

What are your Goals?

by Robert M. Gignac

What are your goals? You do have some don't you? What is a goal? In the dictionary, it reads: "Goal, Function: Noun. The end toward which effort is directed, the terminal point in a race."

For business owners, goals are vitally important. They are like roadmaps that help us get from point A to point B, acting as mileposts along the way to ensure we are staying on course and on target.

The biggest issue with goal setting is that most people never bother to take the time to put a pen to paper and begin. If you do much reading about goal setting, you'll no doubt encounter a famous study about the Harvard class of 1954. The class was asked who among them had written down on paper the goals they hoped to accomplish in their lives. Only 2% had taken the time or had the inclination to record specifically and clearly their goals in writing. Twenty years later, the same group was contacted. Those individuals who were in the 2%, those who had clearly defined, written goals, had amassed more wealth than the remaining 98% combined. Probably just a coincidence, right?

What I am trying to say is that by developing a series of short-, mid-, and long-term goals and writing them down, you've already taken the first step toward accomplishing them. Many people fear that once they write a goal down they are stuck with it, as if they had carved it in stone. Somehow, it eludes them that goals are flexible and change with the passage of time or with the completion of other goals. Changes in technology may create new or revised goals. Ten years ago, I didn't have a digital satellite receiver in my long-range goals—they hadn't been developed yet. I had mine installed last month. Things change.

I know what you're thinking. Short-term? Mid-term? Long-term? Why all these terms? Can't you just have goals and leave it at that?

The goal (bad pun) is to make the process more manageable and easy to focus on. Short-term goals are the present, perhaps a 3-12 month window. Mid-term goals move your horizon out a little further, focusing on a 2-5 year timeframe. Finally, your long-term goals can go out as far as

10, 15, even 20 years or more. I like to see people dream a little at this level, be creative—the pictures will become clearer as the process starts and as your timeframe changes. Remember, there is no limitation on the setting of goals at any stage in your life. Perhaps it's easier if I draw a picture instead?



The process is a flow; the first step is to set goals. Second, we go off and pursue them, doing whatever activities need to be done to accomplish them. At some point, we take a break, visit what we have accomplished, and map it against what we set as our goals. What did we learn? How are we doing? Once we know where we are, we can cross off what we have accomplished or make adjustments if required. We then generate new goals to replace the completed goals and the cycle starts all over again.

So why don't more people do this? My personal belief is that people don't understand that there is no such thing as a right or wrong goal. The fear of failure keeps them from writing them down. They feel if they tell someone what their goals are and they don't attain them, then somehow they have failed. It's not a failure to attempt to do something and not achieve it; the failure comes in not making the attempt in the first place.

When I became a business owner several years ago, I didn't immediately start writing down all my goals; it took me some time to develop the habit. Once I re-

alized that you can only get out of anything what you put into it, I realized I needed to apply myself more and measure what I was doing. Once I got the hang of it, the more I was willing to work on it, the easier it became. If you want to keep things focused, and this is new to you, create your goal list and put it in a prominent location

where you will see it every day.

Just because you create goals on paper doesn't mean you'll accomplish them all. Don't kid yourself—it takes work. Too many people associate the word 'work' with the word 'hard' and, to be frank, that might just be what stops people from beginning the process. Achieving your goals is a fun and rewarding process, not to mention valuable for your business. End of article—now I can cross one of my goals for the month off my list. **SBCM**

Robert Gignac is the owner of Taynac & Associates, providing keynote speeches, seminars, and workshops on personal development, motivation, and leadership.

This article is an excerpt from his first book "Rich is a State of Mind" co-authored with Michael Townshend, available in stores now.

Details and a sample chapter are available at www.richisastateofmind.com. To book Robert to speak at your next event, please contact him at: rgignac@taynac.com or check their website.



WWW.TAYNAC.COM