Volume II, Issue 4

Stand out

from the pack



When I started out in sales, I worked for a manager I’ll call “Larry.” One of my goals at the time was to find a mentor, to learn from someone with experience in the industry. I thought I’d found that mentor in Larry, until I learned his goal was to retire in three years. Nothing wrong with that, except that Larry focused all his time and energy on his impending retirement in a nice house on a golf course, not on his job.

When I asked for advice on approaching clients, he shrugged. “I really don’t have the answers, Paul. You figure it out.” At that moment, I knew I had to find another job. Much as I liked Larry, our opposing goals made it impossible for us to work together. Mentally, he’d already clocked out of the working world, so there was no way he could motivate me.

When it comes to inspiring yourself and others, ask yourself, “What motivates me?” How passionate are you when it comes to achieving your goals? Such passion is infectious: your employees are sure to catch it. Discover your motivation by identifying your own professional and personal goals while helping other achieve theirs. If you and your colleagues aren’t on the same page where goals are concerned, you might soon find you’re not even in the same book.  
  
**What's the definition of a goal?**  
You might think it’s silly to even try to define a goal, and that’s okay. I thought I knew the definition of a goal until I spoke with motivational coach Michael Wickett. Mike told me that only 2% of the population has goals. With that, a debate began.

I told Mike, “When I ask salespeople at my seminars, ‘Who here has goals?’, they all raise their hands.”  
  
He shook his head. “No, Paul, they don’t have goals. They have dreams.” That puzzled me. “What’s the difference?”

“Dreams are in your head. Goals are written down,” Mike explained. “In order for something to be a goal, you need to write it down.”  
  
Mike was right. Many people have dreams about how their lives will end up, but few people take the time to sit down and form detailed plans to make those dreams a reality. For instance, how many people do you know who want to lose weight? The older we get, the more we think about getting healthier, and losing weight is a giant step in that direction for many of us. Now consider how many people have made losing weight one of their life goals. Sure, plenty of us want to lose weight, but how many of us really put that dream into action in the form of a solid goal with specific steps?

By Paul Cherry

# How to Use the Right Questions to Define Your Goals



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Notes from the Chair



***How to turn your dream into a goal***  
  
**1. A goal must be written down.**   
The process of writing down our goals forces us to transform our vague desires into concrete objectives.   
  
**2. A goal must be specific.**   
Specific goals help us focus our energy and make the most of how we spend our time. Rather than saying, “I want to make my life better,” set specific goals such as, “I want to purchase a condominium on the beach,” or “I want to have two kids.”   
  
**3. A goal must be measurable.**

If our goals aren’t measurable, how will we know when we’ve reached them? Examples of measurable goals include “I want to lose 15 pounds,” or “I want to sell $2 million worth of products.”

**4. A goal must have a time frame.**

We must put our goals in terms of time, otherwise we might put them off indefinitely. The time frame for one of your goals could be anywhere from one week to twenty years or more. The important thing is to have a deadline—and stick to it!  
  
Here are examples of personal and professional goals that meet all four requirements:

* “My goal is to lose 15 pounds in the next six months.”
* “I have a goal to produce $2 million in the next fiscal year through sales of my new product.”
* “My goal is to own a three-bedroom vacation home at the beach by the summer of 2013.”

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* “I have a goal to open up 15 new accounts in the next five years.”

Now that you know the difference between goals and dreams, do a personal inventory. What are your goals? You need a picture of where you want yourself and others to go. At work, this will help maximize your efforts and determine what you need from your own motivation and activity. *Questions to help you delineate your goals*

* “What’s my vision of the future?”
* “Where do I picture myself three years from today?”
* “How will others perceive me in the future? My boss, my peers, my family?”
* “What has to happen in the next two years for me to be happy with my progress?”
* “What visual image do I have for my team? What visual image do I have for my accounts?”
* “How do I want to be perceived by my customers? My colleagues?

“If you don’t sell it, it’s not the product, the concept or the company that’s wrong, IT’S YOU.”



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Edgar Smith adjacent to Kubin-Nicholson’s wide format printing press

 

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* “How would my boss define me in one sentence?”
* “What excites me most about my job? What do I want to do more of/less of/stop doing altogether, so I can achieve what’s important to me? To my team? To my company?”
* “Which mountain do I want to climb?”
* “What’s my definition of success?”
* “What benchmarks do I need to achieve in order to feel successful?”
* “What actions do I need to perform on a daily/weekly/monthly basis to achieve my goals?"
* “What areas of my job should I focus on in order to have the most impact on my staff?”
* “Where do I need to prioritize to insure my success? My team’s success?”

If you and the team’s’ goals aren’t aligned, you’ll find yourselves working at cross-purposes. Think about your own personal and professional goals, then write them down and turn your written words into actions. Once you know what you want, you’ll be better prepared to help you and the team figure out what they want, putting all of you on the same page and the fast track to your happy ending of choice.

# Closing the Deal

**The TACTIC: Off the record**

**The STORY:**

Tim had mentally decided that the prospect he was talking to was never going to buy.  For the past 20 minutes Tim had tried all of the trial closes that had worked in the past.

“I have to tell you Tim, I don’t know that this will do what I need.”

Tim had already tried the “what do you really need” response with no luck.  Figuring he had nothing to lose and might learn something that he could use on other prospects, he innocently asked the following.

“Off the record . . . since you have decided not to buy . . . what are you really looking for?”

XXXX

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The prospect who remains after hearing this question has no option other than to respond.  What he says at this point will help you in determining whether he is a serious potential buyer or someone to follow up in a phone or mail sales effort.

**APPROACH:**

Pairing “off the record” with “since you have decided not to buy” accomplishes two goals for you.

First, “off the record” suggests that now you and the prospect can talk freely.  Neither of you will use what is said to make or break the sale.  Of course, this is ridiculous.  Anything the prospect says will be used by you to either pursue the sale or end it.  But just the phrase, “off the record,” often achieves the goal of getting the prospect to reveal what his concerns are.

Second, “Since you have decided not t o buy” forces the prospect to bring the future into the present.  In other words, he perceives right now what it will be like without your product.  If his concerns are painful enough, seeing the future today is often enough to get a prospect moving toward purchasing.

**THOUGHT:**

Giving the prospect a way to see the future often helps the prospect buy today.

For Tim, the resulting silence was painful, but he really wanted to know the answer.  If I can get this information, he thought, I can use it.  So I’m just going to outwait the prospect.

Finally, and much to Tim’s relief, the prospect responded.

“Well, since you asked, off the record as you put it, here’s what I’m trying to do,” responded the prospect for the next five minutes.

At the conclusion of the prospect’s response, still convinced that he’d never close this one, Tim answered.

“That’s very interesting.  So I suppose since we’re still off the record, you’ll never see yourself purchasing this . . .”  and as Tim struggled to find the words to continue, the prospect jumped back in.

“Hold on a minute, Tim.  I didn’t say I’d never buy it . . . and now that I talked out what I was looking for, well, you know, what you have might actually do it for me.”

**The RESULT:**

Perhaps Tim will make this sale.  What Tim did do by going off the record was to subtly pressure the prospect into defining just what he needed.  And by adding the assumption that the prospect was never going to buy, Tim was forcing the prospect to see a future where Tim’s product was not part of the solution.  Either the prospect would view this future as good, in which case Tim never had a chance to make the sale, or bad.  If bad, then Tim had an opportunity to make a sale.  Off the record, how do you see it?

**DISCUSSION:**

Tim did not act like most salespeople.  How many salespeople have the guts to state, “Off the record, since you have decided not to buy . . . what are you really looking for?”  What is the salesperson afraid of when he makes this statement? Simple – the prospect is going to walk out the door. Consider this, if the prospect does immediately leave, then he never had any intention of purchasing. You’ve just saved yourself a lot of time.