



How to Make 2008 Your Best Year Yet!

by Ryan H Law

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INTRODUCTION

The New Year – it is an ideal time to review the past twelve months and reflect on areas in your life that you want to improve or change. Most people at least consider setting New Year’s Resolutions – chances are that *you* have at least considered setting a goal or two for the next year, but if you are like 90% of other people around the world your goal will fall by the wayside before January is over. However, there can be power in goal setting – it is one of the best ways to improve your life, but you need to do it right or it isn’t worth doing at all.

This special report will discuss some ideas that will help you achieve your goals in 2008 and make it your best year yet.

You will see that each step here has an action item attached to it. The only way to get anything out of this special report is to do the action steps. If you aren’t going to do the action steps you won’t be able to reach your goals, and you will find yourself in essentially the same place at the end of the year.

As this is an interactive study guide with action steps you don’t want to leave it on your computer – print it out and do the actions! One of the best ideas to really be able to reach your goals is to set up a goal binder. Here is how you do that:

- Print out this guide and 3-hole punch it.
- Place the guide in a 1-inch 3-ring binder with some blank, lined-paper.
- You may also want to print out a calendar for 2008 and place that in there.



Put a check mark in this box after you set up your goal binder.

STEP 1 – Set your goal(s)

Goals typically fall in the one of the following categories:

- Spiritual
- Mental/Educational
- Physical
- Social/Family
- Financial

The most common goals tend to be:

- Lose weight
- Get in shape
- Take time to meditate/pray each day
- Eat healthier
- Get more education
- Get better grades
- Get promoted/improve career
- Pay off debt
- Increase income
- Start a business
- Quit smoking/quit other bad habit
- Learn a new hobby (i.e. playing the piano, learn a foreign language, etc)

Some people like to set one major goal in each of the five areas, while others advocate setting one major goal for the year from one category and smaller goals in each of the other categories. Still others advocate not setting goals for the year, but instead setting goals for just 30 days – after all, you can commit to exercise for 30 days, but 365 (366 this year) can seem overwhelming. The key here is to choose a method that works best for you. If you have tried setting major goals in each category and it overwhelmed you and you did nothing, try a different approach.

Another important part of setting your goals is to ask yourself why you are setting the goal. People often set goals that they think they are “supposed” to set instead of goals that mean something to them. Maybe you want to start painting pictures, but you are afraid of what other people will think, so instead of setting a goal to learn how to paint you instead set a half-hearted goal to organize the garage (which subsequently doesn’t get done because it isn’t what you really wanted to do). Your goal(s) need to mean something to you. Take some time to reflect on what you really want your life to look like when you hit December 31, 2008, and set your goals after this reflection time.

STEP 3 – Make a detailed action plan.

A goal to start eating healthier is great, but what *exactly* are you going to do to achieve it? Plant an organic garden? If so – buy a book about organic gardening. Eat a salad with each meal? If so – get some good salad recipes.

Without a detailed action plan our goals really are meaningless. If you set a goal to lose 10 pounds by April 1st, but don't set up a plan to do that, you aren't going to find the scale magically showing yourself 10 pounds less on April 1st.

This step is also a good place to find out if you *really* want to achieve the goal. It is easy to say you are going to eat healthier, but if you aren't really willing to give up the daily donut stop then you don't really want it.

However – you don't have to do it all at once. Remember the film “What About Bob?” with Bill Murray? Sometimes you need to start with Baby Steps just like Bob did. Maybe you really do want to eat healthier, but you aren't sure you can quit eating donuts all at once. Can you cut it down to just three days a week instead of five? Then in February can you cut it down to two? You get the picture. Don't try to take huge leaps all on January 1st.



ACTION STEP: In your goal binder write each goal at the top of a sheet of paper and write out a detailed plan to achieve your each goal with deadlines for each sub-goal.

Put a check mark in this box when you complete this step.

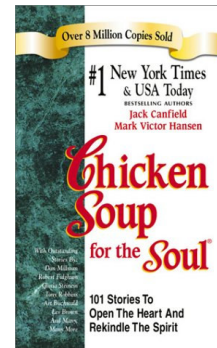
STEP 4 – Eye of faith

It is important for you to be able to actually see yourself as having already achieved your goal(s). If you have a goal to lose ten pounds, can you actually see that scale showing your ten pounds less? If you have a goal to be able to fit into a certain pair of jeans, can you picture yourself actually wearing those jeans? If you have a goal to be debt-free can you actually picture each of your credit card statements showing a zero balance?

To be able to see yourself clearly having already achieved the goal is called seeing your goal with the eye of faith.

It may be helpful to actually get a picture of your goal and post it somewhere, if possible. Is there a particular car you want to buy? Post a picture of it somewhere you will notice it often. Even better – go to a dealership and take a camera – get a picture of yourself in that car and enlarge the picture and post it somewhere.

Bestselling authors of the “Chicken Soup for the Soul” books Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen had a goal to see their book reach the number one spot on the New York Times Best-Seller list. Each morning they would get a copy of the list, white-out the number one book that day, and write in their own book. Soon they didn’t have to white-out the number one book anymore because it belonged to them. This is a powerful exercise to help you begin to see that you achieving your goal.



ACTION STEP: In your goal binder write out how you can see each of your goals with the eye of faith.

Put a check mark in this box when you complete this step.



STEP 5 – Post your goals in places you will see them

This may seem obvious – but it is amazing what a difference this one thing can do. Each person may do this differently – the key again is to do what will work best for you. Here are some ideas:

- Write your goals on 3x5 cards and keep them with you. Review them throughout the day.
- Post your goals on your refrigerator or bathroom mirror.
- Post your goals on your dashboard.
- Make your goals your screen-saver.

You may also want to try something even a little bigger – one man set a goal at age 30 to be a millionaire by age 35 so he took a large gold coin and went to a jeweler and had them smooth out one surface and etch the words “I will be a millionaire by age 35.” He kept that coin with him wherever he went and was therefore constantly reminded of his goal. He retired the coin at age 34.

Success guru Brian Tracy was once asked what one single thing he would teach his son if he could only teach him one thing. He responded by pulling out a yellow sheet of paper and said, “If I could only teach my son one thing it would be this – every morning I get up and write out all my goals again and carry it with me throughout the day. At the end of the day I throw it away and do it again the next morning.” If it works for Brian Tracy, it may work for you, too!

ACTION STEP: Decide what method will work best for you in posting your goals. Write out what you are going to do here (i.e. I am going to write out my goals each day like Brian Tracy suggests):

Put a check mark in this box when you complete this step.

STEP 6 – Plan for obstacles



The fact is you are going to have obstacles. The mattress is going to be much more inviting than the jogging shoes. The donut is going to look tasty. The temptation to skip practicing the piano and watch the newest reality show will be there. You will have obstacles!

An important thing to remember is that you are doing your current behavior for a reason – there is a reward. If you are eating too many candy bars you know you need to cut back. You have known it for a long time. You are doing this because there is a reward for all behavior, even negative behavior such as eating too many candy bars. What is the reward? They taste good!

It may help you to go through each of your goals and figure out what the reward has been for your current behavior. Then determine what the reward will be if you change that behavior and achieve your goal. Many people find this step alone gives them the will-power to overcome obstacles. If you can focus on the reward that will come from achieving your goal you can overcome that obstacle.

ACTION STEP: In your goal binder write down the reward you have been getting from the current behavior and the reward you will get from changing the behavior (i.e. I am eating a hamburger every day for lunch because it is quick and easy and they taste good. By eating healthier lunches I will lose weight and have more energy for the afternoon. This will lead to me being more productive at work).

Put a check mark in this box when you complete this step.

STEP 7 – Get support

Generally you don't want to go at a goal by yourself. If you are going to stop smoking find some other people who want to stop smoking. If you want to memorize 10 scriptures find some other people who want to do the same thing and quiz each other. If you want to exercise everyday find a friend and exercise together (it is easier to get to the gym at 6:00 AM if you have committed to stop and pick up a friend!). If you want to start investing for retirement form an investment group. If you want to learn to speak better join your local Toastmasters group.

Just be sure the people you choose to support you are people who really will support you and not try to tear you down. Hyrum W Smith told a story about how he was out with some friends at



the ocean catching crabs. They would put the crabs in a bucket as they caught them. He was watching the crabs and one of them was climbing up the side so he yelled to his friends, “We need to put a lid on this bucket – this one is about to get out!” His friends told him not to worry about it – none of them will get out. For the next 45 minutes he sat there and watched the crabs. Every time one of them would get near the top one of the other crabs

would grab it and pull it back down! Sometimes our friends or family members can be like these crabs – as we start to achieve success they don't like it and pull you back down. Find people like you who really do want to improve and work with them to achieve your goals.

ACTION ITEM: Write down how you are going to find support for each of your goals:

Put a check mark in this box when you complete this step.

STEP 8 – Measure and report

"When performance is measured, performance improves. When performance is measured and reported back, the rate of improvement accelerates." - Thomas S. Monson

To achieve your goals you must measure them and report them in some manner!

The first step is to measure your progress. You can do this with a simple chart in your goal binder. If you have a goal to study for your class for 30 minutes Monday through Friday, draw up a simple chart and mark it after you study.

The second step is to report it to another person. This is where the support from the previous step is vital. Set up regular times to report and encourage each other. If you know you have to report your progress to someone you are more likely to do it.

ACTION STEP: For each of your goals determine how you are going to measure and report them. Write down your plan in your goal binder. Draw up charts to measure your goals.

Put a check mark in this box when you complete this step.

CONCLUSION

The eight steps outlined in this guide will work for you if you take the time to do them. It is reported that only 5% of people set and achieve goals on a regular basis. Those who set goals properly get to where they want to go. Why not join the 5%? I know you can do it!

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For additional support and information please visit my website at:

<http://www.how-to-reach-your-goals.com>.

On this site you will find the latest copy of this report and an expanding resource area. I am committed to helping you reach your goals and look forward to seeing you on the website. While you are there, be sure to sign up for the free newsletter that will be full of exclusive offers, advice, information about online support groups and more. Click on the link above and visit right away to make 2008 your best year ever!