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## Introduction

Imagine being told about a winning lottery ticket inside a box in a supermarket.

All you have to do is find the product which contains it, open the box and it is yours.

You don't know the name of the product, you don't even know the colour of the box. How much effort would you put into finding it?

You may agree that you would be facing an impossible task, but if the reward is worth the effort you would do it, right?

But, let's assume you have a twin, they have been assigned the same task...

Except they know what the product is called and exactly where to find it.

Ready, set- GO!

You tear through the supermarket like a bull in a china shop, ripping open boxes and spilling the contents on the floor.

Your twin strolls casually to the correct section, picks up the box and claims their prize.

Sorry, there was only one on the shelf...

Better luck next time.

Isn't it great to have an advantage?

You will discover the relevance of the example above, and how you can make life easier for yourself.

- Do you wander around aimlessly, putting every ounce of effort into what seems like an impossible task?
- Are you tired of watching others speed effortlessly towards their goals while you seem to be getting nowhere?

Many people approach their goals with great enthusiasm but fail to achieve them regardless of how much effort they put in...eventually running out of "gas" and becoming unmotivated.

They start off by taking the first step; setting the goal, but failing to realise the most important part of achieving their goals; planning. A good plan...

- Acts like a road map, whenever you are lost on the way to your goal, you can return to your plan and refocus your efforts.
- Helps to keep you motivated when you reach an obstacle, whether it is a personal problem, another project or a distraction.

If something enters your life and blows you off course, you can review your plan and get right back on track again.

# Most Important Steps to Planning Your Success

## ✓ **Start at the End: Set a Goal**

Once you have set your goal, you are ready to begin planning. Without a goal there can be no success.

Ensure that the goal you have set is one you want to achieve because it is likely that you will be required to put in hard work in order to succeed.

There will inevitably be distractions, however, a deep desire to achieve your goal will help keep you focused.

## ✓ **The Middle: Small Steps**

Now that you have set your goal, you need to work out what steps you will need to take in order to achieve it. Some people find it easiest to work backwards, while others start from the beginning.

Write down each step you need to take, you will be able to refer back to your plan in order to monitor your progress.

## ✓ **The Beginning: Follow Your Plan**

Once your plan works on paper, it is time to put it into action. With a plan you will be able to monitor your progress.

Getting closer to the end goal will inspire you to keep going.

Without a plan it would be impossible to monitor your progress, therefore you will not be able to see where your efforts have led you.

## ✓ **Dynamic Editing: Revise Your Plan**

The best route is not always from A to B, a slight detour via C could make life easier.

If you were driving through an unfamiliar town from point A to point B and there was a fallen tree in the road, you would use a map to find another route. The same works with the plan. How does this relate to the story above?

If you have no plan you may start off enthusiastic and full of energy, but in time you will find that your efforts are not paying off.

Ultimately you will lose heart and may even stop trying.

With a plan, you will have a map which leads you directly to your goal...

You will be able to follow it until your goal is achieved.!

## **Birds of a Feather Flock Together**

Look around at the people you mix with - what does this say about you?

Ask yourself:

- ✓ How many of my friends/associates inspire me?
- ✓ How many of my friends/associates are like me?
- ✓ Do I spend too much time with people who are holding me back?
- ✓ Do my friends/associates share my goals?

We are heavily influenced by the people around us, they can either inspire us or hold us back. In a bid to conform, we tend to emulate the people we associate with.

It is therefore important to choose your friends wisely.

I am not saying cut these people out of your life, I am saying introduce yourself to the people who will help you achieve your goals.

Take this example for instance:

If you wanted to travel the world with a backpack and none of your friends had ever done it, what's the first thing you would expect them to say?

I tried this as an experiment and I got the following answers.

- "You wouldn't catch me living in a tent"
- "Nah, there's too many insects"
- "If you run out of money you're stuck"
- "What about your job"
- "What about that guy that was killed in..."
- "You're having a laugh"

If I was seriously considering backpacking around the world, I'm pretty sure some of those comments would have taken the wind out of my sails.

This happens every day to millions of people.

They announce their goals to friends and family only to be met with well meaning advice which de-motivates them. We value the opinions of our friends and family and we do not aim to displease them.

Many of the top self-help books advise you to keep your goals and aspirations to yourself.

I believe there is a better way.

You're programmed to conform to the group, why not introduce yourself to the people who will help you achieve your goals?

You could sign up to a message board or forum on the internet, you could even join a local club or sign up to a training course.

Chances are, you will meet somebody who has either done it already, or somebody else who plans to do it.

What better way to surround yourself with new people who share the same goals and aspirations?!?

- ✓ When we network with people with whom we have something in common, we develop bonds and new friendships form.
- ✓ We enjoy spending time with people who are like us, and we are inspired by them too.

If you need inspiration, go out and look for it. You will be more likely to achieve your goals and you will make new friends at the same time.

## **The Glass IS Half Full if You Think It Is**

- ✓ Do you find yourself burying your head under the pillow while your alarm clock cheerfully sings a happy tune?
- ✓ Do you lack motivation after sliding an inquisitive foot out from under the covers only to find it is cold?

### **STOP!**

It is said that breakfast is the most important meal as it sets you up for the day ahead. But, the frame of mind you wake up in is equally important.

Your frame of mind dictates how you react to outside influences, how many times have you woken up in a bad mood only to have a bad day.

- ➔ It may surprise you to know that you choose your own frame of mind.

If it is cold, great! You get to wrap up warm - in your favourite sweater. Cosy.

If you think you've woken up too early, fantastic! There's more of this amazing day to enjoy.

So...

- ➔ Your frame of mind will invariably dictate the rest of your day.

How do you go about changing it?

The only thing to remember is...

"There are two sides to every coin."

For every negative there is always a positive, consciously seek out the good in every situation. If you do this regularly your subconscious mind will automatically seek out the good in a situation.

When you are happy, things seem to go your own way - and when they don't, you are able to shrug them off with a smile.

- ➔ How much better would your life be if you "changed your mind"?

Well, it's your mind, you can do with it as you please. The glass IS half full if you think it is.

## Reward

A quick search on the internet brings up the following definitions of the word reward:

- Payment made in return for a service rendered;
- An act performed to strengthen approved behaviour;
- Recompense in recognition of someone's behaviour or actions.

### **Do You Reward Yourself for Your Achievements?**

Many people lack motivation when working for themselves or striving towards their goals because they do not realise the importance of rewarding themselves. ]

When we are in full time employment, we are rewarded with a salary for work done. If our work is exceptional we sometimes receive bonuses, another reward.

There are many types of reward given by employers, such as:

- ✓ Shares;
- ✓ Promotion;
- ✓ Recognition;
- ✓ Commission;
- ✓ Pay increase;
- ✓ Extra holiday;
- ✓ Extra training;
- ✓ Certificate of merit;
- ✓ Monthly/Annual bonus;
- ✓ Gifts, ie bottle of wine/champagne/flowers...

Employers know that rewards are a great tool for motivating employees.

An employee who receives a reward often feels good about themselves and realises that it is their efforts which are being rewarded-

They are also more likely to want to put in more effort in future.

A reward often acts as a *reminder that your hard work has paid off.*

When you are working for yourself or towards a goal, it is absolutely essential to reward your own hard work and achievements.

It is important to reward yourself when you reach any goal because:

- It feels good!
- It will motivate you further!
- It shows you are making progress!
- It helps you to measure your progress!
- It celebrates the achievement of a goal!
- It is a reminder that working hard pays off!

You should reward ALL your achievements, whether it is a long term or short term goal.

If you have a long term goal you should break it down into smaller, more achievable short term goals and reward yourself for achieving each of them.

The reward does not necessarily have to be financial, it could simply be a long hot bath, as long as it is something which will make you feel good about your achievement.

Let's say for example that you are training to run a marathon. The long term goal would be to finish the marathon.

In order to achieve the long term goal you would need to increase your fitness and stamina, therefore it is essential to set specific short term goals which will help you do so.

Perhaps you could target yourself to run a mile twice a week, increasing the distance by half a mile each week. Many people stop here when setting goals, not realising the benefits of rewarding their achievements.

It is easy to say "I'll skip it tonight"...

Or... "I'll do two miles next time."

Many people fall into this trap because the achievement of the goal is not an incentive for all the hard work put into achieving it.

- A reward acts as an incentive. If your goal is to run a mile, maybe you could reward yourself with a new pair of training shoes.

Once you are running five miles you may buy an MP3 player so you can listen to music while you run.

As your fitness increases you will be able to run longer distances, reward each milestone to stay motivated.

- You must also set an appropriate reward for your long term goal. For finishing the marathon you could book a weekend away with your partner in a nice hotel.

We all want to achieve our goals, however, we sometimes need a push in the right direction...

*By rewarding yourself for each goal reached, you will stay motivated and increase your chances of success.*

## **Hindsight Is Wonderful... Foresight Is Amazing!**

When we are younger we rarely think about our own mortality, as we reach the evening of our lives we tend to look back on what we have achieved.

Some people will look back and see years of wasted time and opportunities missed, others will look back and see that they made the most of their time and achieved their goals.

When a person suffers from a near death experience they often gain a new lease on life, realising that life is short and that they should make the most of their time.

When we are young and full of ambition, we tend to think about the future. As we grow old we begin to think about what we will leave behind.

- ✓ What is your legacy?
- ✓ Do you aim to provide for your family or spouse?
- ✓ Do you aim to donate money to good causes?
- ✓ Do you want to be remembered for being great?

I am only 26 years old, and everybody I meet wonders why I think of life in this way.

My answer...

A Christmas Carol, by Charles Dickens- the story is about a miserly man who is given the chance to see the error of his ways and acts upon it.

Hindsight is a wonderful thing, but foresight is amazing.

So, take a moment to think about where your life is going...

If you continue to act in the same way, where will you be years from now?

- ➔ How will you be remembered?
- ➔ Will you be able to provide for your family?

If you don't like the answer to those questions, NOW is the time to do something about it.

The important lesson here is that it is never too late to make a change.

We all have the potential to be great, it is up to us to choose whether we do it or not.

## **One Wish, Right NOW:**

If you were granted one wish, right NOW, what would you wish for?

Take a moment to think about that question. Of all the things you dream of achieving, which is the most important thing for you right now?

I am not a genie, fairy-godmother or magician, but I do know of somebody who can make every single wish you have come true...

### **An Experiment in Human Thinking**

Write down your wish on a piece of paper and close your eyes, transport yourself some time into the future and imagine that your wish has come true. How does it make you feel?

Whenever I think about my goals and aspirations in this way it always gives me a surge of energy, extra motivation to get things done.

Here are two reasons why people do not achieve their dreams:

#### **➤ Picking the Wrong Dream**

In order to achieve your dreams you must have a burning desire to do so.

When every single moment you waste eats you up inside because you're no closer to achieving your greatest desire you know that you have chosen the correct dream.

It is easy to know if you have chosen the wrong dream, if you are prepared to sit back and relax - not working towards it.

Another indication of focusing on the wrong dream is the nagging feeling in the back of your head that you would rather be doing something else.

Let's say your ultimate dream is to spend two weeks relaxing on a Caribbean island, but you're spending all your time working towards buying a new car.

You are never going to be fully focused on working towards buying your new car because there will always be part of you which is longing for the holiday.

If you were to work towards the holiday instead, you will find that you are far more motivated and will work much harder instead of daydreaming about it.

You may be thinking, but what if I actually NEEDED to replace my car. If this were the case I can assure you that you would not be thinking about the holiday.

When I began the article I asked "Which is the most important thing for you right now?" when you spend time thinking about the the question in order to answer it honestly, this is the thing which will always be on your mind.

### ➤ **Too Many Dreams**

The easiest way to illustrate this problem is with an example. There are two naughty boys who keep stealing apples from the tree in your garden.

Every time you chase one, the other one sneaks into your garden and steals the apples from the tree. When you notice, you turn around and begin chasing him away, the first boy comes back and steals your apples while you are preoccupied.

You will never catch either boy this way and you will lose more apples. The solution, don't stop chasing the first boy until you catch him.

Then you can spend all your efforts catching the second boy. Once you've caught both, you can concentrate on growing apples.

If you are constantly chasing different dreams, you will never achieve any of them. You will spend all of your time, money and effort getting nowhere.

You must choose your most important dream, the one which you desire most and follow it through.

- ✓ Once you have achieved it, you will feel amazing for doing so. You are then free to choose another dream to follow.
- ✓ Once you have achieved all of your dreams maybe you can sit back and relax with a nice ripe juicy apple.

Like I said, I know somebody who can make every single wish you have come true...

**Now, chose wisely, and make a wish!**

# Overcoming Complacency

When is "good enough" not Good Enough?!?

When there is something better.

If you have fallen into this trap you'd better get out quickly.

Let's say you're the top sales-person in the office, you're aiming to become sales manager in the next couple of months - you're outselling your colleagues two to one. The promotion is in the bag.

You believe that you can take your foot off the pedal and cruise effortlessly towards your goal.

WRONG!

## Complacency Is Very Dangerous

You must recognise the signs early and combat it immediately.

- ✓ A complacent Country can lose a war before they even know it has begun.
- ✓ A complacent company can lose market share to a minor competitor.
- ✓ A complacent husband can lose his wife before he realises there are relationship problems.
- ✓ A complacent boxer can lose his title in the opening round to an unranked competitor.

### Ask Yourself:

- Do you feel self-satisfied?
- Do you find it hard to acknowledge your mistakes?
- Do you find it difficult to accept constructive criticism?
- Do you fail to see difficulties in your personal life?
- Do you believe that minimal effort "will do"?

These are some of the symptoms of becoming complacent.

Complacency is caused when you become too comfortable, lose motivation and don't believe that you need to put in any extra effort.

If you recognise any of these symptoms in yourself it is important to rectify the situation.

Becoming complacent will lead you further from your success.

### **What Can You Do to Overcome Complacency?**

To overcome complacency, you must realise that "good enough" is NOT going to lead to success. It is only when you do your **absolute best** that you can say, "I gave it my best shot."

If we go back to the example of the boxer, we can see why it is important not to become complacent. The champion boxer believed that he did not have to put all of his effort into training before the fight.

He believed that he was good enough to beat his competitor.

His competitor on the other hand realised that HE was not good enough, and that he had to put all of his effort into training...

That he must give everything he has got. He must put every single ounce of energy into the fight because this could be his only chance to win the title.

You must never assume that there is no room for improvement. If you always strive to improve then you leave no room in your life for complacency.

If you find your faults and deal with them, you will always aim to be a better person. Do not make excuses if you fail.

### **Why Ask Yourself "Why"?**

It is usually followed with an excuse.

Instead, ask yourself "how did it happen?" and "what can I do to rectify the situation?"

By learning from your mistakes you will be able to grow.

*When you eliminate complacency and make a positive effort to continually improve yourself, you will find that success is far easier to achieve.*

# Seven Top Motivation Lessons

## ➤ **The Mind Affects the Body, and Vice-Versa**

The condition of our bodies will generally affect our motivation, our motivation will have an effect on the way we treat our bodies.

If we are demotivated we are more likely to sit at home watching TV, whereas if we are motivated we are more likely to get up and go for a run or keep fit.

It works the other way around too.

If we are fit and healthy we are more likely to face challenges with enthusiasm and energy. However, if we are unfit or sick, we may allow challenges to overcome us.

## ➤ **Be Accountable to Yourself**

Who is your boss? You are.

The only person you have to answer to is yourself.

So, while you're sitting around doing nothing when you could be working towards achieving your goals... tell yourself off, go and do it.

Who's goals are they?

## ➤ **Inspire Yourself By Doing Something Unexpected**

If at any time you feel like you are going nowhere, do something new and exciting. There are millions of new experiences available to everyone.

Ever done a bungee or parachute jump? What about taking a last minute holiday to a random destination? Surprise yourself, break out of your old routine.

## ➤ **Use Visualisation to Program Desired Behaviour**

We learn through experience, nothing stops us from experiencing things in our own imagination.

The human mind is a powerful tool, by harnessing the power of our own imagination we are able to conjure up scenarios and play out our actions. We can correct mistakes before they even happen.

By doing this, when a real life situation arises, we have already learned the best course of action to take.

➤ **Start with the End Result and Work Backwards**

The achievement of a goal is a personal triumph, by knowing exactly what you need to achieve you are able to focus on the exact steps which will lead you to success.

➤ **Aspire to Improve Every Day**

Whether you have a weakness or would like to do something more efficiently, there is always something which you can improve.

We grow through constant improvement.

➤ **Ask Yourself the Right Questions**

Your internal dialogue will either inspire you or limit your progress depending on the questions you ask yourself.

Instead of asking "why?" ask "why not?"

For every question you ask yourself, decide if there is a more inspiring question which could be asked.

## Highly Recommended Resources

**[KellyIfrah.com](#)** – Kelly provides a truly comprehensive and highly desirable cost-free collection of marketing resources all compiled under one roof. What more can I say...

She's the Internet Marketers One Stop Shop!

**[AnnaMarketing.com](#)** – Anna provides her visitors with a warm and welcome reprieve from the cold and harsh IM Arena. I most highly recommend discovering the treasures Anna-Marie has for you!

**[RentaGhostWriter.com](#)** - Whether you're looking for a writer for resume writing, creative writing, essay writing, book writing or technical writing...

Summer's highly-talented group of Ghost Writers are just the ones for your project... She offers extremely competitive rates with *careful attention* to detail and customer care.

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