

The ROCK #18 - Preparation & Planning

Planning and preparation are very different things but are equally important! How they work together in your efforts will determine your success.

"When You Fail to Prepare, You Prepare to Fail"

John Wooden

Planning is deciding what you want to do and what you need to do. If you have a clear idea of what you are to do, you will act on it. If you don't, you will hesitate and procrastinate. Planning is about what is important to you. Setting goals to achieve what is important to you is fundamental to planning. "If you want to get ahead, plan ahead".

Preparation is about being a Boy Scout – Be Prepared! Do things beforehand. Sort out the details and then orchestrate the details. The attention to details is pivotal in anything you do. Remember, Murphy's Law says that if anything can go wrong it will. Prepare for what may go wrong. General Colin Powell said that "If your attack is going well, you have walked into an ambush." To put it another way, "If the enemy is in range, so are you." (General George Patton) Whenever you are embarking on a project or endeavor, think of all the ways something can go wrong, and try to devise ways to deal with what could go wrong. Have a backup plan. Something or anything might fail, so prepare for it.

However, also prepare to have success. You need to prepare for your weaknesses, but you need to prepare for your strengths. Remember, there are both threats and opportunities. Preparing for both, and acting on that preparation, defines success. It allows you to be certain in an uncertain world.

Planning - Look in All Directions

- Look forward.
Planning provides a view of the future – who you want to be; what you want to accomplish; how you want to accomplish it. It is the direction that you need to go.
- Look back.
Planning provides a look at your history. What have you done in the past? What have you done right? What have you done wrong? What should you have done but didn't?
- Look around.
Planning creates a necessity for you to understand what the people around you feel about YOU. What do people like about you? What do people not like about you? Are you someone who follows or leads? Or are you someone who can do both and therefore is a good team player?

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Personal Planning

Your personal overview of where you want to go, and the observations of your nature.

- Values Statement
The set of beliefs and principles that guide your actions and activities. Values matter in the outcome of your future!
- Vision Statement
A phrase that says where you want to go and gives you a board picture of what you want to become. When you visualize your dreams, they are easier to fulfill and accomplish.
- Mission Statement
- A statement of your purpose which describes what you are and what you do. This is your compass that demonstrates that values and vision matter.

Goals and Objectives

Make a list of all of your major goals that you have set for yourself. Also list the objectives you have to meet to achieve those goals. Start creating the action plan and action steps to fulfill your vision. In other words, DO Something!

“If you don't know where you are going, why leave?”

-Jim Plato

The Planning Evolution

Your History

- What has happened in your life up until now?
- How did it impact you and others?
- How did it happen?
- What are the results of what has happened to you until now?

Your Situation Now

- Where are you now?
- What do you want?
- What do you need?

Your Goals

- Short-term
- Medium-term
- Long-term

Your Personal Description of How You are Doing

- Describe your personal performance in your social life
- Describe your personal performance school/career
- How would others describe your personal performance in both?

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What is Your Personal Mission?

- Your understanding about what other people think about your Personal Brand
- How do you differentiate yourself from others?
- How do you draw satisfaction from your personal goals and vision?
- How do you build trust and loyalty?
- How do you build confidence and personal commitment?
- How do you build success in your personal performance?

Planning Personal Action

- Plan to achieve the goals you set
- Plan to achieve performance excellence
- Plan to achieve implementation and effectiveness of your personal mission

The Action Steps

- Steps you have taken to achieve your personal action plan
- How do you measure the results you desire to achieve?
- Review and improve your personal action plan as needed

Characteristics of Effective Goals

- Motivational
Goals need to be motivating to you and all that are involved. Goals need to inspire people.
- Measurable
Goals need to be measurable. “What gets measured, gets done.” Goals are a target and you need to understand where and how to hit the target.
- Attainable
Goals need to be possible. You need to be able to reach, with effort and determination, your personal and professional goals.

Goal Accomplishment

1. Base your goals firmly on your values.
2. Believe you can accomplish the goal.
 - Self-esteem
 - Self-confidence
 - Believe in yourself
3. Paint a vivid outcome.
 - Visualize achieving goals.
4. Write your goals down.
 - Make a commitment to your goals.
 - Make a commitment to conscious action.
5. Share your goals with people who are important to you.
 - Your peers provide support for your goals.
 - Peer advice is based on different experiences than yours.

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What NOT to Do When Setting Goals

- Don't set "pie in the sky" goals. Goals are intended to motivate you. Impossible goals tend to discourage you.
- Don't sell yourself short. Goals are often self-fulfilling prophecies. If they are set too low, your achievements will be low. Set goals that will challenge you. You may be surprised by the skills and talents that you have to achieve your goals.
- Don't be vague. Your goals should be clearly defined. You should be very clear about what you want to see happen. Make sure your goals match your vision, values, and mission. Don't hit the wrong target. Don't behave contrary to your purpose or vision.
- Don't keep your goals and objectives a secret. Let other people know about them. This can lead to finding somebody to mentor you, both now and in the future. It can also lead to you mentoring the people who share your goals. They may be fascinated with your goals and objectives and choose to help in these endeavors. Sharing goals will lead to relationships and contribute to your success. What other people feel about your vision will determine if they will follow you. Some will and some won't. Those who don't share your vision or goals may think these goals are not for you, or them. Don't let them steal YOUR DREAMS! Their intent may be to try to help you. However, it may be simply that they are trying to hold you back.

*Regardless of whatever their intent is, these are your GOALS, not theirs.
Don't let them "BLUR YOUR VISION." Stay the course!*

Are You Committed to Your Goals?

By Sandy Schussel

What are your goals for your life and your career? Whatever it is that you desire achieving it requires these simple commitments from you:

- A burning desire to have it. This means more than just wanting to achieve your goals. It means wanting it so much that you will stop at nothing to get it. In other words, you must have real commitments.
- An unwavering belief that you will have it. You must believe that at some point you will win out, even if other people tell you you're dreaming. If you don't believe that, with hard work and dedication, at some point you will win out, you're almost 100% certain to be right.

Think of Dreamers Who Were Told Their Dreams Were Impossible

- For Christopher Columbus, it was the dream that he could sail west and reach the Far East.
- For Orville and Wilbur Wright, it was the dream they could fill the sky with heavier-than-air flying machines.
- For Nelson Mandela, it was the dream that someday South Africa would be a multiracial democracy. Have a willingness to strive until you arrive. Mandela worked for 27 years from his prison cell before things changed. But when they did, they brought growth to his entire country.

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If you're not happy with your career - or any aspect of your life - ask yourself which of these commitments is missing. If you have a burning desire and a belief that you will achieve your goals, all you need to do is keep reaching - and never, ever give up!

Preparation - Do You Do Your Homework?

- Have an in-depth knowledge of what you are going to do.
- Have a planned and logical approach.
- Pay attention to the preparation process so you won't leave anything out.
- Review your preparation so you are comfortable, so you are prepared.
- Remember the terrible “if’s.” Prepare for them.

Preparation in Education, Knowledge, and Training

- Promote leadership roles for yourself and others.
- Learn the abilities and skills required to be in a leadership role yourself.
- Learn how to:
 - ✓ encourage others to take on leadership roles.
 - ✓ influence and persuade others to behave in certain ways.
 - ✓ alter the ways you lead, based in different situations you encounter.
 - ✓ be a team player...a good teammate.
 - ✓ be mentored and what to do to build that relationship.
 - ✓ coach and mentor others for the benefit of you and others.
- Learn the skill of simply telling people what to do. Learn how to be the boss.
- Learn the steps to be in an advisory role with other people.
- Learn the techniques of teaching and training.
- Learn that increasing knowledge and seeking training and education prepares you for SUCCESS!

The Dos and Don'ts of Preparing and Planning

- Don't fail to plan in the first place.
- Don't dismiss the importance of values.
- Make sure your vision is always on your mind.
- Make sure you understand your audience.
- Don't second guess your audience.
- Don't ignore your strengths.
- Always remember your weaknesses.
- “Don't run away from a reasonable risk.” – Robert Hall
- Don't be afraid to take a chance.