

Goal Setting to Goal Getting

When I see a company who wants to increase the effectiveness of their team I automatically want to talk to the team about the business objectives and the purpose behind those objectives. If I do not see any feelings associated with the achievement of those objectives then there is a problem.

I'm guessing if you're a business owner or a manager in a business, you want a motivated, high performing, consistent and effective team. You probably want your people to work as a team, to communicate effectively and agree on important outcomes. Every manager wants his team to be the best they can be and this often starts with having a purpose and common goals that are connected to the team.



In my view many businesses have gone so far down the strategic planning path that their purpose and objectives have become devoid of human emotion. Managers have become so process driven in setting the objectives that they have forgotten to reconnect the people to the business strategy.

Missing from many planning sessions and goal setting sessions is the key ingredient which is how do we ensure that the people's motivation strategies are connected to the businesses objectives.

Someone who is very good at connecting business objectives and people is Richard Branson. He always manages to ignite emotion in his team towards achieving what are essentially his goals. Amazingly if you were to say to Virgin employees that they were Richard's goals they would refute that and say the goals are their goals. That is great goal / objective setting isn't it.

So for those of you who think your business objectives are not connected to the individuals in your teams we have a few ideas for you.

A lot of managers ask how they can motivate their people. They take on the task of motivating others as if the sole responsibility for a team member's motivation rests with them. It is as if the team member does not play a part. The good news is that once you begin to understand what really drives people you'll be able to help people to motivate themselves and maintain that motivation.

As a manager what you need to be exceptional at is helping people get into their most resourceful and driven states. No doubt you see your people in many different states throughout their day or week. Some of those states are productive and others are not. For someone to work effectively they need to be in a resourceful state and then work just seems to happen, great ideas come forward, deals are closed, breakthroughs are made and any other host of great things occur. So as managers if we can help our people access high performance states and for longer periods of time we are onto a good thing. Now let's explore a bit about goals as they play an important part.

The Traditional Goal Setting Formula.

This is how goals have been set for years but is it really effective?

Step 1-Firstly you think about what you want in your life.

Step 2-Next you write down why that is important to you

Step 3-Then you put a date to that goal because you must have a timeline

Step 4-You've got to tell someone about the goal so as to make yourself accountable.

Step 5 – You may imagine / visualise what it will be like when you've achieved that goal.

Step 6 – You bound into action...Right?

For any of you that have set goals or encouraged or facilitated a team goal setting exercise, you will have done this process or any number of different versions of the above process. I personally think this is great to want to give yourself and others something to work towards as without passion we don't have an appetite. However, I've got something you should consider about goal setting and I'll warn you now that it may challenge what you currently think about goal setting. However if you can grasp this idea, it could just open you up to a new level of understanding about people, their performance states and how to really get the very best from your people.

What does goal setting really do for us?

When you set a goal you pick out something that you want to have, be, learn or share. You focus on that one thing.

When you highlight that one thing, you acknowledge that you do not have that thing right now.

Your list of goals in reality is a collaboration of all the things you want but don't have right now.

You've set yourself a summary of all the things that you haven't got but want and these things you've acknowledged will make you a more interesting, fulfilled and or happy person. You have not had or experienced these goals

yet but you are sure they will make your life better and more interesting and exciting. (A thought to ponder here is; how do you know?)

So having highlighted all the things you want and don't have, how are you feeling now? How fired up are you knowing that you lack all these things that are supposedly important to you? Are you pumped or are you determined to change.

This is probably expressing the extreme but the point that I am making is that in the process of goal setting we are influencing ourselves to experience a severe feeling of 'lack' in ourselves and in our lives. From here we are setting down what it is we want. My question to you is: "Is this the best state from which to be making decisions about what you really want?"

I can already hear many of you saying that from this state there is a lot of motivation to change things. Yes that may be true but how many of you have had goals you've set that you have not achieved? Where did that motivation go? Why didn't you achieve it if it was so important?



Traditional goals setting as we know it often causes people to feel depressed initially and then compelled to change things (very often out of frustration of not having or being these things already).

There is one really valuable step in traditional goal setting.

Visualisation. Why is this? For the first time in the process you are experiencing the feelings associated with what life will be like when you have these things or this way of life that you've highlighted as important. You are accessing a powerful state of energy and achievement. From here you can really experience what this goals achievement will really mean to you and your life. If after experiencing what life is like having

achieved this goal you decide it is still worthwhile, then you have yourself an empowering and meaningful goal. If however during this process you do not feel all the satisfaction, happiness or success you thought you would, then you may not consider this to be a worthwhile goal to pursue. Either way you'll be heading towards what's really important to you and also coming from the right motivational energy.

When people set goals and then lose interest in their achievement, they have either decided the goal is not meaningful anymore or they have not been able to get themselves into a state from which achieving the goal is possible.

If it was motivation that you lacked then I can hazard a guess at what happened. It is more common than you realise. I am sure when you set the goal you had a compulsion to achieve it. Most likely it was an intense underlying "lack of" state that propelled you to take action but shortly after this the feeling of lack died down and the goal became less important as in a rational state you decided that life wasn't actually bad without that goal outcome. So progress stopped. Now that goal may be something that you would like in your life but the negative drive was the only way you were compelled to act on it. So to maintain that progress you would have had to continually had to remind yourself how terrible your life is without this thing to maintain that motivation (this is extreme but it really is what happens at a deep level inside of us).

So where does your constant motivation lie?

Consider setting a goal in a new way for a moment. I want you to pick a goal now and imagine feeling how you'll feel when you have achieved that goal. Experience NOW, in this moment, that way of life when you've achieved that goal. Notice what is going on, how you are and what's important to you now. Notice everything about life when you've achieved that goal. This will put you in the state you'll be in when you've achieved that goal. As soon as your really feeling what it's like come back to now (today) and ask yourself what the next tiny step is to keep momentum going towards that outcome and notice what is the first

thing that comes into your mind. That is your next step. The trick is to make that step small. Only as large as the smallest next step and that is what keep momentum going. When we achieve that step we are in a success pattern and success breeds success doesn't it.

When you take just that next smallest step you'll have momentum and when you achieve that next smallest step you do the process again and watch your momentum and motivation build as you consistently move towards your meaningful outcome.

You may or may not see the distinction between the two different ways of goals setting. Put simply if you are in the state of being that you'll be in when you achieve the goal and then you come from that energy to set the next step, you'll already have the resources (positive energy) you need to make a good judgement on what to do next. You've experienced what it like in the future so you know better now about how you need to be (as a person) to get there. The difference is small but the impact is massive.

So often with traditional goal setting we stick such large goals out there on the horizon and make them so big and great but they seem so far away that we haven't a clue what the next step to take is. That is more demotivating that motivating and overwhelm is the normal feeling people have.

In contrast, when you experience what it's like having achieved that goal, then you know how you are being as a person when you've achieved the goal. The achievement is real and tangible so having all that knowledge NOW enables you to easily pick the next smallest step toward that outcome. It breaks it down into achievable steps and motivation is alive throughout the process.

Rather than feeling a sense of "lack of" you experience a feeling of "having it all now" and then deciding what is really important and the best steps to getting there.

For anyone who has ever reached a goal only to ask themselves 'so what's next', will appreciate that sometimes the achievement of a goal does not hold the same emotion or meaning that we placed on it when



we set the goal. Sometimes people waste months if not years in pursuit of things that had they experience what it was like to have it back when they set the goal, they probably would not have pursued it. Many a mid-life crisis could be described this way.



So the trick to goals is to always approach them from the 'resourceful state' not the 'lack of' state and treat your goals as a way of life not a listed outcome relating to your happiness.

The good news is that you can be happy not and work towards new things and it actually works much better this way.

So how does this tie back into business and business outcomes and maximising the time our employees spend in high performance states. As soon as you realise that goal achievement in people is state dependant you come to the heart of how to help employees motivate themselves continually in the right direction for them and the business. When your team of individuals is feeling resourceful, has meaning in their lives and is feeling confident in their ability you can't not have a team of high performing people. The next step is to take this very same process of goal setting and apply it to the team and the company. Look at the state you and your business need to be in to achieve its outcomes.

Manage the 'states of being' of the people in the company and you can't not begin to see the results of many high performing people together. That is success in any manager's book.

If you want to look at the purpose and objective of your business or your teams' motivation we would be pleased to talk to you about how we can help.

We'll help you find the energy that is hidden in your people.



Martine Snow
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Become Coaching

