

# Roadmap to Success

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Imagine you are planning a trip. You begin by deciding where you would like to go, and then you find the most direct route to your destination. You know that stops will be necessary along the way and you factor them into your itinerary. You aren't deterred by unexpected obstacles; rather you work around them and continue on your way. During the entire process, you know if you have arrived at your destination or not.

Now imagine you are beginning a trip, but you have no idea of where you are going. You just hop in the car and start driving. You're uncertain of your decisions, because you don't know where you're going. The road signs don't help. You stop and ask for directions, but since you don't where you're headed to, you receive conflicting information. People with good intentions don't know how to help you find your destination, so they make recommendations based on their own desires. When you encounter obstacles you have no idea whether you should go around them, change directions or just turn back the way you came.

Which journey are you taking in life? The only way to arrive at your destination is to know where you're going. You must have clear goals and objectives to succeed in any business, including the business of creating a rewarding life.

"A goal is a specific, clearly defined, measurable state." 1

What do you wish to accomplish? If you don't know the purpose of your actions, you won't know if you are dedicating time to the right activities, if you are making progress or if you are just spinning your wheels.

When setting your goals, be as detailed as possible. Include specific objectives:

1. Number ("I weigh 125 pounds.")
2. Date ("On May 15, 2008, I have completed my MBA.")
3. Time ("In 2008, my annual salary is \$150,000.")

Goals should be measurable. State your goal in quantitative terms and use positive, present tense language. Do not use future tense language because this only affirms a state of lack in your life. "I will lose weight" = "I am overweight"; This sends the wrong message to your subconscious mind and traps you in the condition you want to change.

Speak, plan and act as though you have already arrived.

Achieving a goal is much like arriving at your destination, you're either there, or you're not.

If asked if you have achieved your goal, your response will be "Yes" or "No". For example: if you want to be a writer, you may have a goal to write a novel. The first rudimentary draft would qualify as achieving your goal. However, if your goal is to publish a novel, the first draft is only one milestone along the path. This is why clarity is important.

Some days you may be cruising along at dizzying speeds, other days you may barely roll an inch, but you are moving towards your final destination just as surely as you are aging with every tick of the clock. Failure to set any goal forfeits the power in your life. You will either drift aimlessly or you will be victim to the whims of others. If you're not working to fulfill your goals, you are working to fulfill someone's goals; your boss, landlord, businesses, etc.

"Be above it! Make the world serve your purpose, but do not serve it." 2

Actively plan your life, rather than waiting passively for it to unfold. You must take action to succeed. Thought without action is meaningless; it occurs nowhere but in your mind and vanishes the moment your attention shifts. Thought with action is pure power. When you act with intention, you control your journey through life. Of course there will still be road blocks, detours or traffic jams along the way, but you can work around them and get back on track.

"Thinking is easy, acting is difficult, and to put one's thoughts into action is the most difficult thing in the world." 2

Your goals must be flexible, so you can refine them as you go. Goals will change over time; becoming less important or more critical as you progress.

"As you begin moving towards your goals, you'll gain new knowledge along the way, and you'll have to adapt your plans as you go. You may also change your vision if you get partway there and decide it's not quite what you really want. Ill-formed goals are still far superior to no goals at all." 1

Lastly, write down your goals. You've taken the time to plan your journey, so keep the directions handy and check your progress. Committing your goals to paper will help you clarify the actions you need to take along the way, the skills you need to develop, relationships you need to build and choices you need to make. Your directions will guide you through the stormy times of life and allow you to get back on track as soon as possible.

"Your reality will not match your vision exactly. That's not the point. The point is for your vision to allow you to

make clear daily decisions that keep you moving in the direction of your goals.&rdquo; 1

&ldquo;Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now.&rdquo; 2

1. Pavlina, Steve: The Power of Clarity, 2001, Retrieved January, 2008.

2. von Goethe, Johann Wolfgang: Quotes at Brainyquote.com, Retrieved January, 2008.