

Stock Clerk or History Maker?

By Bruce Carter

J.C. Penney once said, "Give me a stock clerk with goals and I will give you back someone who can make history. Give me someone without any goals, and you have got yourself a stock clerk."

Webster tells us that a goal is an aim or a purpose; it is something worthwhile that we set out to do. As North Americans, we are fortunate in that we have the opportunity to accomplish whatever we set our minds to do. Successful achievement is limited only by our ability to clearly visualize a positive outcome and a willingness to work hard to accomplish it.

As with most things in life worth attaining, however, reaching a goal is much more likely when a proven system is adhered to for achievement. Following a recipe (or "system") for baking the perfect apple pie like Aunt Polly's ensures results identical to Aunt Polly's. Following an effective system for setting and achieving goals also ensures positive results.

Nine Steps to Achievement

An effective recipe for the achievement of goals includes nine essential components.

Clear Visualization. The more clearly we are able to picture a goal in our mind, the clearer "target" the brain's servomechanism has to lock onto and direct us toward. Goals visualized in living color and complete with sound, taste, feel, and smell are the best ones. If the goal is a physical one such as a new car, a boat, a piece of jewelry, a new home, or a set of golf clubs, then a photograph or a picture clipped from a magazine of the item and taped to the bathroom mirror can serve as a useful mental reminder.

Commit in Writing. Goals not committed to in writing are little more than hopes or wishes or dreams. After the goal is made clear by mental visualization, get it down on paper. Experts agree that goals carefully spelled out in writing on even a plain sheet of notebook paper are already 80 percent achieved!

Think Short, Medium, and Long Term. We should have a variety of goals in life. Long-term goals could include a retirement destination or nest egg or perhaps a full year of worldwide travel. Medium-term goals might be a new home, a more fulfilling job, an educational achievement, or a dream vacation. Short-term goals could be the attainment of an ideal body weight, a new

*Whatever you vividly imagine,
ardently desire, sincerely believe in,
and enthusiastically act upon will
inevitably come to pass.*

piece of furniture for the home, or entering and completing the local 10K race. Often, it is the achievement of shorter term goals which lead to the attainment of the medium and long term ones. All of them can play an integral part in the overall plan.

Set a Deadline. Give a specific deadline to achieve the goal you have pictured. Here again our brain, like a guided missile, works best on achieving its mission when the mission is clearly defined. "I am earning ___ dollars annually by December 31, 2010" is a much more effective goal than simply stating, "I want to make more money." "I am enjoying life at 165 pounds in March of 2009" produces far better results than saying, "I want to lose weight."

Think in Terms of Having Already Achieved. When setting a goal and locking it into your brain's achievement mechanism, visualize the goal as already having been achieved. See yourself already driving the gleaming new sports car, sitting in the manager's office, or soaking up the warm sunshine on the crystal white sands of Waikiki Beach!

Identify Potential Roadblocks. With most of the goals we set, we find there are inevitably going to be some temporary roadblocks to our success. Roadblocks that must be identified and planned for in advance could be financial, educational, or physical in nature. These obstacles in the pathway to our success need to be identified and a plan needs to be made to address and overcome them.

Define the Reward. Every goal worth setting should have a clearly defined reward for achievement. The reward could be better health, more status in the community, a more stable financial future, or more solid relationships with the people around you. Whatever the goal may be, the reward and positive aspect of

Bruce Carter is a popular motivational speaker and sales trainer specializing in the fire equipment industry. Bruce is available to you and your organization for: in-house sales and customer service seminars, in-the-field sales training, and consulting. For information visit www.nafiresales.com or call (513) 772-3778.



reaching it must be identified and dwelt upon throughout the entire goal achievement process.

Stay On Track. Motivational and success guru Brian Tracy says that our goals must be the first thing we think of when we rise in the morning and the last thing we dwell upon before putting our head on the pillow at night. A constant awareness of and single-minded focus on the things that we most wish to accomplish in life are crucial keys to achievement.

Keep 'Em Coming. Premier sales trainer Tom Hopkins reminds us that success can be simply defined as the achievement of worthwhile goals. If Tom is correct, we must make our success a lifelong process by continuing to set, work toward, and accomplish meaningful goals. As soon as one goal is achieved, another should be considered, visualized, and committed to on paper. People that are constantly working on meaningful goals are not only more successful and productive individuals but are happier and more fulfilled human beings as well.

As a wise man said nearly two thousand years ago, "...this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize..." So remember, friends, that whatever you vividly imagine, ardently desire, sincerely believe in, and enthusiastically act upon will inevitably come to pass. Set your goals, enjoy each day as you work toward them, and you may well make history! ♦

© 2008, Bruce Carter, all rights reserved.