

Want to get your goal every time? Use these 7 secrets for success!

by Nancy Morris

Whether to get your New Year's Resolution back on track or to set yourself up for success at any time of year, one of the most important things you can do is create a Goal Statement, a written sentence or very short paragraph of exactly what your goal is. Without a destination, you won't arrive anywhere.

There are many books out there on how to create a Goal Statement that works. So many, in fact, that it can feel overwhelming trying to find the right information. Over the years, I've learned the best of the best tips and strategies (often hidden or lost within those books) and have distilled them into the top 7 secrets for creating a powerful Goal Statement.

1. **The Goal Statement MUST be framed positively.** Negative statements attract negative thoughts, feelings or actions. Frame your goals so that you are 'gaining' something, not giving something up. Avoid words like stop, not, or non- in your Goal Statement. Words like less, lose, no, and nothing have a very negative connotation. Also, state your goal as a definite "will", not a sloppy "want".

Which of these sounds better to you?

I want to stop spending so much time at the office

or

My work schedule will be organized so that I have time to myself each day.

2. **Make the statement specific, especially timeframes.** See the difference here?

On X date, my work schedule will be organized so that I have 30 minutes of time to myself each day.

3. **Include a reason,** an underlying purpose, for the goal in the wording of the statement itself. Do you know why you want to achieve a particular goal? Is it to create more financial independence? More freedom? More energy? More space? Do you want to focus on your personal development?

Taking the above example from the office, you might say:

On X date, my work schedule will be organized so that I have 30 minutes of time to myself each day for drawing, painting and sketching.

This may sound like an unusual goal to some people. Many folks long to have more time in their day to be creative and have fun, just for themselves. I hear goals similar to this one many times each week. People say they simply don't have the time to do the activities they want to do. Well, we all know we cannot create 'more' time - there is only 24 hours in the day for all of us, even those people you think are really successful. But we can create a plan to make the time we have more available to us and our personal priorities. We can make different choices.

4. **Make the goal realistic.** Using our example Goal Statement, 60 minutes might be the amount of time you *want* to have every day for yourself but perhaps at this point it is not realistic. Stating 30 minutes might still be a stretch (particularly if you don't feel that you have the time at the moment) but is perhaps more realistic at this point for you.

5. **Keep the goal simple and do not specify “how” the goal will happen within the Goal Statement itself.** Do not make the goal complicated, full of twists and turns – you will only sabotage yourself. And do not state “how” you will achieve the goal. Doing so only limits your options. State the goal, simply, and the strategy for achieving it will come later.

6. **Make sure the goal is completely within your control.** This is *very important*. You cannot ensure that you make new friends, get new clients, have better relationships or land that dream job. Anything that significantly involves the decision-making processes of other people is outside of your control. What you *can* ensure is that you take actions that make those events more possible. And *those* actions need to be your goal. For example, you *can* be in control of the number of resumes you send out, the amount of phone calls you make or the total time you spend exercising.

7. **Do you actually want to achieve the goal or is it a “should”?** One of the most effective ways to achieve a goal is to make sure it is something you WANT to achieve, and not a 'should' goal. Do you really want this goal you have identified?

So, in summary, to create a Goal Statement that will work for you, not against you:-

1. Make it positive, avoiding all negative connotations, and make it definite
2. Use specifics, including timeframes and amounts
3. Write your reason for achieving the goal in the statement itself
4. Make the statement realistic for you
5. Make it simple and do not complicate things or limit yourself by stating “how”
6. Make sure the goal is entirely within your control
7. Be clear that you truly want to achieve this goal

Okay, let's put together the first draft of your Goal Statement:

On [write actual date this goal will be achieved by] _____

Tick each of the 7 secrets above as you see them in your Goal Statement. If you cannot check off one of the numbers, go back and rework the Statement until you can.

Okay, there is one last thing we need to do to make this Goal Statement one that sets you up for success, not failure! We need to make it 'present'. We are going to change the language of the Statement just enough so that you are speaking as if the goal has already happened. Using the original example from above, I'll show you what I mean:

Draft Goal Statement:

On X date, my work schedule will be organized so that I have 30 minutes of time to myself each day for drawing, painting and sketching.

Make it present:

On X date, my work schedule is organized and I have 30 minutes of time to myself each day for drawing, painting and sketching.

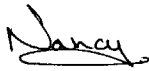
See the difference there? Subtle but powerful! Feels already achieved! Write 'as if' today was the actual day chosen as your goal achievement date. Okay, your turn - take your draft Goal Statement from above and make it present:-

My Goal Getter Goal Statement is:-

On _____

While there are other steps to achieving a goal (like creating the plan of action, pulling together your Goal Getter Gang, etc), starting with the best possible Goal Statement is the No. 1 way to create success in all your goals. It doesn't take very long to create, and will save you many hours (and possibly a lot of money) by giving a sense of direction, purpose and intention. Miss this step at your own peril!

Here's to your success!



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