

COACHING TIP

From Rex C. Houze

How to Keep Your Goals Alive

Set low goals and raise them gradually. This creates a sense of winning which will boost self-confidence, self-image, self-esteem, and enthusiasm for new and larger goals.

Break large goals into bite-size chunks. Large goals can be motivating and overwhelming at the same time. Breaking them into smaller goals will stimulate motivation without overwhelming you.

Keep score. What gets measured, tracked, and reported gets done. The way you keep score can be as simple as hash marks, a barometer, a graph, or other symbols.

Schedule specific action steps. When you put things on your calendar, in specific time slots, you are more likely to act on them.

Set priorities. Tackle the most important action steps first.

Make public commitments. Let people who support you and your goals know what your goals are and what you are doing, or have done, to achieve them.

Ask for help if you need it. In the same vein that you miss 100 percent of the shots you don't take, you are not going to get much help with your goals unless you ask for it.

Use affirmations. An affirmation is a positive declaration stated as if it were true. Affirmations are tools to help you achieve a goal. They are not true or false. Your subconscious mind cannot tell the difference between fact and fantasy. It believes anything it is told. It is also a servomechanism that guides your thoughts and behaviors. You can program your subconscious mind to develop the thoughts and behaviors necessary for the accomplishment of your goals.

Affirmations need to be written and read daily or memorized and recited daily. For best results, use the personal pronoun "I" and state your affirmations positively and in the present tense. Using the personal pronoun "I" addresses your subconscious mind.

Stating your affirmations positively is important because your mind grasps positives better than negatives. For example, if you want to adjust your weight, it is better to say, "I weigh 160 pounds" rather than "I will lose 20 pounds." Or, another example is, "I am enjoying record-setting consecutive safe days" rather than "I don't want anyone to get hurt."

Using the present tense takes advantage of the "act as if" principle. The subconscious mind responds well to positive, action-oriented commands. If you want to be happy, act happy; if you want to be enthusiastic, act enthusiastic; if you want to be energetic, act energetic.

Use visualization. Put pictures that symbolize your goal when it is accomplished in prominent places such as your desk, your bathroom mirror, your refrigerator, the dash or visor of your car, and/or any other place where you will see it regularly. Another technique is to create a "visualization board" out of poster board or cork board, and place it where you can see it regularly.

In a 1970s TV show, Flip Wilson's character, Geraldine, said, "What you see, is what you get." The same is true with your goals when you visualize them. The passenger side mirror on your car has a statement etched on the bottom portion that says: "Objects in mirror are closer than they appear." The accomplishment of your goals will be closer than they appear when you use good visualization techniques.