



Bud Bilanich, *The Common Sense Guy*, is a management consultant, keynote speaker, executive coach, author, and blogger ([www.successcommonsense.com](http://www.successcommonsense.com)). He can be reached at [commonsense@PM360online.com](mailto:commonsense@PM360online.com).

# The Power of Goal Setting

BY BUD BILANICH

IT'S JANUARY. DO YOU HAVE YOUR 2009 GOALS IN ORDER? IF NOT, WHAT are you waiting for? I'm not usually a nudge, but I can't help it when it comes to goal setting at the beginning of every year. So here's my annual take on how to set goals to help you succeed.

Success begins with S.M.A.R.T. goals. These goals are:

**SPECIFIC.** Your goals should be targeted, not broad and general. They should be unambiguous and explicit.

**MEASURABLE.** You should be able to tell quickly and easily if you've met your goal. Develop a set of criteria that will be indicative of success or failure in meeting each of your goals.

**ACHIEVABLE.** Set goals that are challenging but not incredibly difficult to achieve. A challenging goal is motivating, an impossible one is demoralizing.

**RESULTS ORIENTED.** Focus on results and avoid the activity trap. Your goals should focus on the results you want to achieve, not the activities you will undertake to get there. For example, "improved presentation skills" is a result; "participating in a presentation skills training program" is an activity. As this example indicates, it is possible to complete activities and not achieve the desired result.

**TIME SPECIFIED.** Set deadlines for achieving your goals. Well-developed goals come with specific time limits.

Once you have developed a set of S.M.A.R.T. goals, you need to work them. Here are some ideas for accomplishing your 2009 goals.

**Write down your goals.** People who take the time to write their goals accomplish them more frequently than those who don't.

**Keep your goals with you** in your wallet, on a clipboard, or as your screen saver. This way, they'll

be a constant reminder of what you are going to achieve.

**List at least one reason why** you want to achieve each goal. These reasons will help you stay focused when you get tired and frustrated and begin asking yourself questions like, "Why am I working so hard on this?"

**Share your goals** with your friends. These folks can be a big help, as goals become more real when you share them with others; otherwise, they are merely aspirations.

**Talk about your goals** at social and networking functions. Help comes from surprising places, and you never know who might offer the assistance to help you achieve one or more of your goals.

**Focus on your goals** several times a day. Ask yourself, "Is what I'm doing right now helping me achieve one of my goals?" If the answer is no, stop what you're doing and do something that will help you reach your goals.

**Stay balanced** by creating goals in not just one, but all areas of your life: career, business, personal, family, hobbies, and health.

**Have congruent goals.** Make sure your goals don't conflict, as this will create undue stress. If you have a career goal that is going to take up 60 to 80 hours of your time a week, it will be difficult to realize a goal of running a marathon. You simply won't have time to train.

**Consider the sacrifices** you'll make in order to reach one of your goals, such as family or hobby time. Ask yourself questions like, "Is this goal important enough for me to give up time with my kids or my weekly yoga class?"

That's my take on how to use the power of goals and goal setting to make 2009 your best year ever. Good luck. I hope you truly rock in 2009. ○

Ask yourself,  
"Is what I'm  
doing right  
now helping  
me achieve  
one of my  
goals?"

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