

How to Set Effective Goals That You Can Meet and Even Exceed

When it comes to successfully growing your business, it's important for you to set goals and meet them. Otherwise, you'll find yourself floating aimlessly in your business, and not ever really feeling completely satisfied with the direction your business is heading.

Now here's the catch: a lot of people think they are setting good goals, but what happens is that they set unrealistic or vague goals. Or, just as bad, they set goals without also creating a plan for achieving those goals.

End result? They don't meet their goals. In turn, they get frustrated or they think their business "isn't working." Maybe they even quit and start chasing something else that looks bright and shiny. This is the vicious cycle people get into where they spend years doing a whole lot of work (often chasing multiple ideas at once), but not really getting anywhere.

So, let's avoid all that. Check out this step-by-step guide for creating good goals and then making a plan to meet them...

Step 1: Set Specific, Measurable Goals

The first thing you need to know is that your goals need to be both specific and measurable.

For example, plenty of marketers make goals such as, "I want to make more money this year."

Here's the thing – if you make just \$1 more than last year, then you've met your goal. If you make \$20 more or \$100 more, then you've met your goal. But chances are, you wouldn't be happy with closing the year having only made \$20 more than last year, right?

That's why you need to be specific. E.G., "I want to make at least \$100,000 this year in net profit." This particular goal also works well because it's measurable. Every month or even every week you can check your profits to

see if you're on track with your goal. (More on this just a bit later when we look at milestone goals.)

Here's the other important part of your goal: it needs to have a specific deadline. If you don't attach a deadline, then it's just a wish (not a goal).

In the example above, "this year" means that your goal deadline is the last day of business for the year (e.g., December 31st). Be specific and write down your exact deadline, even if it is implied. You don't want to leave any loopholes for yourself.

Now the next step...

Step 2: Be Sure Your Goals are Realistic

You've set a goal. It's probably a big goal, because almost any good goal causes you to "stretch" a little and step outside your comfort zone. But while you need to be sure your goal has you stretching, you need to also make sure your goal is realistic.

For example: If you're brand-spanking-new to business, then it's not realistic to say you want to be making \$20,000 by next month. That's just not going to happen.

On the other hand, if you're already making \$18,000 per month, then yes, it's realistic to set a goal to make \$20,000 (because that's somewhere in the neighborhood of a 23% increase in profits).

The point is, be brutally honest at this point when assessing your goals. Are they achievable and realistic, even if they cause you to "stretch" a bit (i.e., they challenge you)? If so, that's a good goal. If not, then tweak your goal so that it's both challenging and realistic.

Moving on...

Step 3: Create a Plan for Achieving Your Goal

The next step is to create a step-by-step plan for achieving your goal. This is one of the most important steps of this entire process, so be sure to invest some time in getting this right. Check out these tips...

Reverse-Engineer the Process

The idea here is to start with your big goal, and then reverse engineer the process to determine all the steps you need to take in order to achieve that goal.

Let's say you have a specific, measurable income goal that you'd like to achieve in a year's time. You can start by figuring out what you need to do every month in order to achieve the yearly goal. Then you can break that down further what you need to do every week to achieve the monthly goals. You can then take your weekly plan and use it to create your daily to-do lists.

For example, maybe you determine that you need to get 10,000 visitors per month and convert 3% (300 of them) to buyers in order to achieve your goals. You'll then break this down further. Specifically:

- What specific steps will you take each month (and each week) to get 10,000 visitors? List each traffic method you intend to deploy and how much traffic you expect to get from each method.
- How will you convert these visitors into buyers? Again, map out your EXACT process, such as setting up a lead page, converting a specific percentage of visitors to subscribers, and then converting a specific percentage of subscribers to buyers. Be specific at each step (e.g., what sort of emails will you send? What offers will you promote?).

The more specific you can be during this planning stage, the better your end result will be.

Which brings us to the next point...

Plan for Problems

Things rarely go exactly as planned. That's why it's a good idea to spend time brainstorming potential problems and what to do if you encounter them.

For example, let's suppose part of your plan includes using Facebook ads to drive X amount of traffic to your site. In order to make your campaigns as effective as possible, you need to track and test them to boost conversions. If you're starting with poor ads or a poorly selected audience, this could take time.

So, you have to ask yourself: if you run out of money in your ad budget before you've had a chance to fully optimize your ad, what do you intend to do? E.G.,

- Do you intend to add more money to your ad budget? If so, how will you acquire these funds? Be as specific as possible. (E.G., sell some of your valuables, do some freelancing, pick up a part-time job, get a business loan, etc.).
- Do you intend to use other free traffic methods to make up the difference? If so, which methods? Create a clear plan.

This is just one example. It's up to you to brainstorm potential problems and then develop solutions if you encounter those problems.

Now the next step...

Step 4: Define Milestone Goals

Now that you have a plan in hand, it's time to define a set of specific milestone goals. These are goals that are "stepping stones" on the way to your large goal.

For example, if your overall goal is to make \$100,000 in the next year, then you'll have a set of milestone goals supporting this goal. These milestone goals may include:

- Getting a certain amount of traffic. You can break this down further by being specific about how much traffic you want from each source. E.G., X amount of traffic from search engine optimization, Y amount from a Facebook ad campaign, Z amount from guest blogging, etc.
- Converting X% of this traffic to subscribers on your lead page.
- Converting X% of these subscribers to buyers via your follow up emails.
- Getting X% of your buyers to purchase \$Y amount of additional products and services from you.
- Creating sales pages with X% conversion rates.

And so on. As always, each of these milestone goals should be specific, measurable, and come with a deadline.

Implementing milestone goals gives you two distinct benefits:

1. They ensure you are on track to meet your bigger goal. Your milestone goals should serve as markers that tell you whether your current plan is working, or whether you need to tweak it to meet your goals.

For example, if you have 12-month overall goal, then you should have milestone goals to meet at LEAST every month, and even better is if you set weekly mini-goals. The sooner you know if you're off track (such as if you miss a weekly milestone goal), the sooner you can tweak the process and get back on track.

Here's a specific example: if you set a weekly traffic goal for your paid ad campaign to get 1000 visitors, then you'll know instantly (even on a day to day basis) whether the campaign is working. If you instead set a monthly goal, you won't know for weeks whether the campaign is working – and by then, you've lost a lot of precious time. Better to set smaller goals and keep track on a daily or weekly basis so you can respond quickly if needed.

2. They keep you motivated and moving forward. If you have a big goal that will take you six months, a year or more to accomplish, it can be difficult to keep your motivation going the entire time. The advantage of setting milestone goals is that they keep you pumped, exciting, and moving forward. Every time you meet a smaller goal, you get a sense of accomplishment, and renewed burst of energy to keep working and keep achieving your goals.

And what about meeting all these goals? As you might suspect, it's very motivating to meet multiple goals every week or every month. Which brings us to the next topic...

Step 5: Focus on Motivation

The milestone goals should keep you motivated and moving forward, especially as you start knocking them. However, to pack even more punch, you'll want to follow these tips and ideas...

Reward Yourself

The idea here is to take one of your most important milestone goals each month and reward yourself when you meet it. In other words, you don't need to throw yourself a party for every single mini-step that you accomplish. However, when you take a big step toward your goal, then yes, reward yourself.

How do you reward yourself? That's completely up to you. One way to do it is to select something you want or like to do, and reward yourself if you achieve your goal. For example, take your family out to your absolute favorite restaurant when you achieve the goal. (Just be sure your reward isn't something you do all the time anyway, or it won't feel rewarding or special.)

Another way to motivate yourself is to give a trusted friend a sum of money that would be painful for you to lose. If you don't achieve your goal, your friend gets to keep the money. For many, this is a big motivator to avoid the pain of losing something valuable.

Be Held Accountable

Another way to get motivated is by finding a way to hold yourself accountable. For example, you may tell a trusted friend or family member your goals. The more people you tell, the more this accountability factor works.

TIP: Don't just tell someone your overall long-term goal, because your friend is likely to forget about it. Instead, tell them about your weekly and monthly goals. You can even tell them to specifically ask you about whether you met your weekly goals. Most people don't lie to their friends and they also feel uncomfortable admitting they didn't accomplish their goal, so folks tend to work hard so they can provide a positive report to their accountability partner.

Next...

Create a Visual

Some people are motivated by a visual representation of their goals. For example, fundraisers are often depicted using a thermometer which increases in "temperature" as the fundraising amount increases.

That's just one example, but you can create any sort of visual that would be helpful to you. For example, maybe you just like the idea of seeing gold stars on a calendar for every week where you meet your goal. If that works for you, then do it. Just be sure your visual representation is somewhere that you'll see if often, such as on your computer desk top, or even a physical copy hanging on the wall in your workspace.

Your Assignment

Your assignment for this lesson is to set an overall goal for your business, and then answer the following questions:

- Is this goal specific and measurable?
- Is this goal realistic, yet slightly challenging?

- What is your plan for achieving this goal?
- What milestone goals will you set on the path to achieving this goal?
- Which milestones will you recognize, and how will you reward yourself?

Yes, it takes a little thinking and planning upfront to define your goals and make a plan for meeting them, but it's well worth the effort!

Conclusion

And there you have it – you just discovered dozens of tips, tricks and strategies for growing your business in each of the eight essential components. Here's a quick recap:

- **Market:** How to Become a Trusted Go-To Source for Content in Your Market
- **Mission:** How to Use Your Mission Statement to Build a Powerful Brand
- **Monetize:** The Five Types of Profitable Membership Sites You'll Want to Build
- **Minimize:** Three Proven Traffic Methods to Grow Your Business
- **Model:** How to Effectively Lead Your Prospects and Customers Through Your Sales Funnel
- **More:** How to Use Testing and Tracking to Get More Subscribers, More Customers and More Sales
- **Methods:** Tips and Tricks for Effectively Scaling Your Business
- **Milestones:** How to Set Effective Goals That You Can Meet and Even Exceed

What I suggest you do now (if you haven't already done so) is complete each of the assignments at the end of the eight lessons. Go ahead and work on them right now, as each assignment puts you one step closer to building a more profitable business!



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