

Taking Action E•Book

Goal Setting For Success!

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Excerpted from The Baby Boomer's Handbook for Women

Introduction

I encourage you to complete the *Action Exercises* in this book so that you have a starting point to begin achieving your goal or dream. There are worksheets for each action exercise and a *Take Action Tool* located in the appendix.

Goal Setting for Success!

“You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream.”

C. S. Lewis

Goal setting for success knows no boundaries-only your own. No matter your age or circumstances achieving success is more a state of mind and a willingness to decide what you want and to take action toward that goal or dream. What I will share with you in this e-book is a proven process and some success principles that will help you achieve your goals. If you are reading this at a time while you are contemplating your retirement, next career or wanting to go back to school to earn that degree you always wanted, or starting a business, or writing a book, whatever it is that you are contemplating begin with the end in mind and know that it is never too late.

The Seven Steps

There are seven steps in this process that will make a difference in achieving your goals and creating the life or career you want. As we explore the seven steps we will also consider some success principles that will help you move toward achieving your goals.

Step One

Decide what you want to accomplish-identify or set your goal and write it down. *“The indispensable first step to getting the things you want out of life is this: decide what you want.”* Ben Stein, actor and author, excerpt from *The Success Principles*, written by Jack Canfield and Janet Switzer. Once you have decided what you want to accomplish, it’s time to write the goal. There is a very effective method to writing powerful goals that will greatly increase your success. The method is using “SMART” Goals. “SMART” is an acronym for *Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, and Time specific*. Let’s discuss each element of the “SMART” goal method. Vague goals don’t get accomplished; being *specific* helps you stay

Goal Setting for Success!

focused on exactly what you want. Goals that are *measurable* will help you determine your progress. If a goal is not *actionable* you will greatly diminish your level of success. Goals that are *realistic* are attainable-remember goals are designed to help you achieve greater success with what you want to accomplish or achieve. Lastly goals that are not *time specific* are not realized. If a goal is not time specific it's a wish not a goal. Here are some examples of a "SMART" goal:

Complete my masters' degree in human resources in 18 months.

Complete three webinars related to social networking over the next six months.

Weight 140 pounds by the end of the year.

Get certified to teach Tymor boot camp program by the spring of next year.

Once you have written your goal ask yourself does it meet the criteria to be a "SMART" goal?

Is it well defined, can I measure my progress, can I begin to take some action, is it attainable, and do I have a timeframe for completion (Wish or Goal)? Successful people have disciplined themselves to use this method; disciplining yourself to use this method will greatly enhance your success.

Step Two

Have a vision of your goal. In other words, ask yourself what does the success of this goal look like? Imagine the goal already achieved and what does that look or feel like. So if the goal is related to losing weight for example, how will you look at your new weight? Describe what it might feel like, perhaps more energy or a svelte body, or wearing that bikini you haven't worn in years. This is your vision, so be as descriptive and vivid as you can-the more vivid the more powerful the impact on achieving what you want. Another way to create the vision of your goal in addition to using words is using pictures. Find pictures in magazines that represent what that goal "looks like" cut them out and post them on a bulletin board, or refrigerator. Always be selective with your picture choice, it needs to reflect exactly what you want.

Goal Setting for Success!

The power in creating a vision for your goal is that it reinforces a positive image and therefore brings the experience to a sub-conscious level. The more we reinforce the image in our sub-conscious mind the more we can expect to achieve. Napoleon Hill's famous quote, about what the mind can conceive and believe we can achieve-speaks to this very important aspect of achieving what we want, be it personally or professionally.

Another value in this exercise is that you are projecting a positive future state, and this has great influence over any negative thoughts or self-limiting thoughts that may creep into your conscious mind. In other words, it keeps that "negative inner voice" quiet.

Step Three

Make your goal known! Tell at least one person, more is better. This works for two reasons. One is that it raises your level of accountability, second it helps you achieve step six in this seven step process.

Why would raising the bar on accountability matter? There is something quite motivating when it comes to having to tell someone what progress you have made. In my experience and in working with others having someone to hold ourselves accountable to increases the likeliness that we will do what we said we would. While being well disciplined to work on our goals (taking action) is critical, stating our intentions to others holds us to a higher level of commitment and produces better outcomes/results. Jack Canfield, author of *The Success Principles*, suggests having "Accountability Partners", for the very purpose of two people holding each other accountable for deadlines, accomplishing goals and making progress. "Accountability Partners" make an agreement on the goals that each person will be held accountable for and establish a meeting arrangement. These meetings can be face to face or over the phone and they can occur weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly.

Goal Setting for Success!

Step Four

Identify what resources you need if any. By resources I mean the “hard stuff”, like money/capital, budget, space, land, a building, a particular type of transportation, printer; it all depends on your goal. Whether it’s a personal goal or a career/job related goal typically there will be some type or types of resources you will need to successfully achieve your goal. In step six you will begin thinking about what I refer to as the “soft stuff” (relationships), it’s the “support system” you will have to help you achieve your goal. During step four stay focused on the “hard stuff”. Don’t worry about the how as you begin to identify the resources, you will devote some thought to that when you start establishing action steps toward achieving your goal.

Step Five

What challenges or obstacles might you face in accomplishing your goal? How might you overcome them? These are critical questions to ask. What you are doing by asking yourself these questions, is “pre-empting” obstacles. This creates the opportunity to be proactive in overcoming a particular challenge. This also increases your success, in other words you are preventing failure. Think of challenges or obstacles like a road block or detour, they present themselves (you see them) and you proceed with an alternative path.

There are two types of obstacles, internal and external. Most often when we think about obstacles we immediately think about the external type. For example, lack of time, not enough resources, a particular person, or competition. The external obstacles (challenges) are typically the easy ones to identify, particularly the predictable ones like competitors (if the goal is business related) or other predictable obstacles might be the time of year, a spouse/partner’s schedule or other commitments. Internal obstacles are sometimes more difficult to identify. These types of obstacles can be related to our beliefs, values, experiences, or self concept. It’s that inner voice

Goal Setting for Success!

challenging your self confidence or self esteem. It's the second guessing or the doubting that you might do or the fear of failing. Fear is a universal internal obstacle and manifests itself differently for each of us.

Internal obstacles are sometimes referred to as your "Gremlin" or self limiting beliefs. Your "Gremlin" is that internal dialogue sometimes referred to "negative self talk" in every day life. When you experience the negative "self talk", one of the best ways to overcome that obstacle is to begin practicing positive "self talk". As soon as your inner voice begins the negative dialogue, immediately start talking positive about what you can accomplish, and that you will overcome any obstacle that is presented (real or imagined). In other word, you are replacing negative thoughts with positive ones and using positive language. This alone will increase your success. Think about any predictable behavior that you are aware of that may be an obstacle to accomplishing your goal. For example, do you have the tendency to be a devils advocate or do you doubt yourself. Simply being aware of the behaviors will enable you to think about what you might need to change or do differently to achieve your goal. Taming your "Gremlin" is a process and cannot be fully explored in this chapter, but begin paying attention to your inner voice and predictable behaviors that might be self limiting and you will empower yourself to make a change.

Step Six

Ask, Ask, Ask... Expect to ask for assistance or help with achieving your goal. It's okay to ask for support in accomplishing your goals. Women typically struggle with asking for help, successful people are not afraid to ask. The number one reason we don't ask is fear of hearing "no", in other words rejection. If you think the fear of rejection will be one of your internal obstacles, write it down and ask yourself is it worth the risk of asking? What do you have to lose

Goal Setting for Success!

by asking? You have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Don't assume you are going to get a no. If wanting a mentor to be part of your support system is going to help you achieve your goal, the only thing you have to lose is the person saying "no." Be ready to ask more than one person. The person who says "no" might be able to recommend someone. You will never know, until you ask.

Creating a support system is critical to success and that's what you are putting in place by asking others for help, assistance, expert advice, moral support, or whatever you determine you need to accomplish your goal. *"You've got to ask. Asking is, in my opinion, the worlds most powerful and neglected secret to success and happiness."* Percy Ross, self-made multimillionaire and philanthropist, excerpt from *The Success Principles*, written by Jack Canfield and Janet Switzer. Think about if the role is reverse; someone approached you for help or assistance to accomplish a particular goal, would you help that individual? My guess is the answer would be yes.

There is a science to asking successfully. Here are five tips adapted from *The Aladdin Factor*, written by Mark Victor Hansen and Jack Canfield:

1. Ask with yes in mind, expect the yes.
2. Assume you can (its okay to ask) and assume you will get what you want.
3. Qualify the person you want to ask. Are they the expert? Are they the decision maker?
4. Always be specific. Vague requests produce vague results.
5. Be persistent. If you get a no the first time don't give up. Some people are going to say no. It's not a reflection of you; it simply means they have other priorities, commitments or other reasons that prevent them from helping you.

Goal Setting for Success!

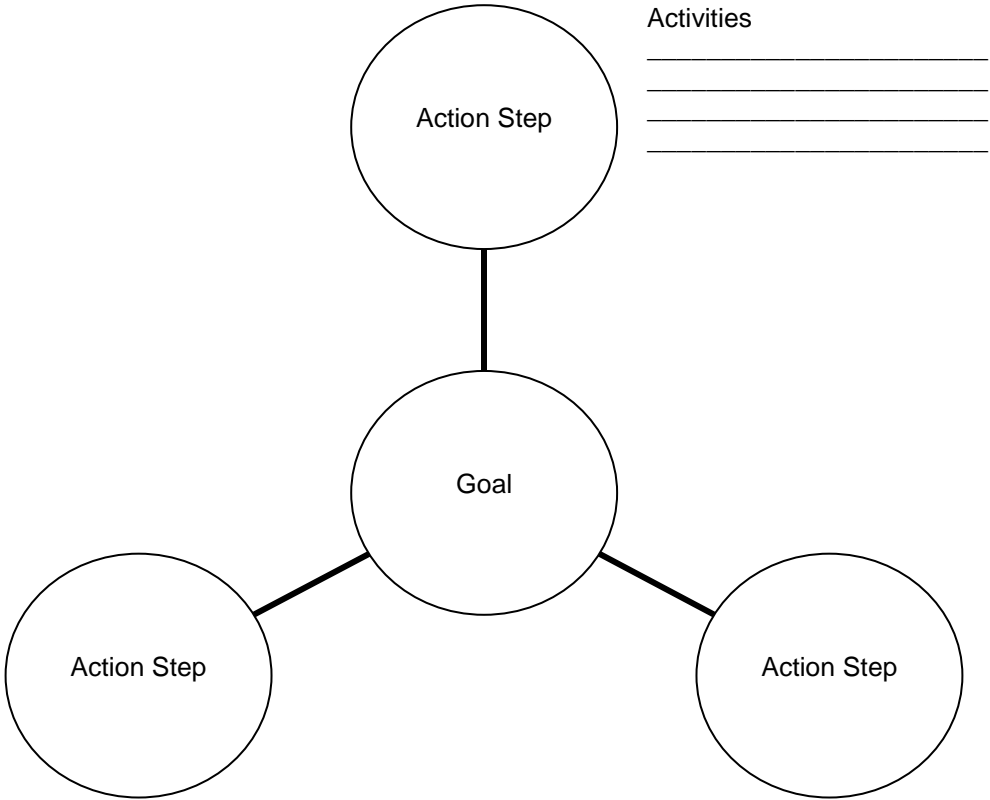
Step Seven

The key to your success with this process is step seven. *Nothing happens until you take action.* Do not misunderstand me; the first six steps are necessary for your success, but if you don't take action nothing will happen. Successful people have a bias towards action. If you don't take action your goal remains a wish or a dream unrealized. You know the familiar quote about someone wanting to win the lottery but they've never bought a ticket. "You've got to be in it to win it."

Taking action doesn't require huge leaps. In fact it's important to look at taking action in small steps. You can start with identifying just one action that would take you closer towards achieving your goal. Or you can list out the actions you must take and pick one or two to start with and as you complete each action start another one. If you are a more visual person, an excellent tool for "chunking down" what steps to take is called a mind map (See sample diagram below). It starts with drawing a circle in the middle of a piece of paper and writing your goal in the center of the circle. Draw circles outside the center circle for each action step and connect them to the center circle with a line. Write the action step in each circle. For each of these circles list the activities required to complete the action step. The most important aspect of step seven is to maintain forward motion. Continually ask yourself, does this action take me closer to achieving my goal?

Goal Setting for Success!

Mind Map Tool



Goal Setting for Success!

I will leave you with seven questions that mirror the seven steps of the **Goal Setting for Success** process. I promise if you use the seven steps you will achieve your goals. Use the questions below to get you started on taking action toward achieving your goal or dream!

1. What do you want to accomplish? (Use “SMART” Goals):
2. What does the success of this goal look like?
3. Who will you tell? Tell at least one person (Colleague, friend, peer, family). This raises your level of accountability.
4. What resources do you need to achieve your goal? (The “hard stuff”)
5. What obstacles (Include predictable) might you face? How might you overcome them?
6. What support system do you need? (Who do you want to ask?)
7. What one action will you take today, or this week toward achieving your goal?

My Motto: Start small, Think big!

Goal Setting for Success!

Resources and Recommended Reading

Books

7 Habits of Highly Successful People, Ken Blanchard

The Aladdin Factor, Jack Canfield and Victor Hansen

The Success Principles, Jack Canfield and Janet Switzer

Taming Your Gremlin, Rick Carson