



Deck Plate Leadership Series

Goal Setting

USCG Leadership Competency: Leading Self: Accountability & Responsibility

Learning Outcomes:

- Describe the seven ways for goal setting
- Assess why goal planning is essential to unit success

Time Required: 25 – 30 minutes

Facilitator Activities: Present slides, providing amplifying information from material below. Facilitate discussion with last slide – Where are We as a Flotilla? Slides can be copied three-to-a-page with line for notes if projector is not available.

How do you make change happen? More than that, how do you make the right change happen? When there is a gap between what is and what you want to be, how do you cross that gap? Every Flotilla and Division should plan.

Overview Information for the Facilitator:

No matter what types of goals you are setting or for what time frame, here are seven core principles for setting goals that will help you make a bigger difference and get you to a place you actually want to be.

1. Ask “what needs to be done?”

Goals are about making a contribution. Therefore the first question you need to ask is not “what do I want to do?” but rather “what needs to be done? The issue is the end towards which you direct your interests. When setting goals, you need to ask first what outcomes your family needs, what outcomes your organization needs, and what outcomes your community needs, not first what outcomes you need.

2. Ask “where can I contribute best?”

When you ask the question of what needs to be done, there will almost always be more than one good answer. When there is more than one thing that needs to be done, choose the one that is most in line with your interests, skills, and strengths. Except for extreme cases (emergencies where there is no other option), don’t compromise.

3. Ask “what are the constraints?” last, not first.

Most people put this question first, and that’s what ends up creating so many problems in the long run. This question must be last, you will almost always have to compromise something—and you can never know what the right compromises are unless you first know the ideal state you are



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aiming toward. Don't limit yourself right out of the gate. Compromises will have to be made, but unless you start out with the ideal outcome, you will always make the wrong ones.

4. Aim high and lead.

Don't simply jump on the bandwagon, and don't be drug down by people with a militant commitment to mediocrity. Set large goals and make big plans.

5. Keep your goals aligned with your mission and values.

This is where you need discipline – in not necessarily doing less, but making sure that all that you do is in line with you and the Auxiliaries mission and values. Don't settle for mere appearances of discipline by simply doing less. Be truly disciplined by focusing on the things that embody and reflect the mission and values.

6. Re-consider all of your goals each time you accomplish a goal.

After accomplishing a goal, if you simply do what's next on your list, you run the risk of being held captive to the priorities of yesterday. Therefore, always reconsider your priorities before setting a new goal, rather than simply doing what's next on the list.

7. Pursue justice and mercy in your goals.

Goals have a reputation of being about how we can make our own lives better. The leader with the greatest meaning is one that takes the initiative for the good of others. Setting goals for using any influence we have to go the extra mile and bring benefit to those in need is a fantastic way to do this—and a great privilege. It helps us ensure that we are setting goals that really count and will really be meaningful in the end.

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