Goal Setting

CHEAT SHEET

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www.noraconrad.com

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Introduction to Goal Setting

Making effective goals and working on them at a steady pace is the best thing you can do for your business. Too often, we make the mistake of setting a goal and then never looking at it again. A few month later if we hit that goal we might check it off and feel proud, but we never thought about it past writing it down.

Goals should be actionable and an end result of set tasks. This cheat sheet will help you set the right kind of goals to grow your business and help you work toward something bigger than your daily routine. Let's get started.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD GOAL?
We all have goals, they might vary from business to business but we all have them. Maybe your goal is to make more money, spend less time on client work, automate a system, get to inbox zero.

Whatever it is, there are some characteristics you need all your goals to meet. These should not change your goal, it should just define and better narrow your goal.

> 01. **YOUR GOAL SHOULD CHALLENGE YOU**
> 02. **YOUR GOAL SHOULD BE ATTAINABLE**
> 03. **YOUR GOAL MUST HAVE A DEADLINE**
> 04. **YOUR GOAL SHOULD BE MEASURABLE**
> 05. **YOUR GOAL SHOULD BE POSITIVE**

We'll use "make more money" as our example for these guidelines to help break these down. For number one, our goal should challenge us, we don't want the goal to be "make $10 more than last month". Unless that's an extreme challenge your goal should be bigger.

When we make big goals, goals just on the cuff of insane, we hit those insane goals and push our business more than we ever thought possible. It'll feel great to aim for $10,000 and come up only $500 short, but it won't feel as satisfying when you only get $10 over your tiny goal. Aim small, miss small.

Number two also is just as important. I will not make a goal of making one million dollars this year if I've only made $5,000 in the last 3 years. That goal is too high and when you fall short, it'll cut off your fire. Being discouraged will not help you work harder.

Pick a goal just on the edge of insane and then work your butt off for it. Ask yourself at what point you'd feel proud. If you feel proud at $500, go for it, if you wouldn't feel proud until you hit $20,000, set it as your goal. Where do you feel the best about your achievement?

Number three is the key to this whole project. If you don't set a time line you will never hit your goal. You need to have a deadline and a well-designed plan to get there. We'll talk more on this soon.

Number four is a big one that's skipped too often. With a goal like money, it's easy to measure. You pull up your accounting system and see how much money you made. But, no matter what goal you set, it must be measurable.

You want more time for family? Schedule time and make sure you're timing how long you work for. If you want 4 hours a day of no-work, you have to plan for it! Everything must be measured.

This last one is something that is a small detail that can have a massive effect on the way you approach your goal. I could phrase my goal "Make $5000 more in profit during January 2017 than I did in December 2016" or I could say "Be less broke in January than in December".

Which one sounds more positive?
"Eat less junk food" or "Make healthier lunch choices during the work week"
"Lose 5% body fat" or "Gain 5% of muscle and be able to bench press 200 lbs"

How you frame your goal and the wording you choose has a big effect on your mindset. Phrase your goal in a positive light and you'll feel much better when you hit it.

The Braindump Phase

Grab a blank sheet of paper, a pile of sticky notes or hop on your favorite text editor and set a timer for 15 minutes. Until the alarm goes off your only job is to write everything that comes to your mind and get it on paper. All those projects you want to start in your business, those emails to send, chores to do, updates to make. Write them all down.

I love using sticky notes because it's so easy to organize them when your done, but use whatever tool you prefer. At the end of 15 minutes you should have a messy pile of things your mind has been holding onto. Now, it's time to organize these ideas.

Make some categories. I like using "business projects" "business to-dos" "business updates" "home to-do" "personal" and "other". Organize your notes or stickies into groups. Don't think too hard about it and don't have too many categories. 5-10 groups is perfect for our next step, sorting.

The Sorting Phase

At this point I like to grab a sheet of paper and write "THIS WEEK" across the top. Then, I grab 10 sticky notes that will take less than 10 minutes to do. Write an email, change a light bulb, set up a doctor appointment, change my twitter photo. If you find you have a bunch of these little 10-minute tasks make a pile for next week too.

Once you have some of those little things out of the way, you can start prioritizing the bigger projects. Maybe you want to change your branding, start a newsletter, make a youtube channel. These projects will take more time and research. Start with business related projects and order them. Don't order them by most important to least, instead, order them by projects you're most excited about to least excited.

Now, take the bottom-half of those projects and pull out anything that is a necessity to your business right now. For example, setting up an accounting system isn't fun, but you need to do it.

Take the non-important, not-as-excited projects and put them into a reminder on your phone, or a calendar event, set the reminder for 3 months down the road. In 3 months, if you still want to do those projects, you can add them to your list. Usually by the time they come up again, you'll be able to throw them all away.

The Goal Setting Phase

Now it's time to organize the remaining ideas into goals. Think about what goals you're working toward and pick the most important. We'll use "make more money" as our example again. This next part is going to probably upset most of us, but you need to PICK ONE GOAL. Just one. That is your goal for the next 3 months, so make it a good one.

You goal should be able to have a deadline of 3 months. Now, take your braindump notes and re-write your ideas into steps that help you reach your goal. For example, if you wrote "write more blog posts" on a sticky note, change it to say "outline and plan 3 months worth of blog posts" add a couple extra tasks like the following:

- RESEARCH WAYS TO MONETIZE BLOG POSTS
- SIGN UP FOR GOOGLE ADS
- WRITE I BLOG POST EACH WEEK
- ADD RELEVANT ADS TO THE POST
- MARKET THE BLOG POST ON SOCIAL MEDIA

These tasks need to be detailed, and all aimed at achieving your goal. These are the base of your plan for the next 3 months, so more is better at this stage.

Take a day or two to work on this part. Re-write, clean up, add and organize your ideas into a set of tasks that push you toward your goal. If you find there are ideas that just don't fit in with your goal - save them for next month.

In the meantime, start working on your tiny 10-minute tasks that we pulled out earlier. Get those small things out of the way and off your plate so you can focus on the most important pieces.

Once you have your task list, it's time to put them into an order that makes sense. Here are some questions to help you decide how to order these lists:

WHAT IS THE SMALLEST, EASIEST FIRST STEP FOR YOU?
WHICH TASKS EXCITE YOU THE MOST?
WHICH TASKS ARE YOU DREADING?
HOW CAN WE BREAK SOME OF THESE BIG TASKS INTO SMALLER, IO MINUTE ACTIONS?

Look at your list and break it down even further. You can't publish a full blog post in 10 minutes, so break it down: make the graphics, outline the post, write for 10 minutes (repeat until done), proof read, write social media content, schedule the post, schedule social media.

Break as many tasks as you can into 10-15 minute actions. The goal here is to have between 150-250 tasks by the end of this process. That gives you 2-5 tasks per 5 day work week for 3 months.

The Planning Phase

Now it's time to commit. Using ToDoist, Asana, Success Wiz or your own calendar (something with reminders). let's set due dates (and times) for every single action. This is when you switch your goal into actionable baby steps that will make it a reality.

Schedule 60 minutes at the end of each week to review your progress, add or remove tasks and finish up anything you didn't have time to do during the week.

This method might seem like a lot of setup work, but think of it this way. You'll do around 5 hours of work every 3 months in order to plan and design the next 12 weeks. You'll start each workday knowing EXACTLY what to work on, and all the tasks will be focused on helping you reach a bigger goal.

20 hours of work per year is well worth the time it takes to reach 4 of your biggest goals, right? There are a few more questions I have for you to help you with accountability:

WHO WILL YOU TELL ABOUT YOUR LIST AND WHO WILL YOU TELL WHEN YOU COMPLETE TASKS?
HOW WILL YOU MANAGE TASKS THAT DON'T GET DONE ON TIME EACH WEEK?
HOW WILL YOU CELEBRATE AT THE END OF EACH WEEK WHEN YOU COMPLETE ALL YOUR TASKS?

I challenge you to try this method out for 12 weeks. Try planning out your goals in this way and see if it helps you be more productive and more organized. No more time wasted on figuring out what you need to do, less time worrying about your goals and more actions committed toward success.

I wish you all the best of luck, and please, keep in touch! Let me know how this process works for you. Share any adjustments you made to make this system work in your business. I'd love to see how much you all can achieve in the next 3 months.

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