

Measure Your Activity

‘When Performance Gets Measured, Performance Improves’

This old adage remains true year after year. The question is will you do the measuring that can get you the improved performance that you desire this year? We see time and time again in the sports world how records are broken. They constantly measure past performance in order to set new levels of expectation.



During the year, if you want to achieve improved performance, set up a system to measure all your activities that will insure success for yourself and your organization. It is much like a dashboard on your car.

The dashboard measures the activity of the car to insure that it is performing at its expected levels. So if you want to perform at the levels that will achieve success, set up a dashboard that will measure how you are doing.

The first step in setting up your dashboard is to determine what is important to measure. What sort of activities should you be measuring? The answer is every significant activity that will help you achieve your goal.

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Goal Setting – It’s all About Getting There!

As we begin the year with hope, promise and a handful of resolutions, we may find ourselves sidlined before we even get started because we simply do not have a plan.

In any personal or professional enrichment endeavor, it is often the task of defining goals that can become the most elusive. We can easily contemplate where we want to be and what we want to do in the next year or two, but find much challenge in establishing what needs to be done to get there.



To successfully define those activities and actions that will get us where we want to be, we must first simply envision. Envisioning is not only a pleasurable escape, but can also become very liberating. Sometimes the best way to begin setting goals is to think about them as reality. Instead of “listing” those things that we think we *should* be doing/completing/achieving, envision those things as if they had already occurred. Envisioning is a powerful tool. We actually do it more often than we are conscious of. The problem is that we often just leave it at that. We need to take the next step – establishing concrete objectives to get us to that place we want and deserve to be.

Goal setting is essentially determining where you want to go and the steps needed to get there. It is both methodical and purposeful, but more importantly, goal setting should be fun.

When we think about setting goals, many of us look to the larger end result rather than the small steps needed to achieve the desired outcome. These small steps are critical to our long-term success and many times become wonderful achievements in and of themselves.

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ONE MINUTE IDEAS

Where is Your Comfort Zone?

Does the following cartoon speak to you?



The Choice Question

Are you making choices because they are in your comfort zone or are you making choices to take you where you need and desire to go?

Success

“Success tends to go not to the person who is error-free, because he also tends to be risk-averse. Rather it goes to the person who recognizes that life is pretty much a percentage business. It isn't making mistakes that's critical, it's correcting them and getting on with the principal task.”

– Donald Rumsfeld

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As an example, if you are in sales and you make cold calls to generate prospects, then you would want to track the number of phone calls made, the number of times contact was made and the number of appointments generated.

Once you have determined the activities to measure set up your dashboard using a simple form to track your progress. You can use an electronic spreadsheet or simply make tic marks manually. Don't get hung up on what type of method to use, just use a method that works for you. Keep it simple and easy.



Remember, the purpose of maintaining the dashboard is to improve performance. So you'll need to set benchmarks to measure your actual activity. If you need to make four sales appointments a day, then measure it every day and keep track daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annually. On a regular basis, review your results to determine if you are performing at the level necessary to achieve your goal.

So in summary, if you want to be your best, begin today by keeping track of those activities that will get you there.

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Admittedly, determining what steps are needed is often the most difficult task. But, if we follow the advice of the great Mark Twain we can be instantly on our way.

“The secret of getting started is breaking your complex, overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one.”

– Mark Twain

– by Alison Sfredo, The Training Connection

Troubleshooting a Stagnant Meeting

Be ready to propel a meeting forward when it hits trouble spots. Here are three classic meeting problems and how to solve them:

✓ Problem: *“We always peter out.”*
Solution: End the meeting on a high note. If 17 minutes into the meeting, you reach the climax of the gathering, stop the meeting there. That way everyone walks out revved up – and more productive.



✓ Problem: *“Everyone's bored out of their minds.”* Solution: Make attendees laugh. Here's a trick from Sheldon Arora, CEO of Esoftsolutions in Plano, Texas: The last person into the room at the monthly companywide meeting has to tell a joke. It loosens up the room and fills the seats on time.

✓ Problem: *“No one retains a thing.”* Solution: Do a five-minute recap at the end. You want everyone to leave knowing exactly what they're supposed to do. Clarify potential outcomes, outline next steps and make assignments.

– Adapted from *Escape From Meeting Hell*, Patrick J. Sauer, Inc., www.inc.com

A Life Success Idea

Prosperity is one of the areas where people seek the most understanding. "The Prosperity Paradigm" is, in reality, simply a way of thinking. Experts have compiled a list of the top three coaching ideas that can expand the way you think about business. Included are books that detail each point if you seek more knowledge on the subject.

The Prosperity Paradigm

1) SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE CREATE SUCCESS HABITS, UNSUCCESSFUL PEOPLE DON'T.

Human beings are creatures of habit. 90% of your daily behavior is based on habits, and you don't think about it, you just do it because it's become your way of life. Your habits and beliefs are largely a product of your environment. Unfortunately, most people were raised to think, speak, and act negatively - which has become a habitual self-fulfilling prophecy. Their actions indicate they are powerless over their habits and that they can't change. This is untrue. There's an old expression that says "Successful people do what unsuccessful people are unwilling to do."

You absolutely can change bad habits - and you must - to experience a new life result. One way to do this is to create an extremely positive series of statements about a new reality you would like to experience in your life. Saying it repeatedly is an effective new habit that can change your life results. Another suggestion is to first identify the bad habit, then replace it with good habits, one by one. For More info read or listen to: [The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People](#), by Stephen Covey.

2) THE PROSPERITY PARADIGM VS. THE POVERTY PARADIGM.

Most of us were not taught by our parents, schools, and society how to think with a prosperity mindset. There is wise business adage that says, "First conceive it, then believe it, to be able to achieve it!" Most people walking down the street think with a poverty mindset. They expect to struggle financially, and of course, the belief makes it so. This has been instilled from a very early age, and is a deeply ingrained habit that many needlessly suffer from. It is based on a cultural fallacy that becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, one that those who live this way think is inevitable. This is not true.

This fallacy is "There's not enough" - not enough money, not enough great clients, not enough food, not enough time, etc. Let's take the "not enough money" fallacy and really look at it. The U.S. Government

offers multi-millions of grant dollars each year that goes totally unclaimed! Why? The average person (because of poverty thinking) can't conceive of it, probably wouldn't believe it, therefore will never achieve it! Also, there have been more new millionaires created in the last five years than at any other time in modern history. The fact is - we actually live in an era of SUPER-ABUNDANCE! Study the wealthy and you'll see that they expect to make lots of money. The first step is to conceive of the possibility that you can legally claim and earn more. The more you do this, you'll actually begin to believe you deserve to earn more, and if you persist, you'll achieve it.

For More info read or listen to: [Dynamic Laws of Prosperity](#), by Catherine Ponder

3) LEARN AND WORK WITH THE 'UNIVERSAL LAWS' FOR ACHIEVING PROSPERITY IN BUSINESS AND IN LIFE.

Prosperity is not an accident - it is maximized for those who work in harmony with universal laws of abundance. Violating these Laws is disastrous to any endeavor. Operating in harmony with them phenomenally maximizes your success potential.

EXAMPLE: The Law of Cause and Effect - *Everything happens for a reason, for every effect there is a cause.* For you and me, the most important expression of this universal law is, "Thoughts are causes and life results are effects." TIP: Examine the most important areas of your life - your family, your health, your work, your financial situation - and observe the cause/effect relationships between what you think, say, feel and do and the results you are getting. Be honest with yourself! For more information read or listen to: [The 100 Absolutely Unbreakable Laws of Business Success](#), by Brian Tracy.

ADDENDUM RESOURCES: OLDIES BUT GOODIES

If you haven't read these classics you need to:

1. [Think and grow rich](#), by Napoleon Hill
2. [The Greatest Salesman in the World](#), by Og Mandino
3. [Feel the Fear and Do it Anyway](#), by Susan Jeffers

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Books to Consider

Where Have All the Leaders Gone? by Lee Iacocca. Iacocca is outraged. Now 82, he has seen the United States overcome some of its worst crises, including the Great Depression and World War II, through great leadership. Iacocca presents a brutal analysis of cronyism in Washington, D.C., the abysmal situation in Iraq, and failed policies at home, he is not a pessimist. With a reputation as a straight shooter, he hopes to inspire more young people to vote. This is a surprisingly outspoken take on the pressing need for real leadership in this country.

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable by Patrick Lencioni. Once again using an astutely written fictional tale to unambiguously but painlessly deliver some hard truths about critical business procedures, Lencioni targets group behavior in the final entry of his trilogy of corporate fables. And like those preceding it, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* is an entertaining, quick read filled with useful information that will prove easy to digest and implement. This time, Lencioni weaves his lessons around the story of a troubled Silicon Valley firm and its unexpected choice for a new CEO – an old-school manager who had retired from a traditional manufacturing company two years earlier at age 55.

“Destiny is no matter of chance. It is a matter of choice: It is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved.” William Jennings Bryan

“Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.” William James

Change

Change comes every day of our life. Some change is very gradual over months and years. Other change comes abruptly and dramatically and you may say it is life changing. Change comes in every area of our lives - relationally, financially, socially, spiritually, etc. Change can be intentional or unintentional.

Are you aware of the changes you “need” to make? Why do you need to make them? What is stopping or delaying you in making these changes? Or do

you ask yourself, “What am I waiting for?” There may truly come a time when it is too late?

Emily introduced us to the music of Tracy Chapman last year. On her *Where You Live* album we received this Christmas is a song entitled, “Change.” (<http://www.ilike.com/artist/Tracy+Chapman/track/Change>) The song starts out,

“If you knew that you would die today
If you saw the face of God and love
Would you change?
Would you change?”

Consider the changes you need to make and begin the process of changing intentionally now, not later.

“Reaching your destiny requires that you deal appropriately with many bewildering issues and uncomfortable circumstances.” Samuel R. Chand

“The Challenge of Change

1. *Few people really like it.*
2. *Most people don’t know how to do it correctly.*
3. *Some people know it is essential for growth.”* John C. Maxwell

“I desire to so conduct the affairs of this administration that if, in the end, when I come to lay down the reins of power, I have lost every friend on earth, I shall have at least one friend left – and that friend shall be down inside of me.” Abraham Lincoln

“The better you know yourself and the more true you are to yourself, the greater your success.” John C. Maxwell.

“There are three things extremely hard: steel, a diamond, and to know one’s self.” Benjamin Franklin

“The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change.” Carl Rogers.

“God will help you be all you can be, but He will never let you be successful at becoming someone else.” Joyce Meyer

Bottom line, if you don’t set your goals and make the decisions, somebody or some situation will make them for you.

