

Do You Know Where Your Goals Are?

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In the beginning of each year, many people engage in goal setting, or what we typically call making New Year's Resolutions. But by now, the gyms are empty and any pounds lost in January have crept back on, smokers are back to huddling outside buildings to drag on cigarettes and many people are still unhappy with their jobs. All their good intentions, expressed by setting goals, have been replaced by regret at their inability to turn those good intentions into reality. That's because — as we all know — *setting* goals is a lot easier than *achieving* them.

If you are struggling with achieving the goals you set for 2012, don't despair. It's not too late to turn your good intentions into reality with these eight keys to goal achievement.

1. **Be realistic.** Don't have too many goals at one time. In that New Year blast of enthusiasm, many people set broad goals, encompassing every aspect of their lives. That practically guarantees failure. Instead, try setting no more than three goals at a time: a personal development goal, a professional goal and a physical improvement goal. When a goal has been achieved, replace it with another goal in the same category.
2. **Be specific.** The more narrowly you define your three goals, the more likely you will be to achieve them. For example, a general goal could be "I want to lose weight." The specific goal could be "I want to lose 20 pounds by August at a rate of 1 pound a week." By being specific, you will be able to track your progress more immediately in small increments.

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- 3. Develop a simple weekly action plan.** Begin each week with at least a single, defined and measurable action step you will take toward achieving each of your three goals. Just as you were specific in developing your goals, be specific in creating the steps in your action plan (i.e. "I will eat five servings of fruits and vegetables a day," or "I will invite three new people to connect with me per week on LinkedIn," or "I will spend at least 10 minutes talking with my spouse with no distractions each day.")
- 4. Write down your goals.** Just thinking about your three goals won't make them happen. Putting them in writing focuses the brain in a powerful and intense way, and makes them more likely to be achieved. And, if you are really serious about success, rewrite your goals twice a day: once in the morning to focus your attention for the day and once immediately before going to bed, so your subconscious can work on them while you sleep.
- 5. Review your goals during the day.** Put the written goals in a place where you can see them throughout the day (i.e., next to your computer, on your smart phone, on the visor in your car, tattooed on your wrist!). This will focus you on taking actions to achieve those goals throughout the day.
- 6. Share your three goals.** Find at least one person who will provide positive support to you and tell them what your three goals are. Then check in with that person regularly to discuss the progress, or lack of progress, towards achieving your three goals. Involving others increases your accountability and makes it much more likely you will take meaningful action towards achieving your three goals.
- 7. Expect obstacles.** I can guarantee you that there will be unexpected obstacles to overcome on your way to achieving your three goals. The challenge is to respond to these obstacles by finding a way to overcome them and stay on track. If you respond to setbacks resourcefully, you will achieve your objectives.
- 8. Celebrate!** Establish milestones to recognize your progress as you move towards achieving your three goals, and don't forget to celebrate at those milestones again as you successfully reach each goal.

The Glover Group is a management consulting firm dedicated to assisting companies survive the WorkQuake of the Knowledge Economy by improving workplace performance. Glover is also a FastCompany expert blogger who teaches leadership theory, assessing leadership skills, communication skills for managers, team building, critical thinking and employment law at Lewis University, National Louis University and the University of St. Francis. Moreover, Glover bares his knuckles to present 76 strategies and tips to thrive in the Knowledge Economy in his new book, [WorkQuake](#) [1], published by [Round Table Companies](#) [2]. To contact Glover, visit him through Twitter: [@WorkQuakeBook](#) [3]. Please also feel free to comment below.

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