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Setting Goals for 2019, *NOT* Resolutions

A simple 5-step process can help enable talent to drive their career and be open to unexpected opportunities.

by [Rita Balian Allen](#) January 14, 2019



The start of each year brings with it the ritual of creating resolutions for how we will improve upon something in the year ahead. Many reflect on the previous year and come up with ways to start fresh and consider new approaches with great intention. Those who are

quite serious will write down these thoughts while others may develop a mental checklist, and of course there are many who do neither and forget all about them within a few weeks.

As learning professionals, we can embrace this concept in a way that can motivate and inspire talent to not only keep them but to impact their dreams and aspirations. We can do this by replacing resolutions with goals. Most often, employees are accustomed to having deliverables they are expected to achieve within a 12-month period. Extending that practice to establish personal and professional goals at the start of each year is an effective way to clarify our vision and set the stage for success. It takes resilience, motivation and commitment to stay true to ourselves.

Organizations continue to strive to attract the right mix of talent, develop them and keep them engaged to fulfill their business goals and objectives. Similarly, each individual can have a plan that empowers themselves to take charge of their careers while ensuring alignment within their organizational and functional goals. We want every individual to be the leader of their own career and be able to advocate for themselves — to know what they have to offer, what they want and how to ask for it. Managers want to be the resource that supports them in their endeavors and be comfortable having these career conversations. Goals can empower everyone to drive this process and learning organizations can help provide tools and strategies to equip them as such.

This can start by helping managers work with employees to set aside time at the end of each year to review and determine their goals for the coming year. This allows employees to start the new year with focus and determination. We all need to have a mission for our career and specific goals we want to accomplish on a personal and professional level.

Without a plan, we do not have direction or criteria for accountability; we simply exist. Our success lies in our ability to create this vision putting ourselves in the driver's seat rather than sitting in the back going along for the ride. Managers should ask their team members often, "What does success look like for you?" and challenge them to give specific examples of when and how they have achieved that success along with determining road blocks or missed opportunities as a result of not setting goals for themselves.

The following process offers a way to stay on target and achieve this kind of success. It can help enable talent to drive their career in the direction aspired as well as to be open to unexpected opportunities exploring new paths and directions.

Step 1 — Identify Your Vision, Mission and Values

- Vision — what do you envision for yourself, current and future?
- Mission — what is the purpose of your career for you, existing and ideal?
- Core values — what matters most to you? Identify top five values.

Step 2 — Create ‘SMART’ Goals

- Specific — precise and quantifiable rather than vague.
- Measurable — appropriate metrics to qualify success.
- Attainable — realistic, challenging and achievable.
- Results oriented — focus on desired outcomes.
- Time bound — specific target dates for completion.

Step 3 — Develop Goal Setting Process

- Short-term goals — 1 to 3 years.
- Long-term goals — 3 to 5 years.
- Realistic obstacles and challenges that you may encounter.
- Execution strategy — what, how and when.
- Follow up plan to review and evaluate regularly.

Step 4 — Determine Commitment

- Write them down, both personal and professional.
- Reach out to others for help and support.
- Earn trust and gain cooperation from others involved.
- Commit to staying focused and true to yourself, live more intentional life.

Step 5 — Maintain Accountability

- Revisit, reassess and reevaluate goals on a regular basis.
- Adjust as appropriate and necessary, keep an open mind.
- Continue to formulate process of setting your personal and professional goals.



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