

Goal Setting

Would you drive on the highway with your eyes closed? Chances are that anyone with even a little bit of common sense would not consider something so foolish. Driving blindly on the highway, or anywhere for that matter is asking for a disaster. As far-fetched as this seems, there are great numbers of people who do the same equivalence with their fitness program. Starting an exercise program with no goal, or no sight on where you would like it to go is setting yourself up for a failure. Setting goals is easy to do, however in order for them to work for you rather than against you need to know how to set your goals realistically.

There are both long term and short-term goals that should be set. It is so easy to get fired up over something you saw, or a remark someone made to get a fitness programs started, or to lose a good 50 lbs. However, it sure can be discouraging to bust your butt for a week and not be anywhere near your 50 lbs that you wanted to lose. In some cases people have been known to gain a bit of weight when they begin to exercise rather than lose in the first couple of weeks.

If you are going to be working at something it is a good idea to have some kind of idea of the direction that you would like to see the project go. If you have no idea of a direction that you expect to see something like an exercise program going, chances are there will end up no direction at all. To start with figuring out your direction is going to be the most important step that you could take. If you want to burn fat it makes no sense to train in a manner that would only bulk you up. If you did train to bulk up while wanting to lose fat there is a fairly good chance that you would end up not training at all after a little while. Knowing what direction you want your program to go helps you focus your mental energies into finding a path towards your goal.




Once you have established a direction it is a wise decision to make two sets of goals, both long term and short term. Just like I mentioned earlier, if you want to lose 50 lbs and work your butt off for a good week and see no changes it can be discouraging. It can be discouraging enough to make people quit their program all together. Let's say that instead of setting a goal of 50 lbs, you had a goal to get to the gym and do your cardio 5 times per week for 30 minutes per session. That is more of a short-term goal that is going to be a nice step towards a long-term goal, which may be the 50 lbs.

A long-term goal should be what you currently perceive the end product to be. If the end vision is losing 50 lbs of fat then you should make that your long-term goal. Now that you have set some goals it is important to give them a *realistic* time limit. Losing 50 lbs safely can take up to 20 weeks, and for some that is pushing it. If you do not know what a realistic time is for a long-term goal talking to a professional is a great idea. Find someone who has a lot of experience in the area that you have your goals set and seek their advice. Tell them your plans and ask their opinion of what they perceive to be realistic. Once you have found out what is realistic it is time to do some good old fashioned writing.

Write a detailed description of the direction you have decided to go, and also tell why you have selected it. This way if there is any question it will be clarified immediately. After you have your direction down select what your long-term goals are going to be. Again explain why you have selected these goals. Once this is completed decide what your short-term goals are. It is important to keep in mind that your short-term goals are

stepping stones to get to your long-term goals. Jumping across a vast lake is only possible with stepping-stones, otherwise you are sure to sink.

The real test is going to be whether or not you have the willingness to do what it takes to accomplish your goals, but without goals there is nothing to accomplish. What it all boils down to is you. Goals are a great way to set a map to where you want to go. Once they are set it is up to you!

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