

Set Goals that Motivate

A goal is an intention you set to achieve a particular outcome—an outcome that wouldn't come to pass without your intentional effort. *It changes the status quo.*

Usual Standard: SMART Goals: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**ealistic, **T**imely

- Why SMART goals don't ensure that you are motivated to take the steps
- What's needed: *objective* goals that factor in both facts and values.

Objective Standards for the goal: **Goals should both guide and motivate action.**

- ⇒ The outcome is **"out there" in the real world**, not "in here" in your mind.
- ⇒ Achieving the goal has a **payoff—a deeply meaningful value** you are contextually certain you will gain. (Hence you will feel joy/satisfaction, etc.)
- ⇒ It is clearcut, doable & important (Exact standards depend on time scale.)

5 Time Scales for Goals

Long-Term (> 1 year): Can be abstract, even vague. May not have a clear path to success. Are personally meaningful—tied to deep rational values.

Objectives (1 month – 1 year): Gain meaning from the long-term goal they advance. Have a significant payoff that is likely achievable in the time.

Key Results (< 2 weeks): Clearcut, doable, and important. Logically will contribute to achieving an objective. Usually has payoff that gains the *same* deep values as the payoff of the objective—but always some important value.

Tasks (< 2-3 hours): Can be completed in one burst of effort. Logically necessary to achieve a key result. Have a payoff, which may be a collateral gain.

Steps (Next 1+ minutes, i.e., Now): Can, want, will: Possible to do *now* with no additional preparation, e.g., a next physical action. Logically necessary to achieve a task. Easy enough that you are willing to do it without pressuring yourself, despite contrary motivation and no obvious payoff apart from pride in doing what you intended.

Tips on figuring out payoffs for Objectives, Key Results, and Tasks:

- Describe all goals in terms of values gained, not threats avoided. (Threats are threats to a value.) *Only a value orientation supplies the creativity needed to come up with payoffs. Get the table of deep rational values.*
- If there's a payoff for a task or key result, you are sure your time will not be wasted, no matter what happens.
- Self-development goals are achieved in relation to real-world goals. 85-98% of your time should be on achieving real-world goals.
- Mental goals can sometimes be converted into written results.