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The Science of Goal Achievement

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By Tom Venuto, Fitness Success Coach

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THE SCIENCE OF GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

Someone once said, "Success is setting goals. Everything else is just commentary." I wholeheartedly agree. Your success rate increases astronomically when you set goals properly. According to Zig Ziglar, Bob Proctor, Jim Rohn, Brian Tracy and other personal achievement experts, only 5% of the population has written goals. Is it any surprise that 95% of dieters fail in their attempts to lose weight and keep it off? Is it a coincidence that 95% of people retire broke?

Why don't more people set goals? Beats me. A mystery of life. Jim Rohn once said, "I find it fascinating that most people plan their vacations with better care than they plan their lives. Perhaps it's because escape is easier than change."

Five percent of the world sets written goals and succeeds. The other 95% refuse to set goals and they fail; it's as simple as that.

This is why I spend so much time educating my clients about goals and why I devoted the entire first chapter of my book, <u>Burn the Fat, Feed the Muscle</u> (BFFM) entirely to this subject. I teach goal setting and mental dynamics first, and then I teach nutrition and training second. Until specialized knowledge is linked with purpose, the knowledge is useless and there can be no intelligent accomplishment.

There is a science to achieving goals. If you want to be a success, it's your responsibility and duty to learn how your mind works and take conscious control over the programming that goes into your mental goal-achieving "super-computer" known as your subconscious mind.

If you choose not to set goals in an orderly, scientific fashion, that's certainly your prerogative, but then by default, you've set a goal for non-achievement. If you fail to give specific instructions to your subconscious, or if you unintentionally give the wrong instructions, you're using the power of goals in reverse.

Your subconscious mind works by law, which means that if you set your goals in a manner that's in harmony with mental laws, you'll achieve those goals with mathematical certainty. Your goal setting mechanism is infallible and it cannot be turned off. It operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, awake or sleeping.

Your subconscious is completely impartial: Whatever commands you plant in your subconscious (or allow to be planted there), will inevitably be expressed in your body (as fitness, health or disease) and through your body (as behavior, habits, and action...positive or negative).

If you want to change your body and your life, but you're not getting the results you want, then you probably: (A) didn't set goals at all, (B) you set goals improperly (not working in harmony with your subconscious "computer"), (C) you set goals, but lost sight of them (You lacked consistency and persistence), or (D) you set goals, but didn't take efficient daily action.

Right now I'd like to share with you two powerful tools that can assist you in setting and achieving your goals. Don't underestimate the apparent simplicity of the principle at work in both of these tools. It's so simple, you're likely to shrug it off as trite and inconsequential, but unless you're already 100% thrilled with your present results, then I would strongly advise you against doing that. Every part of this formula is necessary and has a purpose. Be open-minded and do not deviate from these instructions.

THE GOAL CARD: A SIMPLE BUT INCREDIBLY POWERFUL TOOL FOR REACHING YOUR GOALS

It's important to have lots of goals...dozens of them... hundreds, even... big and small, short term and long term. But to effectively and quickly achieve the goals that are most important to you, you must prioritize and focus. You need a way to stay centered on your #1 most important goal for each 12-week period and to get that goal burned into your subconscious mind. A goal card is the ultimate way to do that.

Here's what I want you to do: Take your 12-week (90 day) goal - which is the primary goal you should focus the most attention on at any given time - and transfer it, in "affirmation" format, to a small goal card. Use card stock, like an index card. If you have a laminator, then laminate it for longevity purposes because you're going to be handling it daily. You could also put it in a clear plastic credit card sleeve.

You must write your 90-day goal statement as an AFFIRMATION. This is covered in detail in chapter one of my "Burn The Fat" manual, yet only a handful of my clients write their goals in "affirmation" format the first time around. Most people resist and object at first because it sounds weird, but the way you write your goal is vitally important, so pay close attention here:

1) Start the goal card by writing your **deadline** at the top:

For example: By August 15th, 2004 (or whatever your deadline is).

This is the only part of your goal card that is written in future tense, and it's only for urgency, it's not part of your actual goal statement. All goals must have deadlines because it's a psychological law that work always expands to fill the time allowed.

(2) Next, begin your goal affirmation statement by writing it in personal tense ("**I**")

(3) Continue writing your goal in present tense ("I AM")

(3) Write your goal with positive emotion ("I AM *so happy*")

(4) Write your goal with gratitude ("I AM so happy **and thankful**")

(5) Give added emphasis to personal and present tense ("I AM so happy and thankful **now that I AM**...")

(6) Finish by filling in the blank with your goal. The goal MUST be **stated in the positive**. In other words, you must write what you want to achieve, not what you want to avoid (how lean you want to become, not how much fat you want to get rid of). Be as clear and specific as possible and feel free to embellish and add as much additional emotion to your affirmation statement as possible. Ideally, when you read it, it should stir up a feeling and make a picture pop into your mind.

For example, if your goal is to lose 6% body fat, (which is a typical rate of fat loss for 90 days), drop from 14% to 8% body fat, and see your abs for the first time in your life, your goal statement might look like this:

MY GOAL:

By August 15th, 2004:

I am so happy and thankful now that I am 8% body fat. My size 30" jeans fit perfectly on my slim, trim waistline. I am super-lean with a rock-hard, flat stomach and I can clearly see the razor-sharp definition in my six pack abs and everyone else notices my ripped abs too.

This might sound silly, but affirmations like these are the ultimate secret to impressing what you want upon your subconscious mind. This is the way your brain works and nothing will ever change that. We humans are simply "wired" this way.

Still have doubts? Then don't take my word for it - go track down the most leftbrained, logical and analytical psychologist, psychiatrist, or hypnotherapist you can find. Ask them how the subconscious mind works and see what they say. They'll all tell you this procedure is perfectly scientific.

I sometimes get frustrated with how much "arm-twisting" I have to do to get my clients to write down their goals in this exact format. Seriously - hardly anybody does it – there's almost always resistance and skepticism because of closed minds, old paradigms and past conditioning.

"But why do I need to write down my goals? I know what I want."

"Why do I have to keep reading it over and over again? I don't have time."

"Writing my goals as affirmation statements in the present tense seems weird; I just can't do that because it's like lying to myself."

"I did write down my goals, but I didn't read my affirmations every day."

"I read my affirmations for a while, but I stopped after a few weeks because nothing was happening."

"The whole thing just seems kind of juvenile."

I've heard every one of these excuses more times than I care to say, and without exception, all these people were struggling. The 5% who had an open mind, listened and faithfully put this formula to work achieved more in less time than they ever had in their lives.

Here's why goal-affirmation statements need to be written and read in such **a** certain way:

Your subconscious mind takes everything literally - to a degree of subtlety that probably not one in ten thousand people understand. The subconscious accepts commands most easily when they are given in the present tense, personal, positive format and when they are read and visualized repeatedly with faith, emotion, gratitude and an already-having-received attitude (and especially when you're in a physically relaxed state).

When a suggestion is accepted by your subconscious, this sets your body into motion and your automatic behaviors (habits) begin to change. When your behavior changes, your results begin to change.

Be open and do what I suggest. Write out your goal card! Read it at least twice a day - morning and night. Read it more often if you can. Carry your goal card with you everywhere you go. Keep it in your pocket at all times. Feel naked without it. Any time you have a spare moment - at a stoplight, waiting for an appointment, while you eat breakfast, heck, even when you go to the bathroom - reach into your pocket and pull out your goal card.

Every time you read it or even touch it, think about your goal and visualize the end result you desire. Flash the picture of you at your perfect weight with your ideal body onto the screen of your mind. See yourself the way you ultimately want to look. Imagine that you're already there. Then watch it happen! It will and it must, for that is the law of your mind.

THE GOAL CARD MEETS HIGH TECH: INTRODUCING "GOAL GENIE"

If you spend a lot of time in front of a computer, there's a neat program called **"GOAL GENIE"** that's the technological equivalent of a goal card. I found out about this software from Vic Johnson, who runs two personal development websites: **Asamanthinketh.net** and **mp3motivators.com**. At Vic's suggestion, I bought the software and have been using it ever since because I spend a good majority of my day in front of a computer.

My first impression of **Goal Genie** was that the software was kind of simplistic - I mean, there wasn't much to it. All it did was pop up goals and affirmation statements on the computer screen at regular intervals. But as simple and straightforward as it appeared at first, I had an intuitive feeling that it was going to work - after all, it's really the same thing as a goal card (electronically). Little did I realize at the time just *how* effective it was and how much I would achieve from using it.

I picked up **GOAL GENIE** six months ago and since then, I achieved every goal I programmed into it – personal goals, business goals, and bodybuilding/ fitness goals - and some of them were BIG ones, like all-time new lifting records in the gym, my highest off-season body weight while staying in single digit body fat, publishing a 337 page weight loss e-book and launching a new website, just to name a few.

Here's why I think it works so well: Did you know that the average person sees, hears or is exposed in some way to as many as 30,000 commercial messages per day? Television, radio, magazine and billboard ads literally "brainwash" your mind to win market share (also known as "share of mind").

If I ask you to name a cola, what comes to mind? "Coke" is what most people

would say, and the rest say "Pepsi." You may not use these products, but you've certainly heard of them. Why? Because the advertising has achieved its objective: Share of mind. The frequent advertising has penetrated your subconscious.

Not only that, but because you thought of Coke or Pepsi FIRST in that product category (and not some generic brand), these companies have achieved a LARGE share of mind, also known as "top of mind" in advertising lingo. When "top of mind" is achieved, you are much more likely to take action and purchase that product.

What if you achieved the same thing - "top of mind" - with your goals? What if you saturated your mind and penetrated your subconscious deeply and effectively by doing some "goal advertising?" But instead of being programmed by Madison Avenue to buy stuff you might not want, what if you programmed your brain to take action to achieve things, be things and do things that you DO want?

Pretty interesting concept, isn't it? This is what Goal Genie does.

It's literally a "pop up" on your computer screen. You program it with your own personalized goal statements and tell the software how often you want it to pop up. I set mine for 20-minute intervals. That means if I spend 8 hours a day in front of the computer, I see my goal message 24 times per day, 744 times per month. As Fortune 500 companies have learned, repetition is one of the surest ways to penetrate the subconscious and move a person into action.

After you use the Goal Genie for a while, you have to admit - if nothing else - that it helps you stay incredibly focused on your goals. It's kind of like having a personal coach who confronts you and holds you accountable.

One last thing - if you DON'T spend a lot of time in front of a computer, **GOAL GENIE** will probably only be a novelty, so just use a goal card instead. However, if you DO log a lot of computer hours and you want a neat little tool to help you stay as focused as a laser beam and to achieve your goals faster than ever, then go over to <u>http://www.mp3motivators.com/cgi-bin/a.pl?motivate&1571&genie</u> and check out goal genie right now.

Your mind is an amazingly powerful goal-achieving super-computer, but it's a lot like a parachute – it only works if it's open. Have an open mind and give these methods an honest trial. Use a **goal card** or **Goal Genie** for 90 days, then write to me and let me know what happens.

Warmly, Your Friend & Coach,

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P.S. If still you're skeptical about these techniques, I understand completely because I reacted the same way when I was first exposed to these ideas. Just remember, you can't hit a target you can't see, and if you aim at nothing, you'll hit it every time! http://www.mp3motivators.com/cgi-bin/a.pl?motivate&1571&genie

About the Author:

Tom Venuto is a lifetime natural bodybuilder, personal trainer, gym owner, success coach, freelance writer and author of "<u>Burn the Fat, Feed The Muscle</u>" (BFFM): Fat Burning Secrets of the World's Best Bodybuilders and Fitness Models. Tom has written over 160 articles and has been featured in IRONMAN magazine, Natural Bodybuilding, Muscular Development, Muscle-Zine, Olympian's News, Exercise for Men and Men's Exercise. Tom's informative and inspiring articles have been featured in literally dozens of websites and e-zines worldwide. You can visit Tom on the web at <u>www.fitren.com</u> or <u>www.burnthefat.com</u>. You can subscribe to his monthly E-mail newsletter at <u>www.fitren.com/listserv.cfm</u>