

Goals and Adversity Training

By Pat Cavanaugh

"Setting goals is the hardest work there is, which is the probable reason why so few engage in it." -Henry Ford

A Harvard study was done a number of years ago that showed that only 3% of Americans actively set goals in their lives and those people tended to be the richest, most successful people in the country. When the other 97% were asked why they didn't actively set goals, the most common answer was that they didn't know how.

"If you aim at nothing, you'll hit it every time." - Author Unknown

People who want to achieve success both professionally and personally...people who want to reach their full potential...people who are interested in always improving themselves...people who want to always do their best, make it a habit to aggressively set, track and ultimately achieve their goals.

Crons is an acronym for Come Ready Or Never Start. It describes a mentality exhibited by people determined to achieve their goals in both their professional and personal lives. It's a mentality consisting of several tenants.

I. Focus on Practice & Preparation

"Today's preparation determines tomorrow's achievement." -Author Unknown

When all else is equal, preparation often makes the difference. How have you prepared yourself to achieve your goals? NBA superstar Kobe Bryant prepares himself every summer by not quitting his workout until he has made 1,000 shots - not taken, made. How does your preparation compare with his - and he's already at the top of his profession.

II. Outwork the Competition

Often your professional goals are tied to the success of your organization. Always remember this. There's somebody at your competition doing your job. Outworking your competitor can make up for having lessor resources or talent. How often have you heard superior sports team blame their lost to an inferior team on being 'outworked.'

III. Ignore the Noise

Noise is anything that interferes with the pursuit of your goals. It could be people who question your ability, your goals, your commitment or your effort. They could be your co-workers, boss, friends or family. Noise could be the many temptations you face that don't align with your goals. You ignore that noise by focusing even more on your goals; realizing that noise is inevitable; being willing to make sacrifices to ignore the noise; and even using that noise to motivate you.

IV. Overcome Adversity

"Smooth sailing does not a skillful sailor make." -Old English Proverb

"Attitude is a little thing that makes a big adversity - guaranteed. - Winston Churchill

Expect adversity, it is an inevitable part of being successful and achieving your goals. You'll face adversity - guaranteed. But also expect to overcome it. That's where attitude comes in - there are right attitudes and wrong attitudes in overcoming adversity. First the wrong attitudes:

- Making excuses to quit - that should never be an option
- Blaming your adversity on others - be accountable, don't pass the buck
- Feeling sorry for yourself - how does that help you achieve your goals?
- Not willing to do the extra work to overcome the adversity
- Accepting the adversity as permanent roadblock to your goals

Now the right attitudes for overcoming adversity:

- Have a positive "can do" attitude - whether you think you can or you can't - you will
- Never forget your goals - they should be too important to you
- Realize that life is not fair and have that "bring it on..." attitude
- Believe most adversity is only temporary
- Believe you can work through almost any situation knowing there are multiple paths in overcoming a particular adversity
- Have confidence in yourself - confidence you build up through your preparation
- Remind yourself that you've overcome adversity before...and you can do it again

"What doesn't kill you, makes you stronger." - famous German philosopher (Nietzsche)

There are definite advantages to overcoming adversity. The more times you face and overcome adversity, the better chance you have of achieving future goals and being successful. Henry Ford and R.H. Macy failed in business numerous times before becoming successful. Colonel Sanders had his chicken recipe rejected over 500 times. Bill Gates first company went bankrupt. But all overcame their adversities to achieve their goals. Other advantages of overcoming adversity include:

- You become a mentally stronger person
- You gain confidence in yourself and your abilities
- You're better prepared to meet the next challenge or adversity
- You gain the respect and admiration of others

Goal Setting

The Crons mentality is the perfect mental approach in achieving your goals but there are many practical strategies that will help you better set, track and achieve your goals. Most importantly, set goals that are motivational to you. The number one reasons goals are not met: lack of motivation.

Many people fail to achieve their goals because they don't break them down into smaller goals that need to be accomplished, providing steps to achieving the larger goal. These mini-goals can be daily, weekly or monthly goals. They let you track your progress. They are not so overwhelming. They are easier to achieve. Ask yourself, "what steps do I need to take to achieve my goal?" These steps are your mini-goals. And these mini-goals can be broken down into even smaller goals which I call stepping stone goals. They are usually your daily goals that support your weekly goals, that support your monthly goals and so on. Tracking and achieving these smaller goals will give you confidence and a sense of progress.

Always have a timeline for your goals. Putting a deadline on your goals gives you a clear target. If there is no time limit, you lose that sense of urgency and are more easily sidetracked.

Write your goals down. Writing your goals down and putting them somewhere where you can see them EVERY DAY is very, very important. They could be daily goals, weekly goals or beyond. When you put your goals to paper you turn those goals into something tangible that serve as a daily reminder and reinforcement of what you need to accomplish. Writing goals down and sharing them with others makes you more accountable. And as you achieve your goals make sure you check them off - one by one.

Your goals should be specific as possible. General goals are OK if you can break them down into more specific goals. Your brain needs to know exactly what you want to accomplish. A monthly goal could be "save money for a new car." What does that mean? How much? A better goal for your brain is, "save \$250 a month for a new car." You know exactly what you have to achieve - is no grey area.

"What gets measured...gets done." -Unknown

Your goals should be measurable. If you cannot measure it, how do you know if you've achieved it? You need to set some criteria that can measure whether you've achieved your goal. You can have a goal of wanting to be a healthier eater. But how do you measure that? Losing five pounds over three months? Maybe. But a better, related goal would be to eat four servings of vegetables and three servings of protein a day. You have established criteria that are measurable - number of servings.

"The greatest danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and we reach it." - Michelangelo

Set goals that are attainable but require a real commitment from you. Sometimes if goals are too difficult - and you know it - you may not give your best effort to achieve them. But attainable goals don't mean easy goals. You need to set the bar high enough then that you feel a sense of accomplishment and success. The best goals are the ones that are just out of reach...but not out of sight. These goals will require a concerted effort and stretch you as a person, forcing you to do your best - then making that best, better. These goals will allow you to test yourself and strive to reach your fullest potential - either professionally or personally.

It is not easy to embrace a goal mentality each and every day. It takes planning. It takes effort. It takes a special mindset. But if you can get to the point of making a habit out of it, you'll soon see yourself experiencing success in your professional and personal life that you didn't think was possible. Because you'll be one of the 3%--not languishing as one of the 97%.

"If you want to live a happy life, tie it to a goal." -Albert Einstein

We all know. That Einstein - he was one smart guy.

For more information on the Crons corporate Goals & Adversity Training Program for employees, contact Ms. Connie Kovolenko at ckovolenko@gmail.com.

About the Author

Pat Cavanaugh is one of Pittsburgh's most successful entrepreneurs, founding a company, The Cavanaugh Marketing Network, that became an Inc. 500 firm in five years and earning Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year honors while being inducted into their National Entrepreneur Hall of Fame. He has been profiled in national business publications like Inc. Magazine and Sales & Marketing Management Magazine which named him the Best Salesperson in the country. He has also appeared on FoxBusiness News and on Forbes.com. Mr. Cavanaugh obtained his BS and MBA degrees from the University of Pittsburgh where he was a two-time captain of Pitt's Top-10 ranked basketball teams.

The Crons Brand is a mentality and motivational brand dedicated to helping people achieve their goals. The brand focuses on promoting a short-term and long-term goal mentality to drive behavior and guide lifestyle choices using apparel, nutritional products and goal education programming to spread its message and inspire individuals.