

BUSINESS

Setting Business Goals for 2011



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We cannot hit a target that we can't see. Without knowing what targets you're aiming for as a business owner, your day is driven by the crises or demands of the moment. Well thought-out goals are the compelling force that guide us in a systematic and productive way. Every successful business owner I've ever met is intensely goal driven. They are very clear about what they want and will single-mindedly focus their energy on getting it. The fastest way to get everything you want is to set specific, measurable goals, with deadlines to achieve them.

The Key is Commitment

Commitment is the key to accomplishing our goals, especially in the face of the many obstacles that block the path to success. One of those challenges is the tendency to focus on the big picture, which can be overwhelming. Instead, break down those large goals into measurable, controllable parts and commit to accomplishing each part on a fixed deadline. Start creating games for yourself with scorecards and targets for every small goal and watch the big goals take care of themselves. When fear and doubt creep into your process, identify the obstacles and then define your best solution as a goal with a deadline and a plan of action.

The "Doable" Plan

When setting goals, the targets should be challenging - but achievable. Some of us like to set excessively high targets and try to get as close as possible even if we don't achieve total success. That is motivational to some. For others, setting unachievable goals is discouraging and de-motivating. The key is to examine your beliefs about what is really possible. They can be the spring-board to growth or the self-limiting factors that hold you back.

Goal Setting in a Shaky Economy

In a wavering economy, how do you know that what you are projecting is realistic? You often don't. However, as you are the knowledgeable in your specific field, your best estimate is better than no estimate at all. Some valuable strategies to assure that your projections will be attainable:

- A) Be outstanding in your chosen field; determine what additional knowledge you need to get to the top of your field and develop a plan to acquire that knowledge.
- B) Become involved with the right people. Everything in life and business is about relationships. Resolve today to join the top 10% of people in your field.
- C) Stay flexible and have a back-up plan or safety net. Also, continuously build bridges to all opportunities. They might not be suitable for follow-up now, but could be feasible down the road.

Here are five tips to keep in mind when preparing your direction and hoped-for next goal:

- a. Get very clear about what you want and don't want. Make a list of the ten goals you want to achieve. Decide how you will personally benefit from achieving these goals. Select three that would have the greatest impact on your life. Put your written goals on index cards and carry them with you wherever you go.
- b. Stop making excuses and start making progress. Write down everything you can think of to do that will move you toward your goal. Organize the list by priority and in sequence. Do something every day that gets you closer to your goal.
- c. Determine the price you will have to pay in additional time, work and commitment to reach your goal and get busy paying the price.
- d. Every night before you go to sleep, visualize your goals as they would be when you have achieved them.
- e. Don't quit before the miracle happens.