

The Five Steps to Becoming More Values-Focused.

Step 1: Open Up to Limitless Visioning. Limitless visioning is the context in which you identify your life purpose. It is an attitude of openness and faith that you can have what you want if you can simply envision it. Limitless visioning is grand and abstract and sets the stage for the next step, Active Imagination.

Step 2: Practice Active Imagination. Active imagination builds upon limitless visioning by making what you want more concrete. In active imagination you create a sensory rich image of what your life will be like when you are doing the right thing.

Step 3: Write Your Own Creative Eulogy. Creative Eulogy further enriches the image of your future life, by adding the element of how people will remember you when you are gone. When you write your own eulogy from the point of view of the people you leave behind after you die, you help to solidify both your limitless vision and your active, sensory rich image of the future.

Step 4: Create a Personal Statement of Purpose. Finally, you must boil down what you have discovered in these first three steps into a personal statement of purpose; a statement of what your life is going to be about from today forward. It will include the valence of your overall vision, the sensory rich images of your future life, and a taste of how you will be remembered after you die.

Step 5: Determine Your Personal Goals. Once you have written your personal statement of purpose, you can begin to work on identifying the major Personal Goals that are naturally implied by that purpose.

Step 5. Determine Your Personal Goals

A goal is a place you intend to end up; an expected outcome; and anticipated result. It may not tell you how to get there, how to have that outcome, and how to achieve that result. And it may not tell you when: tomorrow, next week, in a month, a year from now, or in a decade.

A goal is usually stated as a bigger picture which unless you break it down into smaller parts will be almost impossible to achieve. But if you do break your goals down then you can attain them in stages, step by step. These parts, stages, steps are what we call objectives, action steps, and daily tasks.

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The Twelve Steps to Accomplishing Personal Goals:

Step 1. Develop passion. The first step in changing any part of your life is to develop or uncover an intense, personal passion to change the way things are and to live life to its fullest.

Step 2. Practice faith. You have faith that life will present you with meaningful opportunities and you must believe beyond a shadow of a doubt that you have the ability to recognize and fulfill them.

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The more you can develop a complete faith in your ability to achieve your goals the more rapidly you will move towards their attainment.

Step 3. Be pragmatic. Your goals must be believable, attainable, and practical, given your present circumstances.

If you already make \$10,000 a year but you want to make \$100,000, it will be more doable, and therefore more rewarding, if you choose an increment of change that you feel is attainable. You may not find it easy to go from \$10,000 a year to \$100,000 in a single year, but you could go from \$10,000 to \$15,000 in year one, from \$15,000 to \$22,500 in year two, from \$22,500 to \$33,750 in year three, from \$33,750 to \$50,625 in year four, from \$50,625 to \$75,937 in year five, and finally from \$75,937 to \$103,905 in year six. An increase of half of your previous year's income is a goal that is perfectly reasonable under a wide range of circumstances in today's world.

To make this really work, you would supplement your action planning by developing a series of affirmations that include this incremental approach: in the first year your affirmation would be "I will earn \$15,000 in the next 12-month period." In the second year it would be "I will earn \$22,500 in the next 12-month period." And so on for the six years it would take to reach your ultimate goal.

The same thing is true for any goal, from losing weight to getting a college degree. Break the goal down into attainable increments across a reasonable amount of time. Back up your plans with positive affirmations.

Caveat: Of course, there are exceptions to any rule. For example, if you have a great business idea, it's likely to be easier to raise \$1,000,000 in capital than \$100,000. So, stay awake for the exceptions too. How can you identify an exception? Usually because you've been listening to your advisors and mentors and that's what they've told you.

Step 4. Develop tradeskill. Key tradeskill behaviors to develop are *hands-on and one trial learning, the ability to face facts, a knack for minimizing risks*, and most of all *persistence*. Never give up. There are bound to be setbacks and disappointments. You must "pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and start all over again." Your persistence is your measure of your belief in yourself. If you persevere nothing can stop you. (See *Running a Good Business: Start Up and Legal Matters* and *Running a Good Business: Self-Assessment for Tradeskill* for more on tradeskill and how to tell if you have it).

Step 5. Choose goals that help you grow. Make sure your goals are challenging. Choose goals that make you stretch your present level of knowledge and skill. Move out of your comfort zone and try to ride the edge of what you are capable of.

Step 6. Write your goals down. This is critically important. This is the most effective way to enlist the help of your Everyday mind. Write your goals in complete, vivid, clear, precise detail. This is a critical step in attaining any goal. Until your goals are written down, they are not goals, they are just so many fantasies.

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Step 7. Make a list of benefits. List what you stand to gain or experience by attaining your goals. The longer your list of benefits, the easier it will be for you to maintain your motivation to attain each goal.

Step 8. Make a list of obstacles and barriers. There are always obstacles to overcome and barriers to get around. When you write them down you objectify them and make it easier to overcome them. Once you have objectified them, they don't seem nearly so important or threatening.

Step 9. Create a clear mental image of your goals and objectives as already accomplished. Play it back at every opportunity. What does it feel like to have your own good business? How will you act? Who will you interact with? What will you say? Will you teach? Do consulting? Sell products or services? What will your office look like? What will it be like to go to tradeshows or chamber of commerce meetings? Will you be known as an expert in some part of your field? What part? Will you present at annual meetings? Or just host a booth? And so forth.

Step 10. Make your goals doable and the objectives measurable. Once you are clear about your goals, make a list of their component parts that are actionable. We call these objectives. Make sure your objectives are measurable. Turn a goal of "open my good business " into objectives such as "find location," "negotiate lease," "apply to suppliers for credit accounts," and so forth. If you aren't sure how to objectify a goal, simply ask and answer the question "How will I know when I have accomplished this goal?"

Step 11. Create an Action Plan. Write it down. Make it complete in every detail. Break your measurable objectives down into action steps and daily tasks. Prioritize them and calculate their duration. Continually review and rewrite your plan on a regular basis so that you can take into consideration your progress and changes in goals.

Step 12. Manage your time wisely. Make appointments with yourself to accomplish your action steps. Always ask yourself the question "What is the best use of my time right now?" Review your calendar daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually; however often makes sense for you.

There is much more about objectives, action plans and time management in *Running a Good Business: Time Management*.

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Exercise 18. What are the three most important goals in your life right now?

Take only 30 seconds to answer this question. It is most likely that what pops up first will be what you really want, and that careful consideration will allow the lizard brain to censor these goals because using fear that they are unreachable or, at least uncertain. Remember, "a goal is a dream with a deadline."

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