

8 Easy Steps to Help You Reach Your Goal

What do you want to achieve by this time next year? Write it down in one sentence. Make it as concise and clear as possible. This will help solidify your commitment and enable you to stay focused and motivated. The next step is to divide your long-term goal into manageable increments and write each one down.

Look at the sentence you wrote and underline one or two words that state your goal explicitly and clearly. Next decide what your first step will be in order to get started. Let's say you want to enroll in college and earn a degree. Your first step will be to research colleges in your target areas. You'll want to acquire as much information as you need to help you make a decision (e.g. tuition cost, travel distance, degrees offered, etc). After narrowing your choices to two or three colleges your next goal will be to schedule a meeting with a counselor. If you're paying tuition and other costs out of your own pocket you'll need to decide how to meet the expenses. Continue setting small goals and writing each one down concisely and clearly. Think of each small accomplishment as a stepping stone leading you closer to your ultimate goal.

Post your goal sheet in an area that's highly visible and easily accessible. If you stray from your goals return to them as soon as possible. Rewrite them if necessary. Be flexible and make any changes that you feel are important and will enable you to stay motivated. The following are prompts and questions that will help you take the first step.

1. Something that I've never done but would like to do is ____?
2. My life would be more interesting and fulfilling if I did the following ____?
3. What do I want to be doing one year from today?
4. What do I need to do in order to get started?
5. What do I need to do next?
6. What measurement(s) will I use to determine if I'm moving toward my long-range goal?
7. How will I reward myself when I've made significant progress?
8. Who can I can ask for support and encouragement?

Reaching long-range goals may take longer than you expected. However, staying motivated and working steadily is more important than adhering to a strict time line. Remember to reward yourself when you've made significant headway. And more importantly-- picture yourself reaching your goal. If you can see it you can do it!