

ARE YOU SETTING GOOD GOALS?

Goals are what enable you to be in charge of your own life. They can direct your actions and attention, give you the opportunity to use your existing skills and knowledge, motivate you to keep learning and growing, and put you on the path to achieving what matters most to you.

How do we set goals we're most likely to achieve?

So how can you set more effective goals? Based on an Interview with Edwin Locke by Michelle McQuaid)

- **Make them personal** — it's very important when you set goals for your life that they're your own goals, and not goals for impressing, competing with, or getting the approval from others. Consider what is meaningful to you and your family, what your values are, what kind of legacy you want to leave, and how your specific goals will fit with the rest of your life.
- **Be committed** — understanding why the goal is important to you personally, and believing that you can acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to attain the goal, can increase the chances that you'll put in the effort and hard work required. Publicly stating your intentions, either to work colleagues, or to a coach or mentor can also enhance your commitment, as following through on your actions then becomes a matter of integrity to yourself and others.
- **Track your progress** — tracking how you are going in relation to your goals can help you know when you need to adjust how much energy you are putting in, or if you need to try a different strategy. When you can get feedback on your efforts you are more likely to continue to pursue your goals. Take time to regularly review your progress, and seek out others that you trust who can give you honest and supportive feedback on your progress.
- **Ensure your goals are not in conflict** — everyone has a limited amount of time and therefore a limited number of actions that can be taken in a lifetime, so it's important to develop goal hierarchies that help you decide how to allocate your time to achieve what matters most to you. This takes balancing possibly conflicting demands daily, weekly, monthly and overall across all areas of your life. For example, it may be spending time with your family versus putting the hours in to advance your career.

Sometimes you may need to take a step back and consider on any given day what's important. What really counts in your life right now? Where do you want your life to go? And how do your short and long term goals all fit together to achieve this?