

# views you can use

Leadership, Motivation & Productivity – By Linda Tennant

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## Simplify Your Life with Prioritized Goals

**T**oward the beginning of the year, many of us are thinking about our goals, but also how to simplify our over-committed lives. The good news is, effective goal setting and simplifying are closely aligned!

Usually, we have numerous goals we are trying to achieve at the same time. Often these can conflict with one another and become burdensome or confusing. When this happens, the goal activity or even the goal itself may be dropped.

When planning for the future first ask, what is the overall vision or desired end result? Take time to really consider where you desire to go and what impact you want to make. Visioning normally requires that we disengage from our daily activities. Go where your thinking will not be interrupted, and you can even do a little dreaming. Before getting caught up in specific goals, allow yourself to become clear on the direction you want to head.

Once you have a clear idea of where you want to go, list all of your goals. Don't worry about putting them in a particular order; the important thing is to just get them on paper. Then go back and see which ones are the biggest priorities

and number them accordingly.

Next, take your number one goal and turn it into a SMART goal - specific, measurable, attainable, relevant (aligns with the larger purpose) and timed. Think of all the benefits of achieving your goals. This will help with motivation down the stretch. Then think of all the possible obstacles, and several solutions to each obstacle. Select the best solutions and turn these into action steps with target dates. Determine the best way to remember the action steps such as a planner, calendar, or Outlook. Ask yourself if the goal is worth your time and resources. If not, it may be something that should be done at a later time. If it is worthy, then schedule it in; what gets scheduled gets done. Determine in advance how you will celebrate your accomplishments and milestones along the way. This keeps it all fun and will motivate you even more!

Go through this process for each of your goals in priority order. Scheduling them in order of priority insures you are handling those things that are truly the most important in the larger scheme of things. At some point, you may see that your calendar is filling. Be honest with yourself and ask if this timing is realistic.

If not, make adjustments accordingly. Some actions may need to be moved or delayed. While it's good to challenge and stretch yourself, remember that you also have finite time. Consider if there is a more effective way to handle something, such as delegation.

While this may seem to be a time-consuming process, it will actually save time and frustration in the long run. You will feel less conflict, as you have already determined what the most important things to get done are. Of course, things will come up to get you off track, but it is easier to rearrange activities and get back on track if you have a good, written plan in place.

Simplification starts in the mind. Develop a singleness of purpose. Get clear where you want to go. Effectively executing a prioritized plan in accordance with your vision is a good way to simplify life. ■

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Linda Tennant is President of Attainment Inc., a franchise of 40-year-old Leadership Management Inc. (LMI). Using a proven Behavior Change Process, Attainment helps leaders improve in the areas of leadership, productivity, communication, teambuilding, coaching and sales. Listen weekly to "Attainment with Attitude" on the John Adam Show, KXAM1310, Tuesday at 7:40 p.m.