

# It's Not Too Late



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With the New Year upon us, we again have the opportunity for change -- to re-charge our batteries, to re-arrange our priorities, to start anew.

Are you excited? Are you energized? Are you focused? If you answered “no” to any of those questions (*particularly the last one*), you might want to take another look at your goals, and re-examine your chances for success in 2008.

When I study successful business owners, I consistently find some common themes among them. They are disciplined, determined, hard workers, and **they are goal setters**. They understand that what they want to accomplish is more within their control, as long as they remain focused on the goals they have set for themselves.

Every business owner **WANTS** to be successful - another way of saying “profitable,” and every successful business owner knows how to turn those “WANTS” into achievable goals.

We all set goals, *on some level*, even if unconsciously. But as a business owner, it is critical that your goals are **conscious**, are well thought-out, and that you have a plan of action for achieving them. You fail to do this, and your competition will drive you out of business. You have to stay focused on your goals.

That said, it would not be a bad idea if we quickly reviewed the essentials of setting

goals. So here is my version of Goal Setting 101!

It all begins with a **vision**. For some of us, that vision is so real, we can taste it. For others, it may be less dramatic. But vision it is, and provides for us an end point to which we can now direct our efforts.

Another advantage of the vision is that it helps us define our **long-term goal**. But don't get caught in a trap here. “Long-term goal” is simply your end point, linked to how long you think it will take you to reach it. And here is the second essential: **a goal is only truly a goal when it is linked to a specific time frame**. And as things progress, you re-visit, re-view and re-visit as necessary.

The third essential is **a carefully thought-out plan of action**. Instead of trying to eat the whole elephant in one bite (*clearly an impossibility*), you divide it up into bite sizes. Thus your long term goal is rendered into a series of **short-term goals**, that are **manageable** and **achievable** (*within a reasonable time frame*).

Finally, be sure to write it all down – the fourth essential. It is worth as much time as it takes to **generate a written version** of your vision, your long term goal, your plan of action, your short-term goals, your time frame for achieving them. Isn't that called a “Business Plan”?

So be excited, be energized about your prospect for this year, stay focused on your goal, and success will be yours for the taking in 2008.

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