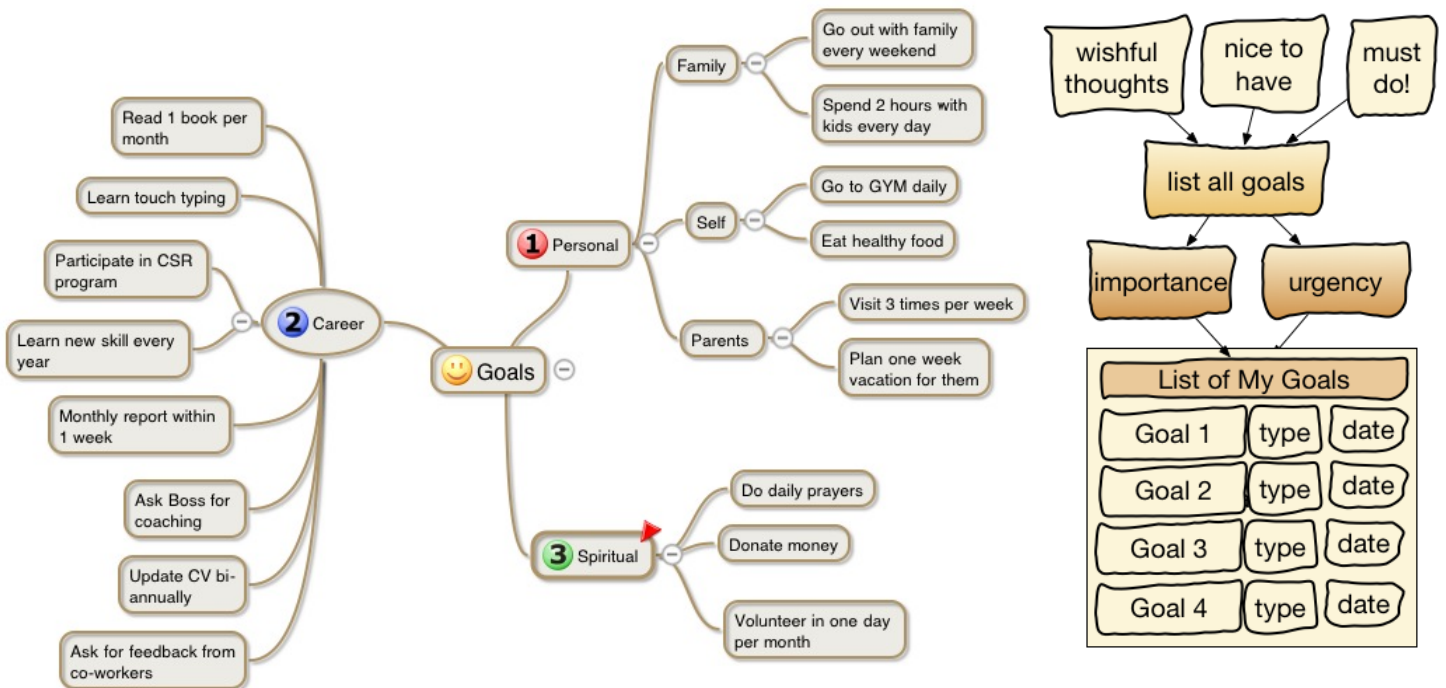


# Setting Personal Goals

Easy to set and easy to achieve ?



Sami Malallah, MBA

Chemical Engineering  
University of Dayton (USA)  
Master of Business  
Administration  
Maastricht School of  
Management (Netherlands)

Email  
sami@smalallah.com  
Blog  
SMalallah.com

Written and designed  
by the author

Many of us had assembled a toy or a piece of furniture before. You probably did the assembly with the help of the instruction sheet or a drawing which was folded inside the box. Researchers found that many people spend long time to plan their vacation and take care of the little details to enjoy every hour of their vacation time. The same people would not spend half of that time to plan their lives.

Planning our life and careers would start by identifying our short-term and long-term goals. We should articulate the goal and then set a plan to achieve them. We need to select the achievable and realistic goals to improve our life. You will be able to set your personal goals and write a plan to achieve by simply reading the following text and follow the simple guidelines.

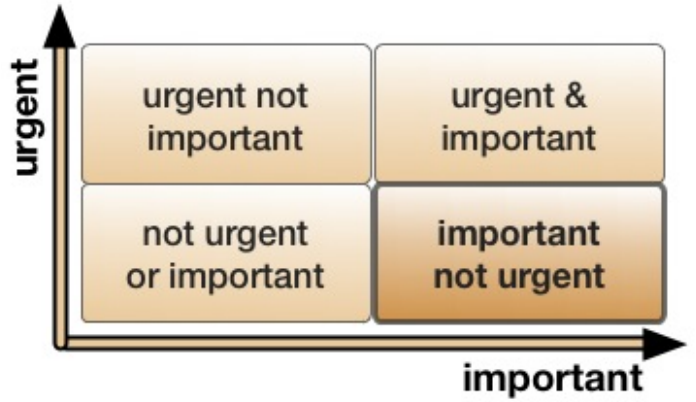
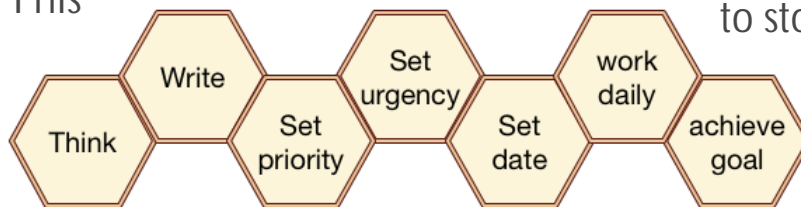
# GENERATING IDEAS

Some of the goals we do not need to think about them or list them on paper. Such goals are either ongoing goals like the spiritual goals that we practice everyday, or an overwhelming desire that we constantly think about and work toward achieving it everyday. These goals we need to plan in a timely manner and assign milestones for them to help us understand in which state of completion we are at.



## Brainstorming

The individual should set in a quiet place with a tool to note the ideas and goals that come up in his or her mind. The goals should be written freely. We should dismiss the thought "this is impossible" or "I will never achieve this" or "This goal needs ten people to achieve it!" this negative thinking would not help the individual who set his or her goals, but rather limit the imagination and reduce the possibilities of finding new ideas and valuable goals.



List goal or project that come to your mind then sort the goals to categories or types. The suggested major categories would be: personal, spiritual and work goals. Put each category in a separate list then rank the list according to its importance and urgency.

The important and not urgent should have more attention than the other goals because if we delay these goals then they will become "important and urgent." The important and urgent should be targeted for early

completion before we have

to stop our regular

work to achieve these urgent goal. Some of

the urgent but not important goals are imposed on us by others or assigned to us by the organization to achieve somebody's else goals or to help finish jobs that not related to us or the organization. We may not like doing

these urgent goals because they are not ours, but we have to complete them as part of the overall job development and personal satisfaction.

## WHAT KIND OF GOALS DO WE HAVE

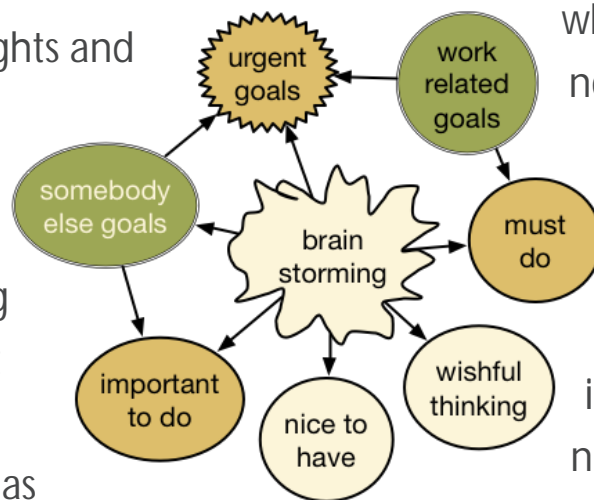
Goals are different in their importance and urgency. Some goals are nice to have and some are important to have, but there are few goals which we must have.

### Wishful thinking

We have many thoughts and ideas that cross our minds from time to time but when we start a brainstorming session we should jot down these thoughts but they will remain as "wishful thoughts". A good example of a wishful thought would be:

- Be the best father in the world.
- Win the lottery.
- Have baby boys only with my future spouse.
- Replace my home furniture every year.

*Pursuit "Nice goals" when you have extra time*



These wishful thoughts can be a good seed for future goals but they will be considered as wishful thoughts for now.

### Nice to have

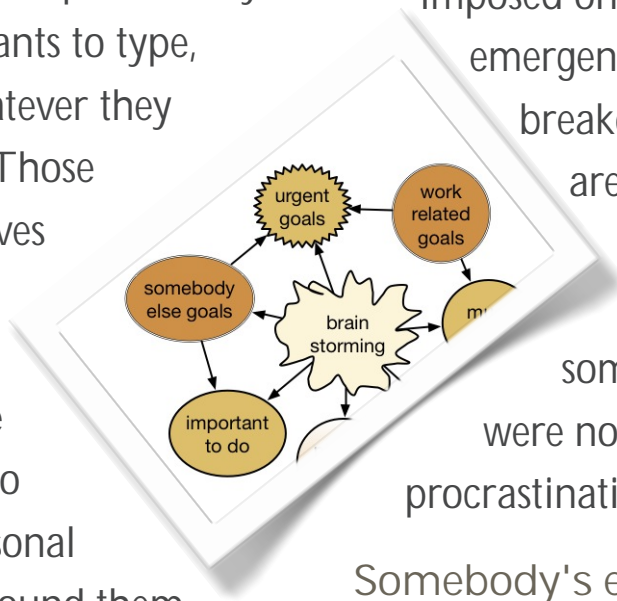
Some goals are nice to have and should be targeted if we have extra time and effort to pursue them. Some examples of these goals would be learning calligraphy to enhance our handwriting. This goal would improve our note taking and would be useful

when we write personal notes to others. Lately most of the notes are typed and sent electronically so handwriting improvements would be a nice goal to target but not important.

### Important goals

Important goals are as named "important" but they might not be urgent. We need to achieve these important goals in the future but they are not urgent now. Planning these important goals would be more important than achieving the urgent goals. Important goals are usually delayed or postponed until they become important and urgent. At that

time we will be searching for time and energy to achieve these goals. For example, many of the executives and leaders are postponing learning the necessary and basic computer skills because they can do most of their work without using a computer. They usually ask their assistants to type, print and prepare whatever they need on their laptop. Those managers and executives will need to work outside their office more frequently in the future and may need to travel a lot. Their personal assistant will not be around them to prepare their work or do last minute corrections. At that moment they will be struggling and realizing the need to learn the minimum skills needed to use the computer functions.



## Urgent goals

Urgent goals are drawing valuable energy and precious time because of their urgency. Some of the urgent goals are not important but we have to do them now because they were imposed on us as part an emergent work. Mistakes, breakdowns and accidents are major contributors to the urgent jobs. As discussed before that some of the urgent goals were not urgent but our procrastination made it urgent.

## Somebody's else goals

Sometimes we receive unfinished work which was assigned to another team member but could not finish it because of different reasons. The reassigned work would be part of the organizational overall goals that we have to prioritize it over our personal goals. In addition, the new work is usually assigned to us when it is either due or going to be due shortly. So we need to use our extra time and special skills to manage the extra work along with our original work.

## "Must Do" goals

These goals are similar to the important goals described in the previous section but with one major difference. The must-do goals are required now and can not be postponed for later time. A good example for the must-do goals would be studying for the final exam or preparing the research material and survey for the term final paper.



## PLANNING THE EXECUTION

At this point we should have identified the goals and ranked them according to their importance and urgency. We should focus on the top 3-5 goals from the list. We check each goal and ask ourselves if we have the talent and the resources to achieve the goal.

We identify the skills and resources that are required for the goal then plan learning these skills and getting the resource on a time line. We may need to read books, attend training courses or even earn an academic degree. Some of the required resources we can buy off the shelf in the market. Other resources



what is available for us. Time may be one of elements that make a goal realistic and achievable or not.

We need to set milestones or check points in the plan to alert us if we deviated from the plan. We should think of the milestones as smaller goals that we need to achieve. If we are trying to write a book then completing each chapter would be a good milestone to watch for.

We should reward ourselves for achieving our goals. Also, if the goal is big then we should reward ourselves for achieving the major milestones in the goal's time line. For example, I will reward myself with a hot chocolate brownie and a big scoop of vanilla ice-cream when I finish writing this material.

*Planning the goal is the road to achieve it*

can have to be brought in or made especially for the task. The time, effort and cost will be set on the timeline to check if we can meet the target date because some of the requirement may need more time than

*You are invited to read more thoughts, business ideas and professional views in my blog. Please visit [smalallah.com](http://smalallah.com) or follow me on Twitter account "SamiMalallah"*

