

BY MONIQUE WATERS

STICK TO THE PLAN



**5 EASY STEPS
TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS!**

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5 Easy Steps to Achieve Your Goals!

By

Monique Waters

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H2ostrategiesllc.com

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO:

Ofield Dukes, who mentored me during the critical early stages of my plan.
His legacy lives on through his countless mentees and his inspiring principles.

Thank you for teaching me that "*The First Law of Life Is Knowing Thyself*".

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PROLOGUE

Three sobering new years ago, I sat in my living room doing what most Type A professionals in Washington, DC do - reflecting on my next steps and asking myself, "What the heck have I been doing all this time?"

To my surprise, I found myself curiously googling Legal Zoom and cautiously walking through the process of establishing my own business, H2O Strategies. For many, this is seen as a placeholder until the next "big opportunity" comes their way, but I quickly felt my confidence in this small step growing in permanence.

Now that the idea was officially added to my plan and on paper - quite literally - I had to do the leg work of reflecting over the nearly 20 years of work experience I had amassed and objectively consider what I could offer as an entrepreneur.

I began to quickly rundown my resume:

I had worked with the Office of the Chief Technology Officer on constituent engagement activities around open data policies with former D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty; excelled at a crisis communications firm devising a strategy that led to passage and enactment of a historic claims bill; served as one of only two African-American press secretaries in the U.S. Senate at the time working for the U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) advocating for criminal justice reform; and I had secured my dream job as head of corporate communications at EVERFI, an education technology company spearheading the strategy for corporate social responsibility initiatives.

While ruminating on my past achievements, I thought, "Congrats girl! After all of that, what have you learned? What have you gained from these experiences and what are you going to do with that knowledge?"

Writing this eBook has allowed me to reflect on the building blocks of my success.

In doing so, I came to realize that it all started with a plan! THAT WAS THE KEY.

This eBook will help you define your plan, develop a strategy, and provide you with building blocks that will lead you to success.

Whether you are an executive looking to translate your vision, a manager looking for ways to make your team more effective, or, perhaps, you are just starting a new journey, the tools we discuss here will help you appreciate the value of developing and sticking to your plan.

Achieving your goals is a simple task when you follow my 5 easy steps:

1. Seek Allies to Validate Your Goals (Find A Trusted Mentor Who Will Give You Feedback)

2. Put Pen to Paper (Start Drafting Your Plan)
3. Tap into the Value of Allies in the Workplace (Understand Various Communication Styles)
4. Turn Your Obstacles into Lessons (Overcoming Roadblocks)
5. Stick to Your Goals & Change the World (Use Your Plan to Make A Difference)

The most valuable and important thing that you must have to start this process is a PURPOSE. Goals are not meaningless day-to-day tasks. They should empower everything that you do. A plan can guide your course of actions to accomplish your goals, but you must have a reason to begin the journey.

The earlier you start using the tools provided in this book, the earlier you can achieve your goals! Your dreams are just 5 steps away.

If you are ready to change the world by building your approach and embracing your vision...turn the page.

“The First Law of Life is Knowing Thyself”

AS SHARED BY MENTOR OFIELD DUKES

ORIGIN:
ONE OF THE GREEK DELPHIC MAXIMS AND THE
FIRST OF THREE MAXIMS INSCRIBED IN THE
PRONAOS OF THE TEMPLE OF APOLLO AT DELPHI

INTRODUCTION

Imagine you have lived on an island all your life. You have never had to leave this place because everyone and everything you have needed was right there at your fingertips. Now, you feel like you have outgrown your home and you are ready to explore! So, you pack all your belongings, and your family agrees to let you use a small canoe. At first, you cannot wait to leave. You say your goodbyes and set off! A few hours later, you ask yourself a delayed, but important question.

“Where am I going?”

I have asked myself this same question for years. Whether you are starting a new job, a new career or a new business, this eBook will guide you through the nuances of answering this question.

Before you can begin focusing on your direction you must first know who you are.

“Know thyself”.

This quote was etched into my brain by my mentor, Ofield Dukes, at a young age and it has guided me throughout the many chapters of my journey. It is the first of three maxims inscribed in the forecourt of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi according to the Greek writer Pausanias. I believe these words represent the notion that one must acquire self-knowledge and awareness of their purpose to truly achieve success.

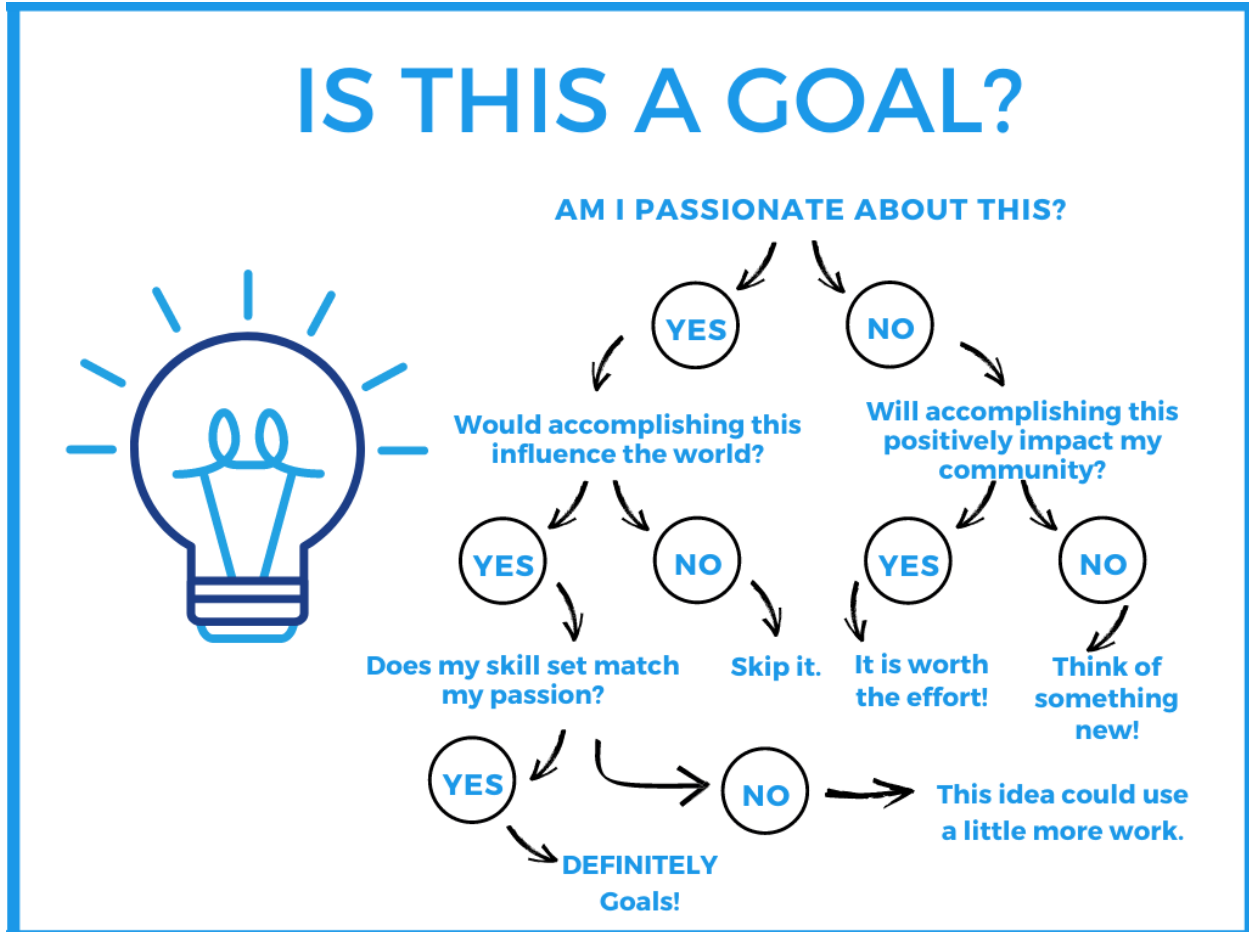
Self-reflection is a critical first step before expressing your goals. Do you see challenges in the real-world and often think, “I have an idea to solve that” but have yet to turn those ideas into formal goals? If you are having trouble deciphering between whether something is a casual idea or something that can develop into a tangible goal, then ask yourself the following questions:

1. Would you focus solely on this idea if you had unlimited time and resources?
2. Is this something that you are passionate about?
3. Can this influence the world?
4. Is this an impactful idea that can positively affect your community?
5. Does your skill set match your passion?

You should be able to answer YES to all the above.

Whenever I meet with prospective clients or have coffee with a young professional, the first thing that I ask is for them to define their goals. Goals are not to be confused with your day-to-day tasks. They are also not based on random ideas that pop into your head.

Starting to develop a plan can be challenging because you must envision your idea as a mature goal. You must define your goals, prioritize them, and solidify your primary



message or mission. Goals should drive everything that you do and say. It is important to be crystal clear about your goals as they are the foundation and motivation behind an effective plan.

In 1979, researchers conducted a goal-setting study on the Harvard Business School graduating class. They were asked if they had written goals and created a plan for achieving those goals. Only 3% of the class confirmed they had written both goals and a plan. A decade later, the study found that the same 3% were making more than ten times as much as the rest of their classmates. While you may be thinking, Monique, money is not everything, it is an astonishing metric that confirms the drastic difference in their market value.

Identifying Your Goals

I read a dating book by a famous comedian that advised women to ask men critical questions on their first date. These questions, he said, were meant to reveal whether this person could be an asset or liability. One question was “What are your long-term and short-term goals?”

There is a clear and valuable lesson we can take away from that. I may not be able to count on definitive answers from a date, but I had better take a hard look and answer those questions for myself!

When we refer to short-term and long-term goals, we are referencing the prioritization of your goals. Once you have identified what your goals are, you must assess the importance and urgency of their completion. Identify just a few that will benefit from your full focus.

What is Your Primary Mission?

Your primary mission is a broad view of how you will leave an impact on the greater community. It is a representation of the aims and values of you or your organization that will help you to attain your goals. It describes the desired long-term effects of your efforts.

It is important to understand your goal, identify your target audience, and what distinctly makes you or your organization equipped to commit to this goal. If you are having trouble determining your primary mission, then ask yourself the following questions:

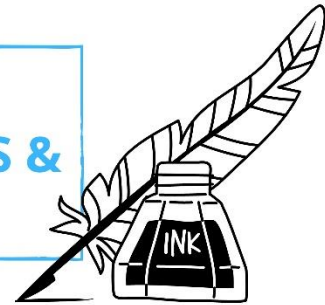
1. What impact do I want to have on my industry, community, and the world?
2. How will I need to interact with others? (i.e., customers or clients?)
3. Why is it necessary for me to accomplish this?
4. What do I bring to the table that will uniquely benefit others?
5. How do I want to be remembered?

This knowledge will ensure that you stay focused on what is necessary and beneficial to helping you achieve your goals. It provides you with a purposeful framework for developing your plan.

Follow the key takeaways, interactive worksheets, and case study examples that are covered throughout this eBook. They are meant to provide clarity and instructional guidance to help you develop and stick to your plan.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

INTRODUCTION: IDENTIFYING YOUR GOALS & PRIMARY MISSION



- 1. Self-reflection is a critical first step before expressing your goals.**
- 2. Goals should drive everything that you do and say.**
- 3. Goals are the foundation and motivation behind an effective plan.**
- 4. It is important to understand why you are committing to this goal.**

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences:

What is your goal?

Why is this goal important to you?

How will this goal positively influence the world?

What skills do you have that will support this goal?

What makes you or your organization unique?

NOTES

(For any additional notes.)

Lined writing area with multiple horizontal blue lines for taking notes.