

Set Goals that Motivate

A goal is an intention you set to achieve a particular outcome.

SMART Goals: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely

- 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

A payoff is a predictable, observable result that is meaningful to you

- You are (contextually) certain you will get the result from your action
- The result is "out there" in the real world, not "in here" in your mind
- Working toward the result necessarily involves gaining a deep value, which therefore can stimulate joy/satisfaction in the short-term.

5 Time Scales for Goals

Long-Range (> 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-range 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 you are willing to do it without pressuring yourself, despite contrary motivation and no obvious payoff.

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.