

The background of the cover features a perspective view of a dark asphalt road with white double lines, leading towards a bright horizon. The horizon is a mix of green grass and a blue sky with scattered clouds, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. A large, semi-transparent grey arrow points upwards from the road towards the top of the frame.

Goal Attainment

**Time-Tested 7 Step
Process for Finally
Attaining Your Goals**

by Kim Olver

Goal Attainment Tip Sheet

I have been studying goal setting gurus regularly for several years now and sporadically for my entire adult life. I have incorporated the best from the best and developed a phenomenal seven-step Goal Attainment System. For best results, after reading this tip sheet, you will want to test out the entire system, which includes our eCourse, workbook and quarterly mastermind sessions with no more than eight (8) people per session. This tip sheet will give you the seven step system you can work independently but there is more support and accountability that can be gained through the application of the complete system to maximize the probability of your success.

Sometime during November or December, many goal setting gurus begin to talk about reflecting on your goals for the past year and looking ahead to the new goals you will create in the coming year. I recognize the huge importance of having goals but I also think it is useless to talk about goals setting without an even stronger focus on goal attainment. That is what makes my system unique. You won't just be setting goals. With the proper commitment to your faithful application of the system, you will be attaining the goals you set!

Anyone who has ever celebrated the New Year has set a goal but what takes goal setting to the next level? I'd like to share with you my seven-step system for actually reaching and attaining your goals. Are you ready?

Step 1: Begin at the End:

Many experts in goal setting will tell you that you must begin at the end. Imagine yourself and all you want to accomplish in the future. Once you can imagine it, you can develop the roadmap of just how to get there.

After all, you wouldn't get on a plane without knowing its destination, would you? Then why would you live your life that way? Decide right now, to the best of your ability where you want to end up when it's all over.

Stephen Covey, in *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, says his second habit is: "Begin with the End in Mind." He suggests that you imagine your own funeral and exactly what you want family, friends and community members to say about you, your character and your accomplishments. What do you want to be remembered for? Once you get crystal clear about that, then you will be able to plan step-by-step what exactly you need to do to get there.

Have you discovered your life's purpose? What are your unique skills, talents and abilities that help you to contribute to humankind? If you are not sure, take some time to daydream about it. Keep trying new things until you find something you love and at which you excel.

Once you know what your passion is it becomes easier to chart your life course. It does require courage however, because often there will be circumstances and other people who may try to sabotage your plans. Sometimes circumstances may appear insurmountable but if you are truly following your life purpose, then what you need will be attracted into your life.

There will be people who will be jealous of your passion. They will not want you to succeed. The expression, “Misery loves company” is what drives these people. They generally are not living their life purpose and may not even know what that is so when they see you living yours, they want you to fail. They will attempt to undermine your confidence. Fight this with every breath in your body.

It may become necessary for you to rid yourself of toxic people in your life and surround yourself with other people who support you and people who are already living their life’s purpose.

When I left my job, moved halfway across the country and started my own business, most of my friends expressed support and spoke of how courageous I was but there were some who seemed to relish when small steps along the way did not work out for me. I had to insulate myself from this negative energy in order to continue on the path I knew I was destined to travel. Perseverance and self-confidence need to become your constant companions.

Step 2: Balance is the Key:

In order to attain our goals, balance is the key. If all we focus on is making money and being a financial success, then other areas of our life suffer. We don’t take care of ourselves. We don’t eat right, get enough exercise or rest. When this happens, it’s only a matter of time before our body betrays us and shuts down.

Another area that can suffer when we have a narrow focus is our relationships. In our quest to be successful at work, we take our significant other for granted, we miss important events in the lives of our children and our friends only remain our friends if they are somehow connected to our business.

Many times when you think of setting goals, you focus on the area of professional objectives. While this is a very important part of your goal setting strategy, it should not be your only center of attention. You are so much more than what you do at work, aren’t you? Work should not be simply something you do while you are waiting for your real life to begin when you retire. Nor should it be something you do during the week while you are waiting for the weekends. There are no guarantees in life. You do not know if you will have another tomorrow.

It helps when you are acting within your life’s purpose. When you do, you will love your work. It will be something you would do for free and you would do it in your spare time for fun. Also, you want to have other things in your life that are important, particularly

people and relationships that are essential for you. Contribution is another important factor to consider. If you were to go to sleep tonight and not wake up in the morning, have you engaged in meaningful work, shown those you love how you feel about them and contributed to the good of humankind?

Think about it. At the end of your life, do you think you will be looking back regretting that you didn't work harder or spent more time at it? Probably not. So, when you have a goal setting strategy session, you must look at all the important areas of your life that contribute to a healthy work/life balance for you.

There are many successful gurus in the goal setting arena who define balance using different categories. In Stephen Covey's, *The 8th Habit*, he speaks about physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual components to which we must attend. Richard Eyre in his book, *Life Balance*, talks about six important areas of our life—people, body, being or spiritual, the brain or intellectual, time, and money. Sarano Kelley in *The Game*, talks about balancing twelve areas of our life—body & health, money, relationships, spiritual life, mind, tools, environment, education, family, work, charities and hobbies, interests and art. In *Living from the Inside Out*, I speak of health, relationships, accomplishments, fun, and independence.

It doesn't really matter which system you use, just find one that fits for you and set several goals in each of your chosen areas to facilitate healthy work/life balance. Make sure your goals are compatible with the vision you developed in Step 1. Your annual goals should be facilitating your journey toward the destination you want to reach by the end of your life.

If you find yourself sidetracked by things that knock you off your course, just remember the elementary geometry postulate that the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. You can indulge in detours, but just know that it will make the journey longer and may even result in you forgetting or becoming confused about your ultimate destination.

Step 3: Take Stock: Where are you now? What are your strengths? What are your barriers?

As important as knowing where you are going is realizing where you are right now. It's impossible to get good directions anywhere unless the person giving directions knows where you are starting from.

Take the time to scrutinize the reality of your life. Be brutally honest and take a long, hard, discriminating look at where you are right now in all the areas you have decided to balance. It really doesn't matter whose system you chose to use or if you developed one of your own in Step 2. You simply need to honestly take a look at each area and determine exactly where you are now.

This is not a time to be overly critical or overly optimistic. Just take an honest look at your current situation. If you are having difficulty seeing your current situation objectively, then ask the opinions of people you trust and respect. Ask them for an objective appraisal of where they see you in each area of your life.

When you have completed a full inventory of your current situation, it is time to take a look at your strengths. Enumerating your strengths can be very helpful in setting future goals. You may be able to use your strengths by tapping into those resources to develop successful plans for the accomplishments of your goals. Don't leave any stone unturned. You never know when a simple strength you take for granted may be the one thing that propels you into greatness. List the strengths you have in each area of your life for which you have decided to create goals.

Finally, I ask you to answer the question, "What would you have to give up in order to achieve success with any particular goal?" When you have your answer, you may have just uncovered the factor that consciously or unconsciously prevents you from accomplishing your goals. Many people want good health but they also want to eat foods that aren't the healthiest and want to spend their free time doing what they enjoy instead of exercising.

Armed with this new discovery, you need to ask the question. "Is there any way I can have both things I want?" Humans are not the best at sacrifice and if we have to give up one thing in order to get another, we will probably sabotage our best efforts. The best case scenario is if we can come up with a compromise where we can have some of each of the things we want.

If a compromise is not possible, then it becomes necessary to weigh which want is most important. You must make a decision to give up one in favor of the other. When this occurs, I strongly advocate determining which need would be met by the option you are giving up and then building into your plan other ways to get that need met. What I know is that it is not possible to give up getting our needs met and when you deny a particular need over an extended period of time, at some point you will tend to go overboard to get that need met.

Consider what happens when someone decides they want to increase their financial security by cutting up their credit cards and not engaging in impulsive spending. This restriction would help the person meet his or her need for power and survival but would seriously inhibit the need for freedom. Without building in other responsible ways to get his or her freedom need met, after a period of going without, it becomes practically predictable that the person would, at some point, go on a serious spending spree. The needs that all humans have are the need for survival, love & belonging, power, freedom and fun/learning.

Many times we don't move forward toward our goals because of fears or sacrifices we believe we must make that remain just out of our conscious awareness. We must bring them to the forefront where they can be confronted and managed.

Step 4—Work Backwards/Time Management:

Once you know what you are striving for, where you are, and what has been sabotaging your efforts, then you can plot out the course to get you what you really want. You can have 10-year, 5-year, 3-year, 1-year, 3-month, 1-month, 1-week and daily goals. I generally review my big picture goals quarterly and set my shorter goals accordingly.

Typically, at the end of one year or the beginning of the next is a good time to sit down and review your goals and overall direction. If this is your first time doing this, then you would visualize where you want to be in ten years and write it down. The more specific you can be the better. Then figure out where you would have to be in five years to make your ten-year goals a reality. Then conceptualize where you would have to be in three years and then one year. Write all of them down and label them with the year by which you want to accomplish the goals.

Once you have your one-year goals, it becomes relatively simple to plot out how to accomplish it in three-month increments. What would you have to accomplish by April? July? October? December? Plan it all out so that everything you listed in your one-year goals is covered in these quarterly plans.

Then every month, on or around the first of the month, review your quarterly plans and decide what you will accomplish during that month from your quarterly plan. Then on Sunday afternoons, Monday mornings or Friday afternoons, whatever works best, plot out your course for the week.

At the end of each day or the beginning of the next, whichever has the most power for you, write your “To Do List” for that day. I try to list the six most important things I need to get done that day in order of importance and I prioritize those things. I do my absolute best to not get distracted by things that are not on the priority list until I have accomplished what is on that list.

While doing some positive goal setting, it is important to attend to time management issues. You will not reach your goals unless you prioritize, organize and protect your time so you can complete the things you have identified as important. My colleague and friend, Marcus “Dr. Respect” Gentry, calls this process POP-ing one’s time. First you *prioritize* what is important. Then you *organize* your time through time blocking and finally, you *protect* your time by not allowing distractions to pull you from what you have identified as most important.

Time blocking is the process of looking at the hours available in the day and scheduling time for the important things you want to accomplish. I believe in scheduling non-work related activities first so you can remember to prioritize your family and your own rejuvenation time over the things you want to accomplish at work. After scheduling time blocks for the important things, then structure your work activities around those blocks. When the time is up that you have allotted, you switch tasks regardless or whether or not the task was complete. You can then time block more time for it later in the week.

Be certain to schedule some flex time so if something unavoidable occurs, you have the time to take care of it and still get your other commitments completed.

I have a role model who is excellent at attending to important things immediately and I tend to procrastinate. Successful people do what has to be done now. They don't wait; because in waiting, they can miss big opportunities. Do not put off what you can be doing right now.

Another issue in time management is persistence. I recently learned that it takes an average of seven "touches" with prospects before you can turn them into customers. Most people give up after two or three contacts. Persistence will win the prize. Successful people will begin where others quit.

Another issue in time management is to seek out others who are already successful doing what you want to do. A lot of time can be wasted attempting to reinvent the proverbial wheel. Talk to the people who have already done what you want to do and learn from their mistakes and failures. They can tell you what to avoid and will greatly reduce your learning curve.

Step 5: Affirmations/Visualization/Meditation:

This is not just some new age hog wash. There has been extensive brain research that backs up the use of affirmations, visualization and meditation.

If you are serious about accomplishing your goals you must write them down. Back in 1953, a Harvard University study showed that 3% of the students graduating that year actually wrote down their specific career goals. Twenty years later, a team of researchers interviewed the class of 1953, and found that the 3% who had written down their goals were worth more financially than the other 97% combined. (Make no mistake, writing down goals pays off, big time!)

An *affirmation* is simply writing your goal as if it were already true in the present moment. You then say these affirmations daily, at least once but more if possible. Be very clear about what you are trying to accomplish.

An affirmation needs to be stated positively in the present tense. Do not speak it as something that will happen in the future, because the future will never come. When I started my internet business, I had an affirmation that I would have 1000 subscribers to my newsletter by August but I didn't specify the year. I only had 400 subscribers the first August but I had accumulated exactly 1000 subscribers by the end of July my second year in business. Being specific is very important in writing affirmations.

A *visualization* is just like a mental rehearsal. In your mind's eye, you imagine what life would be like if you had your goals accomplished. The more vivid and sensory-based you can make your visualization, the more effective it will be. Imagine what you will have

around you, how you will be acting and how you will be in the new situation. Imagine all the things you will see, hear, taste, smell and touch. See it regularly. Visualize in the morning before starting your day and then again, just before retiring for the evening.

You can also use moments normally spent just waiting, to visualize. When you are stuck in traffic, waiting in line at the grocery store or sitting in the doctor's waiting room, instead of allowing precious time to slip away unutilized, visualize!

Meditation is a quiet time you take to get in touch with your inner self or your higher power. It is a time of deep reflection where you may ask questions and seek answers from a place or entity that has the answers. Beginning your questions with, "How can I . . .?" will immediately put your mind to work finding the answers. This is how you can attract those people and opportunities into your life that will contribute substantially to your success.

Another way to use meditation time is to communicate your gratitude to your higher power for the success you experience in your life. Even mistakes and failures can be a learning experience, so be grateful for every one of them.

Another way to use meditation is to simply let yourself go and stay in the moment attuned to whatever your mind or the collective mind brings to your awareness. This can be a time of incredible creativity.

Combine all three—affirmations, visualization and meditation—for a powerful trio of ways to reprogram your mind into the success mentality you will need to be successful in your goal attainment.

Step 6—Positive Attitude:

There is a Universal Law of Attraction that says we attract into our lives that upon which we focus. If we are focused on what we don't have, then we will bring more lack into our lives. If we are constantly complaining about our bad luck, then that is what we can expect.

When working in harmony with our true selves, it is important to maintain an attitude of gratitude. Even when things don't go as you planned, you can always be grateful for the lessons learned along the way. I strongly recommend keeping a gratitude or a success journal that you fill out just prior to going to sleep at night. This way your brain is programmed for more success while you sleep, which is a very powerful time. Simply write down those things for which you are grateful or the successes you experienced during that day.

People have the power to choose their own attitude. You are not a victim of your circumstances, other people, your emotions or your past. You are empowered to not allow other things to rob you of the joy of living. It is a common belief among self-

development experts that the problem is not the incidents we encounter in our lives, but rather our response to those incidents.

I believe that most human suffering comes from resisting our present moment. When we stay present in the moment and accept what is happening as a gift with both positive and negative components, we are exercising our personal power over our emotions. We know that all things have a positive and negative side to them like protons and neutrons—a yin and a yang, if you will. Knowing that, you can choose to focus on the negative or the positive—the choice is completely yours. I choose the positive. How about you?

Another thing that is important about attitude—you must believe in yourself and your ability to accomplish your dreams. And I say dream big. You have no limitations other than the ones you impose upon yourself. My father used to tell me I could accomplish anything I wanted to in life and I believed him. Even if you didn't receive similar messages in your childhood, you are hearing it now. Believe it, but more importantly believe in yourself.

A final word on attitude and that is to make a proactive plan to manage fear and doubt. Unless you are extremely enlightened, you will have periods where your mind tries to sabotage you with thoughts of your inadequacies and fears about success, failure and simple change.

Having a proactive plan involves deciding ahead of time what you will tell yourself when you begin to experience fear and doubt. You need to develop a script that you say to yourself whenever these thoughts rise to the surface. Whenever I hear my voices of doubt, I will say, "Oh, there you are. I don't want to talk to you today. Go away." And then, I start talking to myself using my empowerment thinking and how I can do anything and I drive those self-depreciating thoughts from my life. What are you going to do?

Step 7—Continuous Improvement/Staying Motivated:

The final step may represent the difference between goal setting and goal attainment. The first part is never being satisfied that you have arrived. There is always something more that you can do, another improvement that you can make. Life is a continuous journey.

If you aren't always trying to improve upon what you do, someone else will and you will be yesterday's news. You must stay ahead of your competition in order to be successful for any length of time.

One of my mentors, John Eggan, says that "Successful people do by habit what unsuccessful people won't even try." This is important to remember. You must develop successful habits that will propel you to success. Do not give up prematurely. Don't let delays and set backs deter you.

Napoleon Hill begins with the question, "Do you have a burning desire to succeed?" If you only care marginally about your success, it is highly unlikely that you will attain your

goals. You must be consumed with making your goals happen. You must have the burning desire to do whatever it takes to reach your goals.

Staying motivated is a challenge. Sometimes meeting your goals will be enough to motivate you; sometimes it has the opposite effect, when you experience a fear of success. I find having an accountability partner, a coach or a mastermind group to whom I am accountable makes all the difference. I can promise myself I'm going to do something all day long. If I don't, who will be the wiser? However, when I say out loud to someone else what my intentions are, then my integrity won't let me fail.

As Jack Canfield writes in his book, *The Success Principles*, "Of all the things successful people do to accelerate their trip down the path to success, participating in some kind of coaching program is at the top of the list. A coach will help you clarify your vision and goals, support you through your fears, keep you focused, confront your unconscious behaviors and old patterns, expect you to do your best, help you live by your values, show you how to earn more while working less, and keep you focused on your core genius." Finding a good coach can be essential to attaining your goals.

A mastermind group can help you in the same way. Any mastermind group I have been involved in has asked for a commitment to action at the end of their meeting and then they check in to see if it was accomplished during the next meeting. Accountability is extremely important. There is a lot of peer pressure involved in following through on what you committed to do.

Stop goal setting and start goal attaining. Do what you need to do. This can be your year!