

# 21 Ideas for Simple and Fun Goal Setting Strategies



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# Simple and Fun Goal Setting Strategies

We are all remarkable human beings. There is no one goal-setting strategy that is perfect for everyone—but there are many goal-setting strategies that are perfect for just one person.

Here are twenty-one tried-and-true strategies: I challenge you to try each one at least once, to see which work best for you.

## 1. Brainstorm with Sticky Notes

The beauty of using sticky notes as a business planning aid is two-fold: You can create your own memory aid or category using different colors... and you can mix-and-match them. (Example: Moving them around a bulletin board as you brainstorm various approaches.)

Sticky notes are also less intimidating to many people, compared to writing things down in one static place. In fact, if you're a perfectionist—the sort who has to completely print out a new Calendar page and redo it if you mess up one slot—it's virtually guaranteed you'll find sticky notes less intimidating for you.

And you can buy them very inexpensively at any local dollar store.

## 2. Create your Elevator Goal

Almost everyone knows the famous “elevator speech” exercise, where you try to summarize your business in one sentence after being asked “what do you do for a living” by someone you meet on an elevator.

Try doing this when brainstorming your big goal for the month or year: Imagine you're standing on an elevator, and either (a) someone you admire or (b) someone you hope will become a client or customer asks: “What's your main business goal for this year, and how will you reach it?”

(Here's a prompt, in case you are having trouble getting started):

- I am going to \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ for [date]

## 3. Use Affirmations to Reinforce your Goal

How often has your goal disappeared from your mind while you grapple with the realities of daily life?

Keep your goal in your focus by using affirmations to cue and remind yourself daily. Here's how:

- Set an ambitious goal for the month—one that is slightly out of your comfort zone
- Choose an affirmation that relates to that activity
- Print it out in large letters (make an infographic of it, if you are a visual thinker, using an appropriate and striking background or template)
- Pin it where it is right in your range of vision when you sit down at your desk
- Say it out loud to yourself, with conviction, every time your eye falls on it
- Mentally visualize achieving your goal while you do this

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## 4. Fantasize Success

Many Olympic athletes know this secret—in fact, take it for granted: If you repeatedly visualize achieving a goal in complete detail, your muscles and neural pathways will develop as if you were actually performing those actions.

For example, the tennis player who visualizes performing a perfect serve over and over again; or the figure skater who visualizes her gold-medal Olympic performance, night after night, months before the Olympic games.

Do it by visualizing in absolute detail what it will feel like when you achieve a major goal you are working towards, for your business. For example, if you plan to create a successful webinar summit with eight guests, visualize what you will wear that day; what your guests are wearing; which questions people are going to ask; what you are going to answer; how you will introduce each guest.

Do this before bed or during a meditative break time every day.

Then make notes on actions your visualizations inspire you to take! (Example: “Send red dress to the cleaners and buy earrings to match.”)

## 5. Brainstorm with Friends

Try brainstorming methods of achieving goals with friends, fellow team members or peers.

Brainstorming is not planning: It’s just getting your creativity heated up—especially when it comes to taking things past the obvious ways.

Try setting a time limit and use a timer. Then challenge each other to come up with as many different ways to achieve your goal as possible within that time frame.

(And do record your brainstorming session—or keep notes!)

## 6. Find the Right Accountability Partner

Sometimes it’s hard to keep our eyes on the prize when we are rushing around reacting to everyday life and all its challenges. Setting up a goal with an accountability partner is a technique that works well for many people who otherwise would let things “slide”.

Just be sure to find the right partner! It should be someone who at least has a basic understanding of business and who is dedicated to helping you succeed. (Better yet: Find someone who has an emotional or financial stake in your success—such as a coach eager to boost her own reputation by talking of your success.)

## 7. Use Skype

You work online. You don’t have anyone physically handy to brainstorm with. So find a trusted accountability partner—perhaps from the group you both belong to; or a team member—and play your brainstorming game via video Skype.

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### 8. Set Goals that Make You Happy

That's the positive way of putting it, which everyone agrees is better. But if you really want to put the statement, above, into perspective, do look at the reverse side of this coin: Don't set goals that make you miserable.

And if a goal that's not fun is necessary, look for ways to make it more fun: Doing it with someone you like; rewarding yourself with something really special; trying a different resource or app; and so forth.

Be creative! Goals that make you happy are goals that make you want to get out of bed!

### 9. Use Children's Mind-Mapping and Visualization Tools

The problem with mind-mapping software is that it can be visually "dry" and uninspiring: Perfect, perhaps, for plotting a science formula but not great when you're trying to use it in the brainstorming stage of goal-setting as cue cards.

Try using free tools geared for children, such as [Kidspiration](#) mind-mapping software or [ABCya! Word Clouds for Kids](#).



### 10. Keep a Goal Diary

If you're working towards a big or complex goal that necessitates multiple steps or facets, keep a goal diary. Record your progress every day. Make notes. Jot down ideas—and at least once a week, review your progress. (This will either prod or inspire you to take further action.)

If you are a visual learner, choose a distinctive journal. This is for your personal use, so choose one in your favorite color—one that feels active and optimistic, such as magenta, orange or yellow. Include photographs and magazine clippings, if that inspires you.

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Oh. And call it a “diary”; call it a “journal”—but, as the old joke goes, just call it!

### 11. Set Measurable Goals

Once you decide on a goal, you have to take steps (actions) to ensure that you reach it. Lay these out on paper (virtually or physically) within a schedule or calendar.

Include each step: Both its start date and the date you estimate you should complete it. This way, your goals become measurable: That is, you can chart your progress and accurately answer questions like “what do I need to do next?” and “how many more steps do I still have to take?”

Always remember this:

- Making goals **measurable** makes the process **pleasurable**!

### 12. Ask for Feedback

Feedback, properly given, acts as a reality check. We sometimes become blinded by our own fixed notions. Feedback can alert you to hidden pitfalls you’re not seeing, give you clues on where to concentrate more energy and attention and open your eyes to new ideas and methods.

When you set a goal, ask for feedback from those concerned: Those who you are creating a product for; your peers; and members of your team.

Be selective—but keep your ears open and your eyes wide to new opportunities.

### 13. Break it Down

If any step along the way to a goal overwhelms you, break it down into smaller steps. Then focus on tackling one at a time.

### 14. Be SMART

Use the SMART model of goal-setting so popular with entrepreneurs and large organizations alike.

SMART is an acronym, standing for:

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**chievable
- **R**ealistic
- **T**ime-constrained

Note that you can apply your own, more relevant meanings to this mnemonic acronym, to better suit your mission and your goal.

(For example, you could substitute “assignable” for achievable, if you are planning to achieve a specific large goal by a certain date through outsourcing.)

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Acronyms can be handy tools—particularly applied to systems. See what memorable acronyms you can come up with to aid in keeping your top goals in mind.

### 15. Don't be Passive

Be someone who “makes it happen”.

If you need help, ask for it or find a solution.

Take responsibility for achieving your goals. Don't allow yourself to blame others, circumstances, losses, curveballs or any other external force. Remember the old saying: “If it's to be, it's up to me.”

### 16. Use Worksheets and other Paper Aids

Once you have identified your goal and broke it down into steps or mini-goals, create or download appropriate worksheets to help ensure you:

- Don't miss any steps
- Stick to your schedule
- Know what to do at every stage

Refine your worksheet master, if you plan to repeat a similar project in future, adjusting it so that it becomes a reliable blueprint for future, similar goals.

### 17. Document Your Failures

Record your failures and miscalculations along the way to an ambitious goal, as well as your successes.

Failures help make us aware of what not to do in the future—and what needs to be considered that one might otherwise miss again.

Remember that a project is only a failure when you never take action on it at all.

### 18. Keep your Focus Positive



Be careful to speak about your goals only in affirmative, positive language. The words we use directly affect not only our own energy and confidence, but that of team members and clients too. For example, instead of saying “I am terrified about money”, try saying “I am focusing on creating a steady flow of income”.

Not only will you not drag accountability partners down, you'll feel better and less helpless at your own positive self-talk.

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### 19. Create a Theme for your Goal

Try to get beyond what your goal will allow you to accomplish by looking at the core values it embodies, and what its theme is.

Turn the essence of that theme into an affirmation, tagline or slogan you adopt. Do your best to live that theme until your goal is accomplished.

(Example: “Fearless Webinars!”)

### 20. Create Fun Goals that Connect

Don’t lose sight of the people you want to please. Even if your mind is all business, be sure to add other goals that will help you focus on others and stay connected with your community.

For example, one goal could be: “Remember birthdays!” Sure, Facebook does this for you... but see if you can take it one step further for your clients, team members or contractors: Take out a subscription to a quality virtual birthday card site and mark birthdays on your calendar (along with your other goals).

Make sure you enjoy picking out cards personally. (And yes. You can still save time by pre-scheduling a month’s batch at a time.)

### 21. Don’t Give Up!

Want to know the difference between those who achieve their goals and those who habitually don’t?

It’s this simple: The entrepreneurs who achieve spectacular goals don’t give up. It’s not even an option for them.

If something blocks the road, they instinctively look for ways round it. If one door closes, they find another (or climb through the window).

Successful entrepreneurs know that setbacks, including self-doubt, burn-out and other internal and external obstacles are all part of the process. So do your best to enjoy the process—enjoy the *adventure*—and don’t give up.

Here’s to your success!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eva!". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large exclamation point at the end.