

A Simple System To...
Achieve Your Goals

by Paul Myers

A TalkBiz News Publication

<http://www.yourfreebook.com>

© Copyright 2004, TalkBiz, Inc

Legal Stuff

This book is copyright TalkBiz, Inc. You may distribute the digital file on the Internet without charge by itself or as a bonus included with other products. You may not sell this book, nor may you distribute it in print form.

While reasonable attempts have been made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided in this publication, the author does not assume any responsibility for errors, omissions or contrary interpretation of this information. I'm also not responsible for what happened at that frat party in '78. I wasn't even there. It was the guy next to me.

This publication is not intended for use as a source of any advice such as legal, medical, accounting or plumbing. (They're regulated professionals, aren't they?) The author wants to stress that the information contained herein may be subject to a bunch of laws from all over the place. You're responsible. Don't break them.

Seriously. Just don't. Any of it.

While examples of past results are used occasionally in this work, they are intended to be for purposes of example only. No representation is made, implied, hinted at or otherwise bandied about that the reader will do as well from using the techniques. I don't know that, and either do you. Yet.

The results you achieve using this process will depend on your unique situation, your skills, goals and personal effort. Translation: Just sitting on your duff after reading it isn't going to make you rich.

The author does not assume any responsibility or liability whatsoever for what you choose to do with this information. Use your own judgment. Such as it is.

Any perceived slight of specific people or organizations, and any resemblance to characters living, dead or otherwise, real or fictitious, is purely unintentional.

Use this information at your own risk.

Introduction

This is not leisure reading. This is a workbook. Unfortunately, that means you may have to do some work if you plan to get any benefit from it. I assure you that, even if you just do the exercises and never follow through, you'll get significant benefit from it.

If you follow through, you may find that it will change your life.

It may seem strange to start the process of helping you to achieve your goals by asking you to make a bunch of lists. Think of it as balancing the books. Without this, you won't know what you've got to work with.

Someone once remarked that people spend more time planning a two-week vacation than they do planning their futures. From what I've seen, this is almost universally true. The exceptions are the true successes in life.

As a side note - This was written originally for a business course, so the examples may tend to focus on business concepts. Don't make the mistake of thinking that it's only useful for business. You can use these same ideas, in exactly this same system, to achieve any goal you want.

Yes, any.

So, what do you really want?

It's All About Change

Setting and achieving goals is about something more profound than creating change. It's about managing change, and putting your future completely in your control.

Print out the "Goals Brainstorming" worksheet. And get comfortable. You've got some thinking to do.

So, *what future do you want?*

If your life could be anything you wanted it to be, what would it be *right now?*

- **Where would you live?**
- Who would your friends be? What kind of people would you like to spend your time with?
- **How would you spend your time, if you could be doing anything at all that you wanted?**
- What would you eat? Wear? Listen to?
- **Would you work? If so, what would you do? If not, what would you do?**
- What do you want to learn? To know? To be?
- **Where would you like to vacation? What would you do?**
- What else would be a part of your perfect life?

Start writing. Write down the answers to every one of those questions. Be complete. List everything you'd like to have in your life. Don't assign money values, or think about cash in the bank right now. That's for later.

While you're writing these things down, add anything else that you would really like to make a part of your life. Don't skimp.

You can have anything you want. Make a list of all the things you want.

As they say in the educational cassette programs, "Stop the tape and do this now."

Intermission: Two True Stories

A while back I went to a conference in Boulder, Colorado. It was a business conference, but I went because I was curious. There were two people who were going to be there that I wanted to meet.

While there, Jonathan Mizel, the conference organiser, told an interesting story. I'm telling this from memory, so I won't get it word for word, but you'll see the point, I think. It was about his first discussion with his new business coach.

Jonathan was really excited about the process. (He has big goals.) The coach asked him what he wanted to get out of their conversations. Jonathan said he wanted to get rich.

The coach asked him what he meant by rich, and Jonathan said he wanted to make a million dollars. The coach asked him, "What would you do if you had a million dollars right now?"

Jonathan thought for a second and said "I'd go fishing!"

To which the coach replied, "Jon, you don't need a million dollars to go fishing."

Jonathan does a lot of fishing these days. And he's moved from Colorado to Hawaii.

Contrast this with another, older incident.

A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away, I lived in Cleveland, Ohio. One day I read an article in the Plain Dealer that changed a lot of how I thought about life. It wasn't a happy article, but it carried a powerful lesson.

You may not know this, but the winters get really cold in Cleveland. Sometimes brutally cold. The article was about a man who literally froze to death in his sleep, in his apartment.

That was unusual, but not unheard of. When the police looked the place over to make sure the man wasn't the victim of a crime, they discovered something that shocked them.

No, the man wasn't murdered. He simply froze to death. The neighbors talked about how poor the man was. He bought only the cheapest food he could get, and kept the temperature in his tiny apartment so low that no one could visit him for long. Almost no one wanted to anyway. He was suspicious and paranoid.

While checking out his apartment, they noticed something odd about the mattress. When they looked, they discovered that it was stuffed with money. He had apparently saved virtually every penny he'd ever earned.

The man froze to death sleeping on over \$1,000,000 worth of silver certificates.

Back To Your List

Now that you've made your list, take a look at it. See each of the things you've listed individually, as though it were real.

Do this one at a time.

Some people say that seeing it helps you to believe it can be done. That's true. Others say that actually focusing on it helps to get your subconscious to believe it's possible and start making it happen. That's also true. But those aren't the reasons I suggest this.

I want you to see it for another reason. If you have always thought "I'd like to drive a fancy car," see that happening. How does that actually make you feel?

Does it make no real difference in how you feel? (Forget how others feel about you. That's their business, not yours.)

Does it actually make you feel happier? Maybe it represents a milestone. Or gives you a sense of accomplishment.

You need to see it, to put yourself in the situation as though it were real, to know if it's something you really want, or if it's something you think you're supposed to want.

Life is way too short to spend it messing with things you don't want, just to live up to someone else's expectations. If they're concerned with laying expectations on other people, they won't be made happy when you fulfill them anyway.

It's your life.

What do you really want?

If there's something on that list that you don't see making a big change in your happiness, drop it like a hot rock. It will keep you from getting something you DO want.

Anything that you decide isn't really important to you, cross it off.

Now, look at the list again.

How many of the things that you want don't cost money at all? Probably some of the most important ones, I'd bet. Those are what I call "Permission Goals."

Maybe you feel you have to somehow prove you deserve them. This can range from where you live, to what kind of people you have in your life.

Maybe you think you don't have the time. These can be things like learning a language or musical instrument, or taking up a new hobby.

Move those goals over to another list. (There's a worksheet provided for this.) These may be easy, or they may be the hardest to achieve, because they involve a decision. Usually they don't involve much more than that.

Something has kept you from making the decision in the past. If it's just not realizing that a decision was all that was in the way, or pure routine, they'll be easy. Just do it.

If it's some psychological issue, you're going to have to deal with that. I'm not a psychologist, so we'll leave that for better-qualified folks to help with.

Again, move those goals to the Permission Goals list, and cross them off the one you're working with now.

Cleaning House

Now, you're going to create one more list. Things to get rid of.

Face it, if your life is full of stress, and your time consumed by things you don't enjoy, your chance of getting where you want to be is horribly reduced. If you somehow managed to get there despite those things, carrying them along with you will keep you from enjoying your goals.

You need to get rid of the clutter.

What exists in your life right now that won't exist in your perfect life? What annoys you without giving anything positive back? What stresses, unpleasant relationships, environmental conditions, work issues, routines, commitments, etc?

List them all.

There are some types of things that should be dropped immediately. The first group are things that you do because you're concerned about what others will think of you if you don't do them.

If your happiness depends on what someone else thinks of you, you'll never have control of your life. And you'll never be happy.

You can't please everyone. Trying is a sucker's game.

....

Another group are the things you do because "someone has to." Do they really? And if so, why you? What horrible thing would happen if you stopped doing them?

Commitments are more complicated. If you agreed to something, you need to make sure it's taken care of. Or find an honest way to get out of the commitment or get it fulfilled in some other way.

Note: I'm talking about commitments that you don't want. There are things each of us are committed to that we wouldn't be happier giving up.

Ask yourself for many of these: Did I really agree to this, or is it defined as a commitment by convention or default?

If you didn't agree to it, it's not a commitment. It's an expectation.

Someone else's expectation. And their problem.

....

Yet another group is "Stuff I paid for."

Hey - if you paid for it, you can drop it just as fast as you like. Don't throw good money (and time) after a bad investment or an interest that's waned.

Maybe you paid with effort, and you want to try and make the thing work, despite all the proof that it won't. That's fine if it's something that really important to you. Just don't do it to avoid admitting a mistake. There are better ways to live.

Failing to admit a mistake doesn't make it less of a mistake. It makes it more of one.

....

Now, take all the things you can get rid of immediately and put them on the "Things To Get Rid Of" list.

Whatever is left is likely something that involves a void to fill. Money to pay off debts or skills needed to alleviate shortcomings.

Put those on the "Main Goals" list, if they're really things that you need to be happy.

Remember, the only definition of what's important in your happiness is the one you set. What I or anyone else might think of it is completely unimportant.

If it makes you truly happy without actively interfering with someone else's life, it's what you should do.

Where Are You Now?

Here's where things start to get fun. Yes, you're going to make more lists!

Lists of resources. These may well open your eyes. Most people have far more available resources than they've ever considered.

Knowing everything you have to work with will put you light years ahead of most people. Recognizing the value of those resources is another story. Once you learn to see that value, the only thing that can stop you is you.

Print out the File "Inventory Worksheets."

These are the lists you need to make.

1. **Contacts:**

Here you want to list everyone you know. Your banker, your bartender, and your boss. Friends, relatives, suppliers, customers, casual acquaintances, email buddies, you name it. List 'em all.

2. **Financial resources:**

- Cash on hand
- Credit line
- Liquid assets
- Investments
- Invoices outstanding
- Any other financial resources you may have
- Convertible assets (Stuff you don't need and can sell)
- Cash-generating assets - products, inventory

3. **Technical resources:**

Here you want to list computer hardware, electronics, (camcorders, VCRs, etc), software, technical staff, etc.

You want to pay close attention to the resources that come with your web site. If you have autoresponders, CGI access, extra email boxes or aliases, list servers, password protected directories, etc. Anything

your web host lists as being included with your service. This is one of the most often overlooked parts of the resource list.

4. Skills:

- Every job you've ever had, and what you learned from it.
- Every hobby you have that requires any more skill than flipping channels.
- Every language you speak, instrument you play, and past or present interest.
- Every volunteer position you've filled.
- Every incidental skill you've acquired along the way. This can be writing, accounting, brainstorming, whatever.

List 'em all. Over the course of the next few days, lots of these will occur to you that didn't come to mind right away. Add them as you think of them.

You may want to show this list to someone who knows you well. They may think of things you take for granted. For example, you may not realize that listening well or asking good questions or carrying on a lively conversation is a skill. They are, and they're very valuable.

Or maybe you're a good time manager, or a great speaker. Make sure this one is as complete as you can make it. Don't worry, though. It will keep growing.

5. Interests:

Anything at all that you find interesting. Doesn't matter what it is. If you're interested in it, if it grabs your attention even a little bit, write it down.

6. Activities:

Start with one week ago today, and list everything you've done for the past week. Then list everything you do on a frequent basis that you might not have done this week. Then list all the activities you were involved with in high school and college and in years past.

Include online activities, too. Participating in lists or forums, web surfing, chat rooms, buying at online auctions, whatever it is. List it.

7. Character Traits:

Describe your character, as you see it. Are you honest? Impatient? Cheerful? Easily distracted? Are you creative, a good process person, or maybe a pure manager? List every character trait that you have.

Yeah. For some folks, that one is tough. Be honest. This isn't a test, and you aren't going to be graded.

Okay. That's enough for one day. Or even three. When you've finished these lists, take a break for a day or two. It's okay to come back and add to the ones you've started, but don't go on to the next part until you've had that breather.

Part II

If you did the exercises in the previous section, you have a list of your goals put together. If you didn't, go back and do them. This book does you very little good if you don't do the exercises.

The Big Goal First

Pick the biggest, most important, most exciting goal from that list. By the time you get done with this section, you're going to have a plan to achieve it.

Let's start with something simple as an example. A fancy house in Beverly Hills, with a Mercedes and a yacht.

To get that, all you need is:

1. A mountain of money, or a big pile of it and good credit.
2. Sufficient income to support them.

That's it. And that stuff isn't nearly as hard to come by as it sounds. But that's not goal setting. That's "I want."

You need a plan to get the money. We'll get to that in a bit.

First, consider the following questions:

1. How much is this gonna cost, anyway? Assuming I just went in and paid cash right now?
2. How can I get this cheaper? If I can get it at a lower cost, I can cut the time needed to achieve the goal.
3. Who do I ask to get that information? How do I find out the best ways to save money on a house in Beverly Hills?

....

At this point, all you're doing is getting warmed up. Getting a bird's eye view of the terrain, as it were. This is important, as it helps you to

get a general picture of the things you need to know and to have to make the goal reality.

And you've already started thinking of alternatives. Ways to shorten the time between here and there.

Take a look at your big goal. What do you need to get to make it happen? Do you really need that, or is there some way you can shorten the process? What do you have to trade along the way? Who can you learn from to find these things out?

Take a few minutes and think about these things right now.

Do You Really?

Here's something else to think about: Is this goal what I really want, or does it just represent what I really want? If the latter, what is it that this goal represents to me? Do I really need to have this to get it?

That could be a really easy answer, and in many cases it will be. In many others, you might find that the goal you've set really represents a condition that you want in your life. In that case, the condition is the goal. You might choose to change how you go about creating that condition, or you might decide that what you'd already picked is the right way for you.

All of this is important to think about. The goal of this book is to help you get what you really want, in the shortest time possible. It's not for me to try and influence your choices.

....

Here's another example. Let's say you want to run a newsletter, and you want huge numbers of subscribers.

How many is huge? How soon do you want to get to that number? Be specific.

Okay, now, how do you get that many people to subscribe? If you're like most people, you think about publishing articles in other newsletters, putting up a web site and driving traffic to it, creating a sig file and posting a lot, or giving away free stuff to get people to sign up.

And you stop there.

BANG!

Ya just shot yerself in the foot, pardner.

Yes, these things still work, but people are busier than they were, so the old approaches to newsletter promotion are less effective. Every hack with the \$20 to buy a membership in a business site uses them, so they just don't get as much attention as you'll need.

Let me tell you about a couple of people with an interesting approach to getting subscribers.

Each one has a sort of self-evaluation on their site that's based on proven psychological concepts. Kind of like you see in a lot of women's magazines. The key is that the topic of the evaluations is very closely tied to their prospects' business skills.

The first one to do this used to score the tests herself every week. It took 8-12 hours a week, but she thought it was a great way to drive traffic. And it was.

I thought it was a great way to go nuts. It was that, too.

So, I automated the scoring using a simple Perl script, (freed up her Fridays completely, which was worth it by itself) and she put in a note at the top that said that anyone taking the quiz would also receive her weekly newsletter with more in-depth information on the subject.

She was sure that would cut down the number of people taking the quiz. It didn't. She's been getting a couple of hundred new subscribers a week for years, with exactly NO promotion of her newsletter or that quiz at all.

None.

She doesn't have a high traffic site. She doesn't give out bonuses of any kind. She doesn't spend money on acquiring subscribers. What she did is make the subscription a natural extension of a service that her visitors already wanted.

I'll repeat that for emphasis:

**She made the subscription a natural extension
of a service that her visitors already wanted.**

By the way, very few of these people unsubscribe. The quiz acts as a qualifier.

If you can do that, you're years ahead of the people who do things in the more traditional way.

What do you do now that could be adjusted this way?

Stop right now, take a look at your current promotional methods, and ask yourself:

"How can I hook my goal into this in such a way that it adds value to the experience of the people I deal with?"

"What do they want from this, and how can I change this so that doing what I want them to do gets them closer to what THEY want?"

Watch the cool new ideas you come up with.

....

Now, the second person. He has a quiz on the same subject. It was, in fact, suggested to him by the first publisher. The content is pretty similar, but the presentation is a bit better. And he promotes it a little. Not a lot, but enough to get a few links to it.

He averages over 300 subscribers a day. Over 100,000 subscribers last year, from this one page alone.

If he stopped promoting it entirely, I estimate that he'd drop to as few as 125 new subscribers a day, average. Only 45,000 a year.

Again, not bad for the work. At current market rates, he'd have to spend from \$25,000 to \$150,000 to acquire 100,000 tightly targeted subscribers through list generation services. And he wouldn't keep nearly as many of them.

For these people, the list is a part of a formula that would lead to a goal. The list itself is a much under-estimated part of that formula.

Neither of them aggressively looks for links, tests any form of referral (viral) followup, or uses any form of deliberate publicity to build on their success.

You should, if building a list is a part of your plan.

And you should keep in mind that the real advance here isn't the technique, it's **the concept behind it. Making your desired end a by-product of providing a service that people already want.**

Sometimes the tiniest modifications yield the biggest results.

That last sentence brings up something that you'll want to keep in mind as you do these exercises: This is a living process.

You may go through a lot of iterations of the worksheets before you get to your goals. Things will change and you'll adapt. Or you'll come up with better ideas as you get used to the process.

Don't be afraid to change.

Now, back to the process...

....

Okay, so you've done some warm-up. You have the goal, and a general idea of what you'll need to acquire it. And you're already thinking about ways to shorten the process.

What's next?

Put it in reverse.

Yeah, you're going to go backward. (Just humor me here, alright?)

Print out the "Project Packet," and grab the "Step-by-Step" page.

Now, ask yourself one question: What is the last thing I need to achieve before this step becomes a reality?

Write that down. In the case of the house in Beverly Hills, you'd need to close on the house.

For each step, repeat the question: Just before that, you'd need to have the money.

Repeat the question: Just before that, you'd need to get approved for the loan. Or you'd need to get to the final phase of the money making process you're using to pay cash. (How much is the total?)

Repeat the question: You'd need to be half way to the total required. How much is that?

Repeat the question: You'd need to be a quarter of the way to the total, have a good plan for how much you're going to pay, know what neighborhood you're going to be moving to, and how you're going to achieve it at less than market prices.

Repeat the question: You need a plan for making the money, and for getting the info to cut the costs.

This is a simple example, but it illustrates the principle. You decide where you need to go, and then work backwards to where you are now. And to start with, you only do a very sketchy linear map. Don't fill in the how yet. Just the what.

The key is in developing a strategy and measurable benchmarks to gauge your progress.

....

Another approach to get a view of the landscape: Assume you were already in the position of having achieved your goal. Then it all slipped away.

What would have to go wrong to cause you to lose your desired position?

Go over it step by step. Trace it back.

Now, write it down IN REVERSE. The last things you lost are the first stages of getting to the goal.

....

Yet a third way: Assume you're already there. Really put yourself in that position.

Now, remember what you did to get there.

Then write it down.

It sounds strange to try and remember things you've never done. Until you do it. It works.

....

A fourth way: Put yourself back in the position of remembering how you got there. Say out loud "My big break came when..." and complete the sentence.

Write that down.

By now, your brain should be focused on the process enough to unfreeze and think creatively.

That's the single biggest key to achieving goals. Allowing yourself to actually think creatively. Most people don't have three truly creative thoughts in a month. You can have them on demand.

Just look at things from as many different perspectives as possible.

Some Things To Consider

When setting goals, you need to remember a few things.

The first is that big goals require big actions. Unless you want to have to do huge amounts of unnecessary work, you need to make every step as effective as possible.

Next, the less time you allow for completion of a goal, the more dramatic your action will need to be to achieve it. Make sure you allow time for testing.

Progress is progressive. The closer you get to achieving your goal, the faster you'll move in that direction. Your resources and belief will both grow, and you'll be more focused. Think of it as gaining momentum.

Tony Robbins summarizes this in a quote that I've always liked: "Most people overestimate what they can do in a year, and underestimate what they can do in ten."

If you really apply this material, you'll change that year to a month, and those ten years to one or two.

Surprises are to be expected. Be prepared to adapt.

Always have measurable progress indicators. They'll help you to keep the faith when things seem slow. Or just boring.

Before I get too boring, let's shift gears.

What Do You Enjoy Most?

Right now, write down the three things you most enjoy doing. The things you could do all day long, and never get bored.

Zig Ziglar tells a funny story about this. Seems a fellow was watching a ball game one Sunday when his wife reminded him that the garage needed painting.

The guy moaned to his wife, "I know it, honey, but I'm just so tired. This was one really stressful week, and the boss is on my butt, and my back hurts. I can't even move myself up off this couch, I'm so worn down!"

The phone rings. He picks it up and it's his golfing buddy, Jim. "Bill, I got us a two o'clock tee time. Can you make it?"

Bill jumps off the couch like it bit him, says, "Can I?! Just let me grab my clubs! I'll be there before you can walk to the first tee!", and bolts out of the house like a 20 year-old Olympic sprinter.

So much for "poor, tired old Bill."

Ever been there?

What is it that gets you up off the couch when you're stressed out and tired, and gives you the energy you need to get right to it?

Those are the things you want to write down.

....

Don't think about the money. Again, that's for later. And no, this isn't wishful thinking. It's probably the most practical advice I've ever given anyone.

If you do what you really enjoy, you'll have the energy and make the time to keep going, even when it doesn't look like you're making any progress. And there will be times when that seems to be the case.

And who knows? You could be run over by a bus before you get to your goal. Stuff happens.

Don't you want to enjoy the journey as much as the destination?

Now, look at your list of contacts. Aren't there a lot of people on there with some connection to one or more of the things you like to do?

And your skills list. Probably a lot of overlap there, too. And in your other resources as well.

One of the great things about this approach is that, by concentrating on areas where you have a lot of resources already, you can dramatically shorten the time needed to get to your goal.

....

I heard that. From a few of you, anyway.

"But, Paul. My interests are too specialized to make money at!"

Humbug.

I met a fellow a while back who lives on a ranch, out in Montana or Wyoming or one of those foreign countries. He raises "custom" cattle. He loves his life.

And he sells bull semen. On the Internet. To Argentina, and all over the rest of the bull breeding world.

If you're gonna tell me your interest is more specialized than that, you've got a tough sell in front of you.

How about raw gemstones? I recently met a guy who finances his trips to Brazil to collect gems by buying and reselling rough gem stock. On eBay, of all things!

Think about that. He flies to Brazil, vacations, treks to the mountains to collect stones (which is his hobby), and buys a bunch of rocks from the locals. Then he comes home with these boxes of rocks, sells some of them just as they came out of the ground, and pays for his trip.

The rest he has faceted for his own collection.

eBay finances his vacations, and his vacations finance his investments.

That's what happens when you stick to what you enjoy.

What a life, huh?

You should also consider the higher price points that specialized products bring. People pay good money for things they're really interested in.

How much are golf training tapes running these days? How about deer hunting videos?

Or marketing books and tapes, for that matter. What's the most you've ever paid for a book? I've sold a whole lot of them for people at prices ranging from \$250 to \$2000.

You think you've got a specialized interest? Good! You ought to be suffering from terminal happy-feet right about now, then.

The narrower the interest, the higher the profits, and the easier it is to locate and contact your prospects.

This doesn't just apply to selling information. Those are just examples. Consider... If you really enjoy something, it's easy to enroll the aid of other people who enjoy the same thing.

If your goal is to marry a rich guy (or gal) and you love golf, don't you think it would be easier to attract and keep the attention of a rich golfer?

Yeah. It can be that simple.

Suppose you want to build a multi-million dollar real estate empire, and your hobby is playing pool. Is playing pool a good way to socialize and network? Are pool halls good investments? Could your pool table become the center of activity for your mastermind group?

Could you broker high-end pool tables, on-demand so there's no inventory, as one means of getting money for your investments?

Everything connects to everything else, and sometimes the straightest lines to what you want pass through the most unexpected (and pleasant) connections.

Start Your Map

First, do a list of what you need to accomplish to get to your goal. Make the steps general, like we did in the example of the fancy home. Don't focus on how you're going to get there yet. Just the what.

Do it in reverse, or forwards, or any way you like that ends up with a list of measurable steps.

Do this right now, on the "Step-by-Step" page.

....

Okay. Now we get down to brass tacks.

Print out one copy of "Taking the Step" for each step in the process, and answer the following questions:

1. What financial resources do I need to accomplish this? How much will it cost? Will I need credit? A consistent level of income? Insurance? Real estate?
2. What skills will I need to achieve this? What do I need to know how to do?
3. What contacts will I need to achieve this? Who can help me get there? Who do I know, and who do they know? What do I need to do in return? (Or in advance...)
4. How much time will this stage take? Overall? Per day?
5. What systems will I need to have in place to achieve this? Will I need help, or can I do it alone? What technology is necessary? What will help speed this up?
6. How can I make this part easier on myself? What can I do to achieve this faster, cheaper, and with less risk?
7. What else will I need to do, get, or learn in order to complete this step?

Attach these pages to the "Step-by-Step" sheet in the "Project Packet." Note that many of them will not happen in the same order as the steps

they're related to. Some will almost certainly have to be done in advance.

For example, if you need a certain level of credit two years from now, or a relationship with a professional, you'll want to start working on that right now.

....

Once you've done that for each step, go back and look at them again, from the beginning. You'll start to get ideas of how you can do each thing most effectively. And you'll see a pattern forming.

You'll very likely have papers all over the place and be jotting notes down that connect a lot of the ideas you've written down.

If you're paying attention, the pattern will form around something that feels completely natural, and the ideas will flow easily. You'll be as enthused about the ideas as the goal itself.

If you've been focused on fitting things into a specific model that you had in mind before you started all this, you'll stretch for those ideas. They'll seem exciting, but they won't fit quite right.

If you hear that voice talking, listen to it.

Look at the whole package you've just put together in the light of the most fun thing on your list, and the biggest goal you have chosen. Do you see how they fit together?

Do the outline of your plan from there. One step at a time, lay out the general steps and timeline. Then fill in the specifics.

You're just about done.

Now look at it with a critical eye. See yourself going through each action. Is there anything in there that doesn't fit? That doesn't feel right?

If so, figure out why. If you can't do something that you'll need to do to accomplish your goal, you'd better know before you hit that point in the process.

If it's a preference thing, can you delegate it, or automate it? If so, plan for that.

If it's an ethical question, get it clear before you start, or figure a way to adjust the plan so you don't have that challenge. Nothing will derail you faster than an attack of the "I should have known better."

Clean out the stuff you can't or don't want to do.

....

Now, look at it from the perspective of the "Effectiveness Expert." How can you make it smoother yet?

Go over every point with that question in mind, and get creative. Right now you're planning and brainstorming at the same time. There are no wrong answers. Just ideas to explore.

Write them down. All of them. Take as long as you need.

....

Take 5. At least. Or a day.

It's time for another breather.

....

Back from break? Okay... NOW you look at the ideas you just came up with through the critical lens.

Will they work? If not, can they be made to work?

If they will, move on to the next.

When you've finished this step, make sure there aren't any holes in your roadmap.

Congratulations. You're done.

If you just read through this without doing the steps, you are either confused, or you see now how it works and you know you need to actually do this stuff.

If you've followed these steps, you should have a realistic, specific, detailed plan for achieving your biggest goal, by doing something you love.

So talk to me. How's it feel?

For each goal on your sheet... just repeat the process. It gets easier as you go.

Really.

....

By the way, it's been suggested to me that typing this into a computer file is easier for some people. If you really DO things you've typed, that's okay. It's just not the best way. Even if you're good with "virtual" lists, the act of writing the steps and creating the lists by hand makes a difference.

I'm not going to get into the psychology behind it. Just try it that way. I think you'll see it for yourself.

If not, go ahead and type this stuff out. The only thing that really matters is that you do it.

So, what are you waiting for?

Paul
<mailto:paul@talkbiz.com>

Paul Myers publishes TalkBiz News, <http://www.talkbiznews.com> , one of the oldest newsletters for small business on the net. To subscribe, send any email to talkbiz@aweber.com

A few minutes after that, you'll receive an email with the subject line "TalkBiz News - Please confirm your subscription." Just open that email and click on the link inside to activate your membership.

This Book is “Beerware”

You’ve heard of shareware, right? You try a piece of software out for yourself and, if it’s useful to you, you pay for it.

Well, that’s always seemed an interesting concept to me. And when it comes to goals, well... You want to know you’re going to get results.

I’m sure I could have expanded this workbook, paid someone to make the book and worksheets look pretty, added some audio interviews and software, and sold this system for \$100 or so. (Yes, really.)

But that wouldn’t make it any more effective. And it wouldn’t really help the people who need it most.

I could just give it away and ask for nothing, but then how would I know if it was doing anyone any good?

So, I decided on this. Try it out. If you find that it makes a positive difference for you, buy me a beer.

Really.

<http://www.buy-paul-a-beer.com>

Or just pass it on to someone else you know who might be able to get more of what they want with the right system to guide them. Just give them the URL and let them download it themselves:

<http://www.yourfreebook.com>

Whatever you do, please put this system to work for you. And let me know how you’re doing.

Paul Myers
paul@talkbiz.com

December 24th, 2004