

4 Goal-Setting Alternatives that Can Yield Big Success This Year

By Heather Robson



Do you set goals at the beginning of each year?

How often do you achieve them?

In my experience, goals are better than resolutions, which are typically abandoned before we even see February.

But even so, I know a lot people — myself included — who fall short of their goals more often than they'd care to admit.

If that sounds familiar, I have some goal-setting alternatives for you. By shifting your approach, you could make THIS a banner year.

Tackle Obstacles Instead

If you've set goals for multiple years and find that you continually fall short. And not just a little short, but way short, then this year, consider starting off by putting your focus squarely on what's holding you back.

Here's the thing. You have the capacity to succeed.

You can learn a new skill. You can master it enough that you'll know more than a lot of business owners out there. You can deliver value. You can make money. You can grow your business.

And your capacity to succeed stretches beyond business.

Do you want to be fitter and stronger? You can do that.

Do you want to improve your relationships with the most important people in your life? You can do that too.

Do you want to become a positive presence in your community? Absolutely possible.

You can get fit, take a big trip, make a difference to the people closest to you, earn more money as a writer, *and* do something big like write a book or launch a podcast. You can do all of this before we say goodbye to this year, 365 days from now.

But will you? If your gut is twisting up a little right now because there is something big you want to do but you're pretty sure you won't, then the best thing you can do this year is start paying attention to your obstacles. Really figure them out. Then dismantle them.

So, how do you do this?

Tim Ferriss of *4-Hour Workweek* fame has a method he uses called fear-setting.

Start with something you want to do but haven't done. Like launch your website. Travel to Australia. Join a gym. Write it at the top of a piece of paper. "What if I join a gym." Then list out all the worst-case scenarios. Come up with every way you can think of that things could go horribly wrong if you follow through on that goal.

Once you have that list, for each item, you're going to come up with two responses. The first is a way you can prevent that thing from happening, or dramatically reduce the possibility. The second is how you'll fix it if it does happen, and if applicable, who you'll ask for help.

So, for launching a website, you might say, "What if I launch my website and no one ever visits it and it all turns out to be a big waste of time." That's your disaster-in-waiting. To prevent that, you could decide to be active on social media and include a blog that you update regularly. If it happens anyway, you could reach out to your writing community and ask them to have a look at your site and see if they can suggest ways to bring in more traffic.

Next, ask yourself, "If I'm even partially successful, what will the benefit be?" Using our website example, you might say, "If I'm even partially successful, I'll have a place to send potential clients where they can see my work." Or, "I'll have learned more about the process of writing and launching a website, which means I'll have a valuable skill to offer my clients."

Finally, ask yourself, "If I don't launch my website, what will the cost be in six months?" And then think about the cost in one year and all the way out to three years. Here, you might end up with something like, "If I don't launch my website, I won't have a home base for my business online. That's going to cost me clients. More than that, it's going to cost me business opportunities and connections."

Think about the financial cost. But also consider the emotional cost, the social cost, and the physical cost when those things make sense.

Most of the time, when you do this, you will gain clarity on the risks, which are usually minimal, and the possible rewards, which are often very high.

Seeing that in black and white — in your own writing, no less — can clear the path to make progress you haven't ever been able to make before.

Let Your Personality Be Your Guide

Goal-setting isn't a one-size-fits-all process. For the organized among us, breaking your goals into major milestones, and then setting out monthly, weekly, and daily tasks to reach those milestones may be the most obvious, easy-to-do thing in the world.

But for the person standing next to you, that approach might feel like a slipping into a straightjacket.

If the methodical approach to reaching your goals doesn't work for you, it might be time to harness your natural personality traits and work with them instead of against them.

People tend to be analytical, people-focused, ordered, or adventurous.

If you're analytical, you'll fare better if your goal is centered around learning new things, if you allow big chunks of time to work on your goals instead of smaller daily efforts, and if you enlist someone (like a Virtual Assistant) to handle the mundane stuff.

If you're people-centered, you'll do better on your goals if they have a collaborative element or are tied to a purpose that is bigger than yourself. Scheduling time to work on your goals is key. You'll also find it helpful to have someone you can talk to about setbacks, so you keep those in perspective.

If you see yourself as ordered and methodical, then embrace the typical approach to goal-setting with milestones and tasks. It will serve you well.

If you think of yourself as more adventurous and artistic, you'll resist detailed planning. Instead, turn your goals into a game, and each day decide how you'll play. Think it terms of trajectory rather than a hard-and-fast plan.

If you want to learn more about goal-setting and personality types, we have a comprehensive guide on *Wealthy Web Writer*.
[You can view that here.](#)

Focus on What You Can Control

If you want to guarantee that you reach your goals this year, there's only one way to do it.

And that is to focus on what you can control.

You can't control the number on the scale. But you can control how active you are.

You can't control any particular prospect saying yes to your pitch. But you can control how much time you spend prospecting.

You can't control whether or not you land a major book deal. But you can control how many words you write a day.

Think about what you want to achieve this year, and what actions you can take that will help you get there. Then make your measure of success how much you do of that action.

Ride the Momentum — Tie Your Goal to a Trend

Web writing is a particularly exciting industry ... one that shifts and changes constantly.

There is always a new challenge to tackle, a new opportunity to embrace.

So why not tie your goals for the year into some of the fastest-growing digital marketing trends?

If you learn any one of these skills, you'll set yourself apart from other writers and have a skill set clients are actively looking for. It will also be easy to establish yourself as an expert.

Personalization: Business are getting very sophisticated when it comes to offering a personalized experience. Based on your behaviors and actions, they may offer you content, email messages, and products that are personalized to your interests. This is an exciting trend for writers because it means these companies a) need a ton of writing and b) are getting more conversions, so they will value what you do.

Consider making your goal to master marketing personalization.

Video: Video has been steadily gaining in popularity for years. That trend has not stopped. If anything, it's spiked with more people consuming online video ... and more ways to produce it. Heck, companies are starting to combine video and personalization to produce video messages tailored to a single prospect. Those videos need scripts! And that means those companies need writers like you.

So, you could make this the year you become the go-to video writer.

New ways to search: Voice search. Image search. The ways that people search for online content are changing. And you can bet businesses need savvy writers like you to help them keep up.

What if, this year, you become a leading expert in writing for alternate search methods?

Social media stories: Social media is seeing a big shift to the story format. It's something businesses need to take note of. And if you decide to make mastering social media stories your goal this year, you'll be just the person to help them out.

Setting goals is a powerful way to help you achieve more. But if you struggle with typical goal setting or just want to try something new, give these approaches a try (one or in combination) and see how they work for you.

Do you have any questions or suggestions about goal-setting alternatives? Share them in the comments below.

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