

Business Skills 360 – Achieving Your Goals (Part 1)

Discussion Questions

1. What goals have you set for yourself recently?
2. What are the reasons that you sometimes don't reach your goals?
3. What do you think makes a "good" or "clear" goal?

Vocabulary

sales pitch – a planned presentation of a product or service designed to sell; "John was very nervous before giving his sales pitch to the client."

territory – the area or region in which a company does business; "My sales territory includes most of Oregon and Washington."

mnemonic device – a learning technique or trick that helps us remember something; "Many students remember the colors of the rainbow with a simple mnemonic device: Roy G. Biv."

stands for – to represent or symbolize; often we use initials to stand for a longer name; "Harley is an engineer with NASA, which stands for National Aeronautics and Space administration."

out of reach – too far to access or too difficult to achieve; "With the economy as it is, I think our goal of doubling profits this year is now out of reach."

aligned with – in agreement or cooperation with; "Because the Board of Directors goals were not aligned with those of the Chief Officers, the organization suffered."

mission statement – a short, formal expression of the purpose of a company or organization; "The mission statement of 3M is 'to solve unsolved problems innovatively.'"

quarter – a three-month period in a company's fiscal year; "It's important to set very clear goals for each quarter."

hypothetical – imagined; existing only as a thought or concept; "The interviewer explained a hypothetical situation to Gus and asked him what he would do."

to set aside – to separate or reserve for a special purpose; "Every month, Jerry set aside 5% of his paycheck for his yearly vacation."

to delegate / delegation – to assign tasks or responsibilities to other people; the act or habit of assign tasks to other people; "Vera's book project became too much work, so she delegated the research to her assistant."

discouraged – without hope, confidence, or motivation; "Fiona became very discouraged in her sales job when she failed to make a single sale in one month."

concrete steps – clear and practical stages or directions; "We need to take concrete steps to save this project instead of just talking."

duration – the length of time something exists or lasts; “Heather felt the duration of her lunch break was too short for her to do anything besides eat.”

abandoning / to abandon – to give up or discontinue; to leave completely; “When all of the gold was gone, the mining company abandoned the old mine.”

to give up – to stop doing; to admit defeat; “After six months of asking for a raise, Jonah gave up and went searching for a different position.”

slip-up – a mistake or error; “The company hired a copy editor to review all reports and proposals and correct the writers’ slip-ups.”

Transcript

Hi everyone. I’m Tim Simmons and you’re listening to Business Skills 360. Glad you could join me today for the first part of our series on “achieving your goals.” We’re going to kick off it with a look at setting SMART goals and some tips for managing your goals.

Now, when I talk about goals, I’m talking about *any* kind of goal. It could be a personal goal, like improving your **sales pitch**, or an organizational goal, like expanding successfully into new **territory**. The basics are the same, so the advice I’m going to share with you applies to goals of any size or scope.

Okay, now achieving your goals always begins with setting good goals. But what exactly does a good goal look like? Well, you might have heard people talk about *SMART* goals. In this case, the word SMART is a **mnemonic device**. Each of those letters **stands for** something. The “S” is for *specific*. A goal like “I want to be a better salesman” is not specific. But “I want to improve my gross sales” *is*. “M” stands for *measurable*. Think about that phrase “A better salesman.” Can you measure that? No, you can’t. But you *can* measure gross sales. Next, goals should be *attainable*. Of course, you need to be ambitious, but you shouldn’t set goals that are clearly **out of reach**. In our salesman’s case, perhaps “improve my gross sales by 10%” is reasonable. The “R” in SMART means *relevant*. That is, is the goal **aligned with** the person or organization’s **mission statement**? Is it a worthwhile goal? And finally, goals must be *time-sensitive*. If we don’t attach some kind of timeline to our goal, then we may lose focus. “Sometime in the future” is not a very inspiring timeline. “Within this financial **quarter**” is. So, let’s see if we’ve managed to put together a SMART goal here... our **hypothetical** salesman’s goal is “I want to improve my gross sales by 10% within this financial quarter.” Very nice. It’s specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-sensitive. And because it is all of those things, our salesman has a better chance of success.

Okay, so you’ve created a smart goal, now the question is how are you going to *manage* that goal? First off, you need to make it a priority. Chances are that you or your organization is working toward several different goals. Sometimes those goals compete for precious time or resources. So if you can’t give the goal what it needs, then really, what hope does it have of being achieved? **Setting aside** the time to work toward your goal is key. So is good **delegation**, if the goal is something that depends on the work of others. In this sense, a goal is like a project. In fact, some companies rely on goal-management software to make sure they stay on track.

And staying on track can be tough, especially if the goal is a long-term one. When the desired outcome is in the distant future, people and groups can become **discouraged** or forget altogether what they are working toward. That's why goal management also involves breaking a goal into **concrete steps**. Sometimes people call these smaller steps "objectives." Instead of expecting people or ourselves to maintain motivation for something far off, we set milestones along the way. Then we can spread the sense of accomplishment out over the **duration** of the process.

Does that make sense? You see, many people and organizations like to make goals but have the terrible habit of **abandoning** them. And if you **give up** on your goals regularly, what's the point in making them? Doing this will create a feeling or culture of disappointment and failure. And that is not healthy.

So remember, making smart goals and managing them well are critical. But that's not all there is to achieving goals. You also need to understand the importance of communicating and remembering goals, maintaining motivation, establishing rewards, and dealing with **slip-ups**. But we'll save that for next week. If you'd like to learn more or test yourself on today's lesson, check out the myBEonline.com website. You'll find vocabulary explanations, discussion questions, and a quiz. Thanks for listening, and see you next week.

Review

1. What type of goals is Tim primarily talking about?
 - a. Long-term goals
 - b. Personal goals
 - c. Any type of goal
 - d. Organizational goals

2. According to Tim, which of the following are aspects of a good goal?
 - a. Serious
 - b. Attainable
 - c. Measurable
 - d. Testable
 - e. Specific
 - f. Inexpensive
 - g. Relevant
 - h. Time-sensitive

3. Which of the following is NOT an example of a good goal?
 - a. Our company will double investment in product development in 2011.
 - b. The marketing department will become much better at communication.
 - c. I will find five new clients this month.
 - d. I will become regional sales manager within three years.

4. Tim says that to make a goal a priority we need to:
 - a. Set aside time and delegate
 - b. Find the resources and cooperate
 - c. Be energetic and not give up
 - d. Be specific and measure it

5. What does Tim call the concrete steps that we break a goal into?
 - a. Slip-ups
 - b. Accomplishments
 - c. Timelines
 - d. Objectives

6. Tim says that the result of constantly giving up on the goals we set is a culture of _____ and _____.

Review Answers

1. What type of goals is Tim primarily talking about?

C any type of goal

2. According to Tim, which of the following are aspects of a good goal?

B attainable
C measurable
E specific
G relevant
H time-sensitive

3. Which of the following is NOT an example of a good goal?

B The marketing department will become much better at communication.

4. Tim says that to make a goal a priority we need to:

A set aside time and delegate

5. What does Tim call the concrete steps that we break a goal into?

D objectives

6. Tim says that the result of constantly giving up on the goals we set is a culture of _____ and _____.

Disappointment / failure

Online Practice

Click the "Launch" button to open the **online practice**:

