you prefer working out your stress at the end of the day? Whatever your answer, that's when you should schedule most of your exercise.

## Staying motivated

One of the differences between a person who exercises regularly and a person who doesn't is motivation. Each of us is motivated by different things. Find out what motivates you, and it will be easier to stick with good habits. These tips can help you put on your sneakers instead of turning on the television.

- Make exercise a priority. Yes, getting exercise is as important as cleaning the house, paying your bills, or reading to your child. Simply put, exercise can help you have a healthier, longer life. So when you plan your week, schedule time for exercise, and treat it like an appointment that you can't break.
- X marks the spot. Studies show that some people are more likely to exercise when they keep track of their workouts. Try marking an X on your calendar every day that you work out. This may give you a sense of accomplishment, which will help you keep going. Or, try putting an X on the days you skipped. Seeing too many X's may make you mad enough to pick up where you left off.
- Keep an exercise diary. Another way to keep track of your workouts is with an exercise diary. Jot down how long and how far you bike, how much weight you lift, or how many laps you swim. Or, if you own a computer, you may want to keep track on a spreadsheet. No matter what method you choose, having a record of what you've done, and of all of your personal bests, may be just the reward you need to keep going.
- Join an event. Sign up for a fitness event such as a 5K run, a charity bike ride or walkathon. Getting in shape to compete in a race can be a good motivator. A charity event can be motivating because when you cross the finish line, other people will benefit, too.
- Exercise with a partner. Finding a friend to share your workouts gives you a chance to be social while you get fit. And knowing that your friend is relying on you will help keep you motivated.
- Join an exercise class or group. Aerobic, yoga, or other classes commit you to an exercise program and offer the opportunity to make new friends with the same fitness goals.

## Dealing with setbacks

Old habits can be hard to change, and setbacks do happen. It doesn't mean that you're a failure. It just means that you're human. Try to look at a setback as part of the process of making change. When you find you've skipped a few workouts, make a plan to simply start again the next day.

Don't focus on what you've missed; focus on what you plan to do. Make it your top priority. New habits won't form overnight. So keep at it. Your good health is worth the effort.

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# How Routines Can Help Your Household Run More Smoothly



Routines are an important part of family life. Not only can they provide quality family time, but they can also help accomplish more than one thing at a time. For example, when routines involve activities like chores done as a group, you can spend time with your family and get a household task accomplished.

They also don't have to be mundane; they can be fun events that the whole family looks forward to. When you and your family establish fun routines, you give the family something to look forward to. It doesn't have to be a major event; it can be something as simple as walking the dog together after dinner, or seeing a movie together every Friday night.

## Routines that Help Children Develop

Routines help children learn responsibility, self-confidence, and independence. They also give children stability, which is something all children need. For instance, younger children learn to count on a bedtime story every night as a routine, while older children learn self-care routines, like brushing teeth or flossing before bed. Consider letting older children take on routines that help the entire family, like taking out the garbage or washing the dishes. These types of routines help children create a sense of responsibility and show them the value in helping the whole family.

## Make Mornings Easier with Routines

By establishing routines at night that prepare everyone for the next day, you can ensure that morning time is not a stressful time. For instance, by making lunch boxes or packing briefcases at night, you'll save time and stress in the morning. Encourage children to have nighttime routines that help them get ready for the next day, like packing their backpacks or picking out what they will wear to school the following morning. Also go over the next day's events, activities, car pools etc. In the hectic morning schedule it is often difficult for children to retain all the important scheduling information. If you go over it at night and then remind them in the morning they are more likely to know and understand the events of that day.

## Make Dinners Easier with Routines

You can take some of the stress away from preparing and serving a meal if you have family routines in place. Children can help set the table, clear the table, and wash the dishes, if age appropriate. Also, invite older children to take part in planning the meal: have them choose a recipe and help you make it once a week. As you eat, be sure to turn off the TV and put away any other entertainment materials; make it a routine to catch up on your daily events and share stories. If this is difficult to do everyday night, plan at least once or twice a week where everyone in the family must be around for a family dinner.

## Make Family Meetings Fun

Some meetings can be boring, but family meetings don't have to be. Use the time to order pizza or takeout, and talk about important family topics, like upcoming events, chores, goals, or problems. You can also use this time to plan exciting future events, like vacations or special activities. You may want to couple this night with family game night. Once everyone has shared and the meeting has been wrapped up, whip out a game and start playing. This can also be a helpful tool for diffusing tension or conflict that was brought up during the meeting.

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