

# The GOAL ACHIEVEMENT *Exclerator*

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**Create Your Life.**

Steven Huskey

*TheExcleratedLife.com*

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## Introduction

*"Success is goals. Everything else is commentary." ~ Brian Tracy*

When a pilot steps into the cockpit of a plane, she has a definite destination in mind. It has been estimated that during a flight the plane is off course up to 90% of the time. This is due to various elements beyond the pilot's control – weather patterns, cross winds, storms, etc. However, the pilot and crew make continuous adjustments during the flight and the plane ends up at the correct destination (barring some unforeseen emergency).

The pilot has a goal – a destination – in mind that guides her during the flight. Without that goal, who knows where a plane might end up?

This is a good metaphor for our lives. We can meander through, going here, looking there, and who knows where we'll end up? But by setting and achieving goals throughout our lives, we end up at a destination pretty much of our own choosing. Naturally, many course corrections will be required throughout the journey, but that's part of the process.

Like a pilot, it helps to begin the trip with a flight plan. The **GOAL ACHIEVEMENT EXCELERATOR** can serve as your flight plan.

The **GOAL ACHIEVEMENT EXCELERATOR** consists of 9 steps with corresponding work sheets. The nine steps lead you from brainstorming possible goals to prioritizing your choices, then stating your selected goal as a SMART+Plus goal. You tap in to your own personal problem solving techniques to develop a general goal strategy. You create specific action steps to implement your strategy. You consider obstacles you may encounter on the path to your goal and develop specific actions to deal with them. Finally, you put it all into a Goals Work Sheet – your individual personalized goal plan ready to help you take off.

You can use the **GOAL ACHIEVEMENT EXCELERATOR** on your own or with your coach.

## What is an *Excels*erator?

***Excels*erator** is a combination of two words:  
*excel* - to shine, to be outstanding, be first rate and exceptional  
and  
*accelerate* - to move forward at an increasing pace.

***Excels*erators** are ideas, concepts, and programs that help you move forward in creating the life you want while increasing your ability to be outstanding, first rate, and exceptional.



## How To Play

### Step 1

Generate a list of desires, intentions and aspirations. Examine any irrational beliefs you may have about these goals. ("My friends won't like me anymore." "I could never afford to \_\_\_\_\_." , "I'm too old, (or too young, or too fat, or too skinny, etc.) to \_\_\_\_\_. , etc.). Suspend these for now – your task is to develop a wish list without editing at this stage. You will deal with these unhelpful beliefs later.

### Step 2

Prioritize your list of potential goals. If you need help, use the [A Prioritizing Technique work sheet](#) included in the Appendix of the **GOAL ACHIEVEMENT EXCELERATOR**.

### Step 3

Select your #1 goal. Use the [SMART+Plus Goals section](#) of the **GOAL ACHIEVEMENT EXCELERATOR** to help you express your goal as a SMART+Plus goal.

### Step 4

Begin to WOOP your goal. WOOP is an acronym for Wish - Outcome - Obstacle - Plan. The concept of WOOP was developed by Gabriele Oettingen with assistance from her husband, Peter Gollwitzer, both psychologists studying in the field of human motivation. The science behind WOOP gives us an interesting insight -- the obstacles that we believe are standing in our way and preventing us from reaching our goals and desires can actually become stepping stones on the road to achieving those goals and realizing those desires.

In this step, we focus on the first 2 parts of the WOOP technique: State your wish, the #1 item you selected in the prior step. Envision the outcome of the wish fulfilled. Use the first 2 sections of the [WOOP work sheet](#) to record your Wish and the best Outcome of having the wish fulfilled.



# THE GOAL ACHIEVEMENT EXCELERATOR

## **Step 5**

Transform your personal problem solving style into a goal-achieving strategy. Use the exercise in [Your Personal Goal Achievement Plan](#) of the [GOAL ACHIEVEMENT EXCELERATOR](#) to develop your personal strategy.

## **Step 6**

Once you have your strategies in place, develop action steps for each one. The [My Goal Strategy work sheet](#) in the [GOAL ACHIEVEMENT EXCELERATOR](#) helps you organize your strategies and actions. Some goals may require only 1 or two steps, but others will require careful planning and multiple steps. Make each action step small enough that you can accomplish it in a minimum of time - ideally, in a day or less. If a step seems too big, you are likely to procrastinate doing it. If this is the case, break that step down into smaller tasks.

## **Step 7**

After you have your goal achievement strategy and action steps in place, go back to the [WOOP work sheet](#). In the Obstacles section, record any and all obstacles that might stand in your way of reaching this goal. Particularly look for any internal obstacles that you may encounter. ("I'm not \_\_\_\_\_ enough." "I'm too old / young / short / tall / fat / thin, etc, etc." "I don't have enough money, education, time, contacts, etc. etc.")

## **Step 8**

Now in the Plan section of the [WOOP work sheet](#), write down how you will address each obstacle IF you encounter it. Use the Implementation Intention format = "WHEN I \_\_\_\_\_ (encounter the obstacle) THEN I will \_\_\_\_\_ (your plan for dealing with the obstacle).

## **Step 9**

Now you are ready to put it all together in the [Goals Work Sheet section](#) of the [GOAL ACHIEVEMENT EXCELERATOR](#). Complete the work sheet for your selected goal, drawing on your work from the other work sheets.

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## How To Play (continued)

Repeat steps 3 – 6 for your other goals. Work on only 1 or at most 2 goals at one time, to avoid diluting your efforts.

**Take some action every day** to move you in the direction of your selected goal. Consistency is more important than the size of the action.



## SMART+Plus Goals

### Choose SMART goals.

- Specific: State in concrete detail what you are going to achieve.
- Measurable: State the parameters of your goal -- how you will know when you've achieved it.
- Attainable: Will you be able to reach your goal in a reasonable time frame, for example, within a year or less?  
("A" can also stand for action-oriented. A goal requires you to do something.)
- Realistic: Is your goal something you are willing and able to do?  
("R" may also stand for results-oriented. Refer to "Performance or Outcome Goals" later in this document.)
- Time-bound: Set a deadline for your goal.

### Goal Orientation

Choose Approach goals -- a goal working toward a positive outcome -- over avoidant goals -- a goal avoiding a negative outcome.

Approach goals promote well-being; avoidant goals can detract from happiness.

Sometimes, simply restating your goal in a positive direction changes the orientation. Consider the avoidant goal: "I will stop smoking" vs. the approach goal: "I am a healthy non-smoker."

### Goal Content

Goals related to intimacy, spirituality, and generativity (a concern for promoting the well-being of future generations) lead to happiness.

Power themed goals - a bigger house, bigger car, promotion at work, more money - do not. (This isn't to say you should not have those types of goals, but be aware that they often detract from happiness, rather than enhance it.)

## **SMART+Plus Goals** (continued)

### **Goal Motivation**

Choose Intrinsic goals -- goals that relate to your true internal needs and desires over Extrinsic goals -- goals we choose because we think society or some other person wants us to.

Intrinsic goals are inherently satisfying and lead to a larger payoff in terms of happiness; extrinsic goals have been shown to be frequently accompanied by anxiety and interpersonal problems.

### **Performance or Outcome Goals**

Performance goals measure the activity you take to reach an end result. Outcome goals measure results only.

You have little or no control over outcomes. But you can break a desired outcome into the steps you must perform that will likely lead to a successful outcome.

Performance goals are measurable, so you know what you must do and you know when you've done it. This leads to a greater sense of internal control and improved self-confidence. Additionally, while you may not achieve the desired outcome, you can feel successful at having met the performance goals. ["Goal Setting"]

### **Goal Anxiety**

Mild anxiety around your most cherished goals is natural, even helpful. [Negative thoughts and events are not "bad", they are here as teachers.]

Advice for healthy goals: strive for enjoyable goals; develop both short- and long-term goals; seek out goals you value; change your goals if they are not working; focus on goals that increase happiness and well-being in terms of orientation, content, and motivation.

[\(Back to Step 3.\)](#)

## Wish – Outcome – Obstacle – Plan

**W**<sub>ISH</sub>

**O**<sub>UTCOME</sub>

**O**<sub>BSTACLE</sub>

**P**<sub>LAN</sub>



[\(Back to Step 4.\)](#)   [\(Back to Step 7.\)](#)   [\(Back to Step 8.\)](#)

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## Your Personal Goal Achievement Plan

Use this technique\* to transform your personal problem solving style into a goal-achieving strategy.

### **Set The Scene**

Imagine that you are blindfolded and led onto a plane. You fly for a time . . . you don't know how long or in what direction. Eventually, you parachute from the plane and land safely on the ground, but you don't know where you are.

### **Solve The Problem**

Now, considering your situation and your desire to return home (your goal), what is the first thing you would do? Write it down.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

What is the second thing you would do? Write that down.

2. \_\_\_\_\_

What is the third step?

3. \_\_\_\_\_

The fourth step?

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Continue listing steps until you have succeeded in reaching home again.  
(Add more steps on the back of the page, if needed.)

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

Suggestion: Make the last step a celebration at reaching home and achieving your goal.

8. Celebrate with family! \_\_\_\_\_



## Your Personal Goal Achievement Plan (continued)

### Move From Specific To General

Look at the steps you have written down. Now, write them again, but in more general, higher level terms. For example, many people have for their first step some version of "Find out where I am." A more generalized wording is "Assess the current situation." Or, you might write "Find out if there are other people near by." A higher level way to put that might be "What resources do I have available?" The idea is to transform the strategies for your specific goal -- "Get back home" -- to a generic strategy for all your goals.

Here is my example. Yours will likely be similar but it doesn't have to be. The idea is to tap into your own intuition and creativity. Have fun with this.

- Strategy 1: Assess the current situation – "Where am I now?"
- Strategy 2: What resources do I have available?
- Strategy 3: What are my options?
- Strategy 4: Select the most promising path and follow it.
- Strategy 5: Take care of myself along the way.
- Strategy 6: Celebrate with family!

List your strategies here.  
(Add more on the back of the page, if needed.)

- Strategy 1: \_\_\_\_\_
- Strategy 2: \_\_\_\_\_
- Strategy 3: \_\_\_\_\_
- Strategy 4: \_\_\_\_\_
- Strategy 5: \_\_\_\_\_
- Strategy 6: \_\_\_\_\_
- Strategy 7: \_\_\_\_\_
- Strategy 8: Celebrate with family!

*(\*This goal strategy technique was originally taught by Dr. Dianne Greyerbiehl at the Life Coaching Institute in Greenville, SC.)*

[\(Back to Step 5.\)](#)



## Goals Work Sheet

Your goal should be specific, measurable, time-specific, and stated in a positive way. Complete this sentence:

On \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_.  
[Date]

Write this in the present tense. *Do not* use "I will" or "I hope to" or "I plan". Write it as if it were already done. "I am 10 pounds lighter." "I have completed my book." "I am a good public speaker."

Read the sentence aloud. (You can whisper it if you're in a crowded room.) How does that sound? It should make you excited and a little scared. Reword it if it doesn't sound just right and read it out loud again.

How will your life be different when you have accomplished this goal? Write down at least 5 specific benefits:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you believe about this goal and your ability to achieve it? Write down everything you can think of.

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## Goals Work Sheet (continued)

Read over your beliefs about your ability to achieve the goal. Reframe any negative beliefs by restating them in a positive manner. For example, suppose one of your beliefs is "I'm not smart enough to write a book." Mark through that statement and re-write it as "I can research and learn about my subject and I can get help with the editing." Go over each of your beliefs and reframe all the negative ones. Your finished list should be all positive statements.

Read over this list of positive beliefs at least once each day until you reach your goal.

Write down 10 discrete actions you can take toward achieving your goal. If you can accomplish your goal in fewer steps, then write down as many as you need to complete your goal. Make these *actions*, something you *do*. Action steps begin with words like *go, call, write, send, research, make, read, lift, walk, run, etc., etc.* If one step is too big to do in a day, break it down into smaller steps. Once you've completed the 10 actions, if you haven't met your goal, write down the next 10 things you can do. Continue this sequence until you complete your goal.



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

Finally, and most important . . . do step 1 TODAY.

[\(Back to Step 9.\)](#)

## Appendix

### A Prioritizing Technique

Are you having trouble deciding what's most important in a list of choices? Or do you have a list of items that you need to prioritize? Here is a foolproof method for prioritizing.

Begin by listing all the things that you want to prioritize. Next, compare the first item on your list with the second item. Which is the more important of the two? Put a check mark next to that choice. Now, look at item number one and number three. Which is more important? Put a check mark next to your choice. Compare number one and number four. Which is more important? Put a check mark next to it. Continue in this manner until you have compared item #1 to every other item on your list.

Now, compare item two and item three. Which is the more important of the two choices? Put a check mark next to it. Compare item two and item four, item two and item five, and so forth until you have gone through the list again. Then do the same with item three, item four, etc. until you have compared every item with every other item.

Finally, count your check marks. The item with the most checks is your #1 priority. The item with the next most checks is #2, and so forth. This is your prioritized list.

For example, suppose I have 5 things on my To Do list:

1. Order tickets for play.
2. Shop for wife's birthday.
3. Research web site hosting options.
4. Clean garage.
5. Complete monthly report.

I compare (1) Order tickets for play and (2) Shop for wife's birthday. Of these two choices, number (2) is more important, so I put a check next to it.

1. Order tickets for play.
2. Shop for wife's birthday. ✓

## A Prioritizing Technique (continued)

Next, I compare (1) Order tickets for play and (3) Research web site hosting options. Of these two choices, number (1) is more important so I put a check next to it.

1. Order tickets for play. ✓
2. Shop for wife's birthday. ✓
3. Research web site hosting options.

I compare (1) and (4). Of these two, number (1) is more important, so I put a check next to it.

1. Order tickets for play. ✓✓
2. Shop for wife's birthday. ✓
3. Research web site hosting options.
4. Clean garage.

Finally, I compare (1) and (5). Of these two, (5) is more important so I put a check next to it.

1. Order tickets for play. ✓✓
2. Shop for wife's birthday. ✓
3. Research web site hosting options.
4. Clean garage.
5. Complete monthly report. ✓

Next, I compare (2) and (3). Of these two choices, (2) is more important, so it gets another check.

1. Order tickets for play. ✓✓
2. Shop for wife's birthday. ✓✓
3. Research web site hosting options.

I compare (2) and (4). Again, (2) is more important and gets a check.

1. Order tickets for play. ✓✓
2. Shop for wife's birthday. ✓✓✓
3. Research web site hosting options.
4. Clean garage.

## A Prioritizing Technique (continued)

Finally, I compare (2) and (5). Of these two choices, (2) is more important and gets another check.

1. Order tickets for play. √√
2. Shop for wife's birthday. √√√√
3. Research web site hosting options.
4. Clean garage.
5. Complete monthly report. √

Then, I compare (3) to (4). I decide (4) is more important than (3) and (4) gets the check.

1. Order tickets for play. √√
2. Shop for wife's birthday. √√√√
3. Research web site hosting options.
4. Clean garage. √

I compare (3) and (5). Of these two, (5) is the more important and gets another check.

1. Order tickets for play. √√
2. Shop for wife's birthday. √√√√
3. Research web site hosting options.
4. Clean garage. √
5. Complete monthly report. √√

Finally, I compare (4) and (5). (5) is the more important of these two tasks and gets another check.

1. Order tickets for play. √√
2. Shop for wife's birthday. √√√√
3. Research web site hosting options.
4. Clean garage. √
5. Complete monthly report. √√√

I now have my prioritized list.

My most important task is (2) Shop for wife's birthday, with 4 checks. Next, (5) Complete monthly report, with 3 checks. Then, (1) Order tickets for play, with 2 checks. (4) Clean garage, with 1 check. And, the least important, (3) Research web site hosting options.

[\(Back to Step 2.\)](#)

## Resources

"Goal Setting," 9 Jan. 2016

<<http://smcsqjx.sasktelwebhosting.com/services/mental/goalsetting.pdf>>

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American Psychologist July 1999: Vol. 54 No. 7 493 - 503.

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Requests to the author for permission should be addressed to the following email: [Steven@my-excelerator.com](mailto:Steven@my-excelerator.com)

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