

# The Simplest Keys to Success: *2 Tricks for Goal-Setting and Personal Change*

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# **The Simplest Keys to Success:**

## **2 Tricks for Goal-Setting and Personal Change**

*Written by Dana Theus – 5/22/18*

Leadership, career and success gurus place a huge focus on goals. There are tons of articles, books, videos, classes and “systems” on how to set goals, how to organize them and how to “keep” them. Entire franchises have been built on this one productivity skill.

And with good reason; goal-setting and goal-keeping truly *are* the simplest keys to success in any form.

Want to get a job? Set an appropriate job-seeking goal and stay focused on it through your job search. Want to deliver a big project successfully? Set empowering goals for your team, manage them relentlessly, and success will be yours.

A lot of us figure this out over the course of our career to come up with personal goals systems, and yet overwhelm and stress still come along for the ride. What good are goals that stress you out and drain all the fun along the way?

*“To change the world around you, and how it interacts with you, you must change too.” <=[Click to Tweet](#)*

I believe the fun-draining part of goal systems is the key to why goals are hard, but perhaps not for the reasons you think. There are many kinds of fun, but when you set a goal, you’re tapping a very specific kind of fun,

which is the fun of CHANGE. And too many of us don't react to the idea of change with a "yay" emotion.

*"Turn your change instincts around and you can turn your goal-keeping systems around to achieve anything you want, easily and with less stress."* <=[Click to Tweet](#)

## **Goal-Keeping Requires Change**

Why is it exciting to set a goal about earning more money? Because you imagine your life changed by the freedom to do more, have more and give more.

Why is it fun to set a goal about getting a new job where you are valued for what you like best about yourself? Because you imagine going to work excited to come out of hiding, be authentic and achieve things that matter to you.

Why is it fun to set a goal about working in a place that has a more respectful work-life business culture? Because you imagine being able to turn off work once you leave for the day and truly enjoy your time off without guilt, shame or stress.

Why is it fun to set a goal to live a healthier lifestyle and have more supportive friends? Because you imagine feeling better every day while laughing and loving more.

I could go on, but you get the point. When goals work, they change our lives and they change our world. And when we imagine these wonderful changes, we get excited and feel motivated.

But here's the hidden little truth, a wisdom that will help you activate your goal-keeping potential: *to change the world around you, and how it*

*interacts with you, you must change too.* You can't control the world, but you can control yourself. So what are you waiting for? Start changing now and your world will change along with you!

I know "change yourself" is easier said than done. Believe me, this is my life's work, learning how to change myself and help others activate their higher potential to get jobs they love and become leaders who change the world. I know first hand how hard changing yourself can be. And yet, now that I'm succeeding, and helping so many others succeed, I've learned that the simplest key to success really does come back down to goals, setting them and keeping them. But I've also learned two other lessons along the way that exponentially increase our chances of success:

1. Goals don't work if you don't focus on them frequently enough
2. Goals don't work if you don't evolve them, as *you* evolve, along the journey

### **Goal Trick #1: The Productivity Rule of Three**

This little productivity rule has saved my bacon when I'm under pressure to deliver, and it can save yours too. It's pretty straight forward. When you set a goal, also set a deadline. When you set your deadline, also set three interim "Goal Check-in" deadlines along the way.

*"Life is an exercise in distraction. Want to stay focused on your goals? Focus on them!" <=[Click to Tweet](#)*

The Rule of Three is easy. If you have a goal to deliver something by the end of the day, check in on your goal at 9am, 12pm and 3pm. You may end up reorganizing your To-Do list constantly through the day, but I guarantee you'll improve your chances of achieving your goal by at least 50%, if not 80%.



Have a goal to deliver a project by Friday? Check-in on it Monday, Tuesday afternoon and Thursday morning. By the end of the month? Week 1, 3 and 4. Etc. You get it. Life is an exercise in distraction. Want to stay focused on your goals? Focus on them!

## **Goal Trick #2: Let Your Goals Evolve You**

Goal focus is great for the reasons mentioned above, but to avoid the challenges related to change we talked about even before that, you have to do something very instrumental during each of these “check-in” focus sessions. *You must willingly open yourself and your goals to change.* You must reconnect with your original enthusiasm for that imagined life, the one where you and your world are changed, that results when your goal is accomplished.

There’s only one problem, your original enthusiasm will be changed, too, and require an update to reactivate your motivation to achieve it.

*“Your path towards your goals is a fluid journey of change, because life is a fluid state. You are not the same person you were when you set your goals.”* <=[Click to Tweet](#)

How often do you look at your To-Do list and some of the things that you were excited about when you wrote them down have now lost their lustre? Or maybe as you’re working towards a goal, you find yourself bored by it? If you’re like me, your answer is “all the time.”

Your path towards your goals is a fluid journey of change, because life is a fluid state. Since you set your last goal, even a few hours or days ago, you have changed! You have learned things, made decisions, gotten hungry, worked out, fought with a family member, been consoled by a colleague, toyed with (or committed to) other goals... You are not the

same person you were when you set the goal. So this new and different you must align yourself to your goal from where you are now, not where you were when you set the goal in the first place.

*"Evolving your goals is the best way to see and take advantage of opportunity when it knocks."* <=[Click to Tweet](#)

And the world has changed, too. Other people have made progress towards the goal (or not), Acts of God (e.g., weather) happened that may be affecting your goal. Other people's lives and goals have changed too. You, others and the world are in a constant state of flux and when you learn to use your goal check-ins to recalibrate, refocus and realign your "new" self and world to the goal, you'll find yourself activating your potential to evolve, change and grow more quickly and less stressfully. You'll even find yourself meeting some goals earlier, jettisoning others that have lost their relevance and postponing and/or changing the goals themselves.

In addition to helping you stay motivated and goals-focused, there's one other, critically important reason you want to update and evolve your goals very regularly: to take advantage of opportunity. Since you set your goals way back when, some of the changes that have come your way are good! Some of them offer you shortcuts to your goals, or ways to avoid having to pursue them entirely. Opportunity is always knocking. But if you don't take the time to examine and align these new opportunities and your original goals, too often you ignore the opportunity completely, or you get distracted by it and forget to focus on your goal, which might still be important. Evolving your goals is the best way to see and take advantage of opportunity when it knocks.

## **Why Personal Change and Goal-Setting is Hard – and What to Do About It**

Nice philosophy, right? Sounds so fun and easy. But then there's real life where stuff happens that makes trying to evolve and change with your goals feel exhausting. I get that because I experience it, too. So here's what I've learned about why that is, and what to do about it to make that easy, fluid journey a reality.

1. **Most of us don't know how to set the right kind of goals.** We set goals that are too limiting to allow us to evolve, or we set goals in ways that don't motivate us to focus on them
2. **Even if our goals motivate us to begin with, we don't learn how to stay motivated by our goals over time.** Self-motivation is a skill to be learned. The good news is that we have amazing inner powers to help us motivate ourselves (and others), but we very rarely use them.
3. **We don't take the time to check-in and evolve.** Life is an exercise in distraction, remember? If we don't learn how to give ourselves the right kind of support to stay focused and manage distraction, we lose the game and distraction wins.

I actually have an entire coaching practice built around teaching people these lessons and giving them tools and support to truly activate their personal potential to achieve their goals on a regular basis. This is actually what our InPower GROW community is all about. If you're looking for tools and support to help you learn how to become a master of personal change and goal-keeping, then a GROW membership might be just what you need.



Not sure what kind of help you need to master the skills of personal change to meet your highest goals? For a limited time, I'm opening my calendar to readers for the next few weeks to give you a free 30 Minute Goals Coaching session where I'll help you zero in on a powerfully motivating goal you should focus on right now and get you started on a goals-focus plan to achieve it. [Book your complimentary session soon.](#)

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