

Outcome Visioning: The Key to Achieving Your Goals

*We should never let reality interfere with our dreams.
Reality can't see what we can see.*

—Simon Sinek

Goals are targets—something to aim for. They give life direction and a sense of purpose. In addition, **setting goals is a proactive way of designing your life**, initiating positive change, and preparing for the future. However, despite these important benefits, you may feel reluctant to establish important goals until you know exactly how you will achieve them.

This desire for clarity is understandable but can stall your progress and undermine your potential. In *Personal Coaching for Results*, Lou Tice wrote:

It's a mistake if you think you have to know exactly how you're going to achieve a goal before you commit to it. When you operate that way, you cripple yourself unnecessarily and limit your scope severely. You are goal setting inside a box that is only as big as your present knowledge.

In contrast, a more successful approach is one that Tice calls “end result thinking.” He explains that when you commit to a goal, you are assigning a higher level of meaning and purpose to the outcome. In a sense, you are declaring to yourself, “This is important to me. This matters.” **The surprising effect is that your awareness will be heightened in amazing ways.** You will begin to identify helpful resources and recognize creative ways to achieve your goals that you previously would not have noticed.

David Allen, leading authority in the fields of organizational and personal productivity, embraces a comparable approach to goal setting that he describes as “outcome visioning.” In his book *Getting Things Done*, he explains:

*To access the conscious and unconscious resources available to you, you must have a clear picture in your mind of what success would look, sound, and feel like. Purpose and principles furnish the impetus and the monitoring, but **vision provides the actual blueprint of the final result.***

Similarly, Jackie Klem wrote in *Appreciative Inquiry*, “Images are a much more powerful method for mobilizing change than concrete steps or programs.”

Therefore, as you set goals for your future, it is important to envision and articulate the various elements you want to include in your life plan. Whatever you identify and claim for yourself will become your internal compass by guiding all the big and little decisions you make.

You will discover that **the clearer your vision of the future becomes, the easier it will be to move toward that image.** In addition, as you intentionally “make room” in your life for

what is most important to you, the sense of satisfaction and fulfillment you experience will grow and multiply.

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