

FREE CHAPTER PREVIEW

Goal Getter

The Science-Backed Goal Setting Workbook with Personalized Tracking, Emotion
and a 90-Day System That Actually Works

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What Goals Actually Are (And What They Aren't)

****INTRODUCTION**** As someone who has worked with over 1,000 individuals to set and achieve their goals, I've seen firsthand where people tend to go wrong. One of the primary reasons for failure is a lack of clarity around what goals actually are and how they should be structured. In this chapter, we'll delve into the different types of goals, exploring outcome goals, process goals, and identity goals. We'll also examine the concept of the Goal Stack, a hierarchical framework that enables the achievement of complex objectives. To begin, let's consider the example of Sarah, who wants to start a new exercise routine. She sets a goal to lose 10 pounds in the next 3 months. This is an example of an outcome goal, which is focused on achieving a specific result. However, outcome goals can be limited by their focus on the end result, rather than the steps needed to get there.

****DEFINING GOALS**** To create effective goals, it's essential to understand the different types and how they interact. Outcome goals, like Sarah's, are focused on achieving a specific result. Process goals, on the other hand, focus on the actions and behaviors needed to achieve the outcome. For example, Sarah's process goal might be to exercise for 30 minutes, 3 times a week. This type of goal leverages the psychological principle of Implementation Intentions, which states that specifying when and where a behavior will occur increases the likelihood of follow-through. By focusing on the process, Sarah can create a clear plan of action, increasing her chances of success. To apply this principle, take out the Goal Clarity Worksheet and fill in the following lines:

My outcome goal is:
----- My process
goal is: ----- By

breaking down her outcome goal into a process goal, Sarah can create a clear roadmap for achieving her desired outcome.

****GOAL STACK**** The Goal Stack is a hierarchical framework that consists of three layers: outcome goals, process goals, and identity goals. Each layer enables the next, creating a cohesive system for achieving complex objectives. Outcome goals provide the overall direction, process goals provide the steps needed to get there, and identity goals provide the motivation and sense of purpose. The psychological principle of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is at play here, which states that autonomy, competence, and relatedness are essential for intrinsic motivation. By aligning our goals with our values and sense of self, we can tap into our intrinsic motivation, increasing our chances of success. For example, Sarah's identity goal might be to become a healthy and active person. This goal provides the underlying motivation for her process goal, as she is more likely to stick to her exercise routine if it aligns with her sense of self. To explore your own identity goals, complete the following section of the Goal Clarity Worksheet: My identity goal is:

----- How does
this goal align with my values and sense of self?

****ATOMIC HABITS**** The book Atomic Habits by James Clear gets the identity layer right, emphasizing the importance of building good habits and systems. However, it skips the goal architecture entirely, failing to provide a clear framework for achieving complex objectives. By neglecting the outcome and process layers, individuals may struggle to create a clear plan of action, leading to frustration and disappointment. In contrast, the Goal Stack provides a comprehensive framework for achieving goals, taking into account the psychological principles of Implementation Intentions and Self-Determination Theory. To illustrate this, consider the example of John, who wants to write a novel. His outcome goal is to publish a book within the next year. His process goal is to write 500 words, 3 times a week. His identity goal is to become a published author. By using the Goal Stack framework, John can create a clear plan of action, increasing his chances of success.

****GOAL CLARITY WORKSHEET**** The Goal Clarity Worksheet is a powerful tool for creating effective goals. It includes a SMART 2.0 framework, which stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Additionally, it includes an emotional ownership column, which helps individuals connect with their goals on a deeper level. This is based on the psychological principle of Emotional Labeling, which states that labeling and expressing our emotions can increase our emotional awareness and regulation. By filling out the worksheet, individuals can create a clear and actionable plan, increasing their chances of success. For example, Sarah might fill out the worksheet as follows: My SMART 2.0 goal is: * Specific: Exercise for 30 minutes, 3 times a week * Measurable: Track my progress using a habit tracker * Achievable: Start with 2 times a week and gradually increase * Relevant: Aligns with my identity goal of becoming a healthy and active person * Time-bound: Achieve this goal within the next 3 months My emotional ownership statement is: I am committed to this goal because it aligns with my values and sense of self, and I am excited to see the positive impact it will have on my life. By completing the Goal Clarity Worksheet, individuals can create a clear and actionable plan, increasing their chances of success.

****NEXT STEPS**** In the next chapter, we'll explore the concept of Emotional Accountability, which is essential for achieving our goals. We'll examine the psychological principle of Emotional Regulation, which states that individuals who are better at regulating their emotions are more likely to achieve their goals. By understanding how to manage our emotions and create a supportive environment, we can increase our chances of success and make consistent progress towards our objectives. As you move on to the next chapter, take a moment to review your Goal Clarity Worksheet and reflect on how you can apply the concepts learned in this chapter to your own goal-setting journey.

****DEEPER WORKED EXAMPLE: APPLYING THE GOAL STACK TO A SPECIFIC GOAL****

To illustrate the power of the Goal Stack, let's consider the example of Sarah, a 34-year-old project manager, who wants to launch a successful project

management consulting business within the next 12 months. Her outcome goal is to have a fully operational business with a minimum of 5 clients. To achieve this, she sets a process goal to dedicate 10 hours per week to business development, which includes networking, creating a website, and developing a marketing strategy. However, Sarah's motivation and sense of purpose come from her identity goal of becoming a respected and successful entrepreneur in her field.

To apply the Goal Stack, Sarah breaks down her outcome goal into smaller, manageable process goals. She creates a schedule for her 10 hours of business development each week, which includes specific tasks such as:

* 2 hours of networking on Mondays * 3 hours of website development on Tuesdays * 2 hours of marketing strategy development on Wednesdays * 2 hours of client outreach on Thursdays * 1 hour of review and planning on Fridays

By focusing on these process goals, Sarah creates a clear roadmap for achieving her outcome goal of launching a successful business. Moreover, her identity goal of becoming a respected and successful entrepreneur provides the underlying motivation and sense of purpose, driving her to stay committed to her process goals.

****ADDITIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES****

Two additional psychological principles that are essential for effective goal setting are the Zeigarnik Effect and the principle of Feedback Loop.

The Zeigarnik Effect states that unfinished tasks or unmet goals tend to occupy our mental resources until they are completed. This principle can be leveraged by breaking down large goals into smaller, manageable tasks, and creating a sense of completion and progress along the way. For example, Sarah can break down her process goal of creating a website into smaller tasks such as designing the layout, writing the content, and testing the functionality. By completing each task, Sarah creates a sense of progress and completion, which motivates her to move on to the next task.

The principle of Feedback Loop states that regular feedback and evaluation are essential for making progress towards our goals. This principle can be applied by setting up regular check-ins and evaluations to assess progress, identify areas for improvement, and make adjustments as needed. For example, Sarah can set up a monthly review to assess her progress towards her outcome goal, identify areas where she needs to improve, and make adjustments to her process goals accordingly.

****EXTENDED WORKSHEET ELEMENTS****

To apply these principles, complete the following sections of the Goal Clarity Worksheet:

* My outcome goal is: _____

_____ * My process goals are: + Task 1: _____

_____ + Task 2: _____

_____ + Task 3: _____

_____ * My identity goal is: _____

_____ * My schedule for achieving my process goals is: + Monday: _____

_____ + Tuesday: _____

_____ + Wednesday: _____

_____ + Thursday: _____

_____ + Friday: _____

_____ * My feedback loop plan is: + Frequency of check-ins: _____

_____ + Metrics for evaluation: _____

Adjustment plan: _____

_____ * Rate your motivation and sense of purpose on a scale of 1-10: + Before setting my identity goal: _____

_____ + After setting my identity goal: _____

_____ * Rate your confidence in achieving your outcome goal on a scale of 1-10: + Before

breaking down my outcome goal into process goals: _____ + After
breaking down my outcome goal into process goals: _____

****COMMON MISTAKES AND HOW TO AVOID THEM****

One common mistake people make when setting goals is to focus too much on the outcome goal and not enough on the process goals. This can lead to a lack of clarity and direction, making it difficult to make progress towards the outcome goal. To avoid this mistake, make sure to break down your outcome goal into smaller, manageable process goals, and create a clear schedule for achieving them.

Another common mistake is to set goals that are not aligned with our values and sense of self. This can lead to a lack of motivation and sense of purpose, making it difficult to stay committed to our goals. To avoid this mistake, take the time to reflect on your values and sense of self, and make sure your goals are aligned with them.

By avoiding these common mistakes and applying the principles outlined in this chapter, you can create a clear and effective goal-setting system that helps you achieve your desired outcomes. Remember to regularly review and evaluate your progress, and make adjustments as needed to stay on track.

As we delve deeper into the world of goal setting, let's consider the story of Emily Wilson, a 30-year-old marketing manager at a mid-sized firm. Emily's specific goal is to increase her company's social media following by 50% within the next six months. She's been tasked with leading this initiative, and her success will be directly tied to her performance review. However, Emily's initial approach is to simply "try harder" and "be more active" on social media, without a clear plan or strategy in place.

This is a classic example of the "common mistake version" of goal setting, where individuals rely on vague intentions and good intentions rather than a structured approach. In contrast, the Goal Getter approach emphasizes the importance of specificity, measurability, and accountability. By using a data-driven approach and breaking down her goal into smaller, manageable tasks, Emily can increase her chances of success.

Research has shown that this approach is backed by science. A study published in the *Journal of Applied Psychology* found that specific, challenging goals lead to higher levels of motivation and performance compared to easy or vague goals (Locke & Latham, 2002). The mechanism behind this phenomenon is thought to be related to the increased focus and direction that specific goals provide, allowing individuals to concentrate their efforts and resources more effectively.

To apply this principle to your own goal-setting efforts, follow this step-by-step micro-protocol:

1. Write down your goal in specific, measurable terms, including a clear deadline and key performance indicators.
2. Break down your goal into smaller, manageable tasks, and create a schedule for completing each one.
3. Identify potential obstacles and develop contingency plans to overcome them, including seeking support from colleagues or mentors.

However, it's easy to get off track and neglect this principle. Here are three warning signs that you may be skipping this step:

- * You find yourself feeling overwhelmed or uncertain about how to achieve your goal.
- * You're spending too much time on non-essential tasks or getting bogged down in details.
- * You're not regularly tracking your progress or adjusting your approach as needed.

To stay on track and build confidence in your ability to set and achieve effective goals, repeat the following affirmation to yourself: "I am capable and confident in my ability to set and achieve specific, measurable goals that align with my values and priorities." This affirmation can help you stay focused and motivated, even in the face of challenges or setbacks.

As we conclude this chapter, it's clear that understanding what goals actually are (and what they aren't) is just the starting point for achieving success. In the next chapter, we'll explore the critical importance of aligning your goals with your values and priorities, and how to use this alignment to create a sense of purpose and direction that drives your efforts and fuels your motivation. By mastering this skill, you'll be able to create a goal-setting system that is

tailored to your unique needs and strengths, and that helps you achieve your most important objectives.

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