



Do You Know Where Your Goals Are?

How can you be sure you're on track? Check and update your goals.

By Michelle LaBrosse

Remember that strategic plan you wrote in December or January? Or even your New Year's resolutions? Did you write them down and file them somewhere, or are they hidden in one of those infamous piles we all have?

If you filed them and there's some dust on them, not to worry. We're going to give you five keys to rejuvenating your goals at any step of the way. Remember, successful people don't always get it right the first time. They keep trying. As renowned coach Vince Lombardi said: "It's not whether you get knocked down; it's whether you get back up." Project management is a life skill that shows you how to get back up and stay on the road to success.

Five Keys to Give Your Goals Some Get Up & Go

1. Know Your Top Priority

Look back at your goals or resolutions. What's changed since you wrote them? Are your priorities different now? This is where a project agreement is an invaluable tool. When life changes, as it often does, document the changes in your project agreement and adjust your timeline and tactics accordingly.

2. Identify What's in the Way of Success

What's getting in your way? See the chart below for some common project blockages and how to remove them and get back on the road to success.

3. Be a Bureaucracy Buster

Envision yourself as a business ninja who breaks down time-consuming bureaucracy at every turn. When you identify bureaucratic time wasters and get rid of them, the entire team will operate more effectively.

4. Create Calm instead of Chaotic Work Environments

How long does it take you to find the information you need to get your job done? Clutter, on your desk and on your computer, slows down project work. It's also distracting and causes multi-tasking. A calm work environment helps people focus and use their energy constructively. Ask your team members what you can do in your office to make the environment more effective for them. The changes are often small but can reap big rewards.

5. Give Your Project Heart

Is your project like the Tin Man

looking for a heart? Here are some ideas to infuse some humanity into your project:

Passion. Give people a reason to be passionate about their work. What's the outcome going to be? What will success look like, and how will it feel when they've finished?

Pause. Celebrate successes along the way as you reach key milestones. Give people time to pause, realize what they've accomplished, and gain the fuel to keep going.

Recognition. "Thank you" are two words that go a long way. Show your gratitude to your team members regularly and in front of others. Do it with authenticity. When you let others shine, the light reflects on you, too. ■

Your Blueprint for Setting the Right Goals

To help focus your employees on cutting-edge goals, see these *Nonprofit World* articles at www.snpo.org:

Build the Latest Trends into Your Planning (Vol. 17, No. 6)

How to Reduce Employee Stress (Vol. 24, No. 3)

Five Project-Management Myths (Vol. 26, No. 2)

Master Change Or Change Will Master You (Vol. 14, No. 4)

Strategic Planning on a Budget (Vol. 23, No. 4)

Overcome Organizational Indifference (Vol. 14, No. 2)

Common Blockages to Project Success & Ways to Remove Them

BLOCKAGE	REMOVAL
Feature Creep. You keep adding new features, trying to make the end result better, but time is running out and your team is restless.	Use a change impact matrix. Plan to freeze the project at a specified time. The earlier this is done, the faster your project will move.
A Broken Team. Is your team dysfunctional, not communicating, or no longer working from the same set of goals?	An inability to work together toward a common goal comes from lack of commitment, lack of interaction, and lack of interest in constructively resolving conflict.
Lack of Focus. Is there too much multi-tasking going on, or are people overscheduled?	It's best if people plan their work so that they focus on one task at a time. If they're too overscheduled, they become less effective. Let team members create a schedule that gives them time to breathe and live their lives outside of work.

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