HOW TO SET LIFE GOALS

Your Path
Your Effort
Your Achievement

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Outline

- **First considerations**
- **Choosing a direction**
- **Dreams vs. Goals**
- **Values vs. Goals**
- **Choosing goals**
- **Achieving goals**
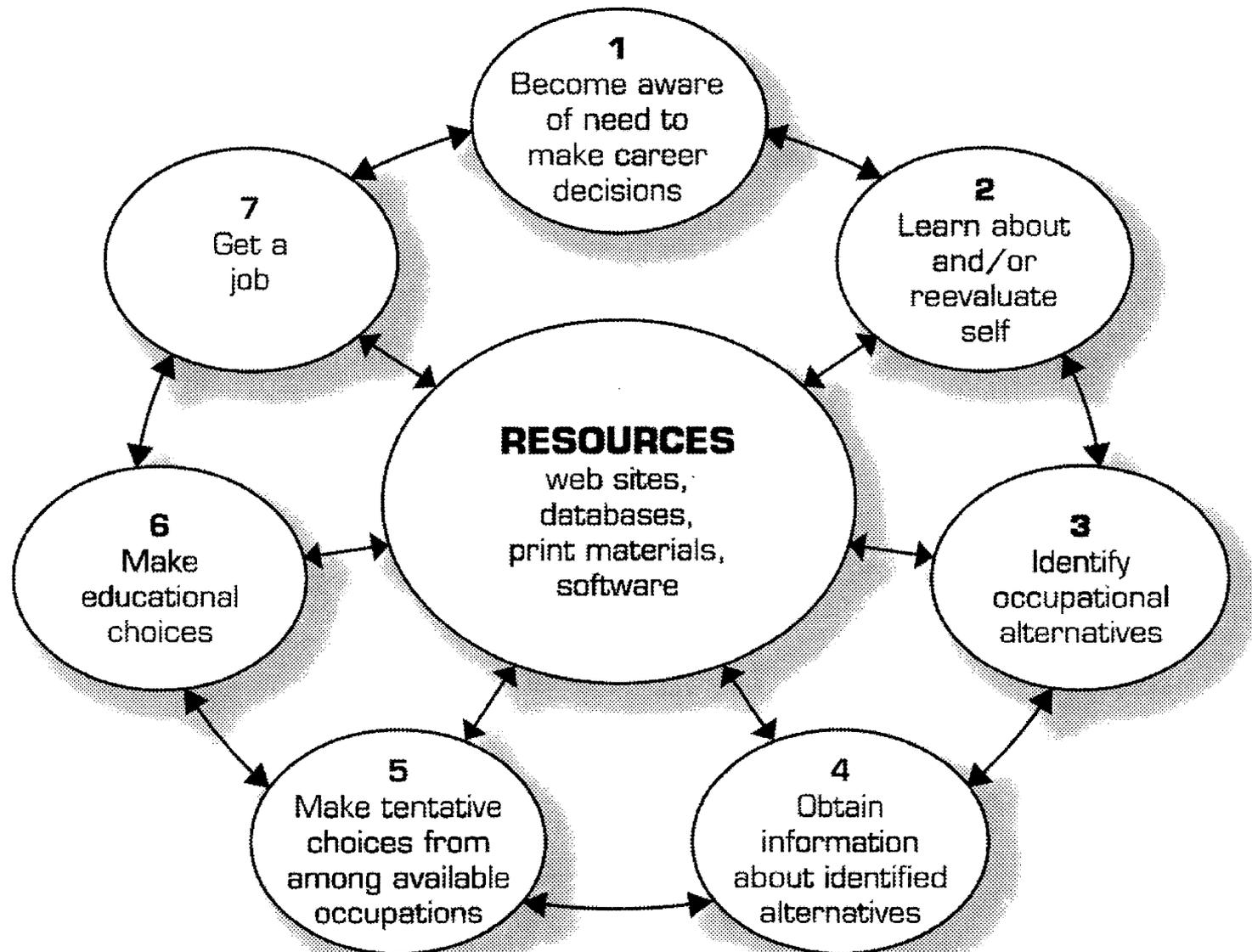- **Encouragement**
- **Summary**

Beginnings

- **Not a straight-forward process**
- **By living, we learn about ourselves and life**
- **There are some ideas we can start with**
- **Life is not a hit-or-miss undertaking**
  - *takes vision, planning, doing*
- **Success is not an accident of birth**
- **There are no 90-day wonders**
- **No quick and easy ways**
- **You have to apply solid performance ethic**
  - *constant cycle: study, learn, work, produce*

Picking a Direction

- **YOUR CALLING - The purpose which God wants you to fulfill & empowers you to achieve.**

- **YOUR CAREER - The path you are currently pursuing as you seek to achieve your purpose.**

- **YOUR JOB - The current activity as you follow your path, the means by which you achieve milestones along that path.**

A Continuous Process
Guided by Information and Insight

A diagram of seven ovals arranged in a circle around a central "RESOURCES" oval (web sites, databases, print materials, software), with double-headed arrows connecting each outer oval to the center and to adjacent ovals:

1. Become aware of need to make career decisions
2. Learn about and/or reevaluate self
3. Identify occupational alternatives
4. Obtain information about identified alternatives
5. Make tentative choices from among available occupations
6. Make educational choices
7. Get a job

Dreams vs. Goals

- **Dream: series of images, thoughts, or emotions passing through the mind**
- **Goal: projected state of affairs that a person intends and plans to achieve**
  - *desired end-point of an undertaking*
- **Notice these keywords:**
  - *projected, planned, undertaken*
- **Dreams can lead to vision**
- **Vision must lead to goals**
- **Goals must lead to plans**
- **Plans must be accomplished**

Values vs. Goals

- **Our values influence how we make decisions and run our lives.**

- **Values are not goals. Goals are targets.**

- **Values are how you see the world, what you see as important, what you believe.**

- **Values are how we express God's teachings, how we approach life.**

- **When we have strong values, and positive values, they will be integral to our achieving life goals.**

Goals

- **Specific: What exactly do you want to achieve?**

- **Measurable: How will you know you are progressing? What are specific indicators?**

- **Attainable: How much does it cost? How much time does it take? Do you have the resources to achieve your goal? If not, how are you going to obtain the resources?**

- **Realistic: Can you really reach that goal? Will it take you a lifetime to achieve your goal? What are the inhibitions?**

- **Timed: When will you reach your goal? Are there sub-goals? Determine a completion date for each.**

Goals and Planning

- Many people go through life wishing that something exciting or new will happen.
- The only way to change the results of your life is to change the way you live it.
- By setting up your goals, you are setting up the road map to your success.
- When things get tough (and they will), review this map to keep yourself on track.
- Above all, do not just sit around waiting for your ship to come in.
- "Luck" favors the well informed and the well prepared, those who live active lives.

Pick Your Goals for the Right Reasons.

- **Know why the goal is important**
- **Know what achieving that goal enables**
- **Know how the goal supports your vision**

Focus on Your Strengths.

- **Search out opportunities in areas that you are comfortable or familiar with**
- **Successful goal setting means continually applying your strengths to achievement**
- **Keep an eye on your weaker attributes**
  - *where improvement is needed, do that*
  - *create new strengths as they are needed*
  - *performance ethic is important here*
    - *continuous cycle: study, learn, work, produce*
- **Learn to do it – Practice doing it**

Visualize Your Goal.

- **Take time to concentrate on your goal.**
  - *imagine every nook and cranny of it,*
  - *feel and sense it*
  - *become attuned to your goal's reality*
- **A powerful technique that you can use to infuse yourself with the desire and motivation to get through the difficult periods along your goal-setting journey.**
- **Once you can almost taste your goal, you are that much more likely to put in the effort to go after it.**

Focus on YOUR Goals. Do not Envy Others.

- **Easy to look at others who have achieved what we have and feel a deep sense of envy or even resentment.**

- **Focusing on achievements and processes of others can quickly turn into jealousy.**

- **Learn from others but what works for one does not mean it will work for you.**

- **Enjoy knowing your journey is unique and special to you.**

Don't Give Up too Soon.

- **Often times the difference between successful goal setting and utter ruin is just that tiny extra bit of persistence.**

- **It is stunning to see how often success is just on the other side of a failure.**

- **Recognize setbacks in the road for what they are - opportunities for you to shine in the face of adversity.**

- **Do not listen to nay-sayers who only want to hold you back.**

Our Biggest Dreams Should Haunt Us.

- **It is a thought that will never quite go away.**
- **It is around every corner, giving us subtle reminders, waiting for us to get on it and do it.**
- **Embrace this feeling, because it will push you.**
- **You will expend more energy doing nothing, by getting down on yourself for not doing it, than actually achieving your goals.**
- **Interesting thing about working towards our goals is that it does not really feel like work after a little while.**

Evaluate Your Process and Progress.

- **Constantly strive to see what is working, and what is not.**

- **Do not restrain yourself from tweaking things that are not working as well as you would like. (Recall that nothing is perfect)**

- **Expand where you are doing things well.**

- **Set a weekly or monthly reminder to go over your progress and readjust where necessary.**

Goals and Accomplishment

- Dream big but be practical
- Can not always get there directly
- Need to map out the road
- Pick a major goal
- What pieces have to come together?
- These are sub-goals
- Repeat for each sub-goal
- Until basic work unit is defined
- For each work unit
  - *who will do what by when?*
  - *what do they need to get that done?*
- Manage so that each work unit gets completed

Example Work Breakdown
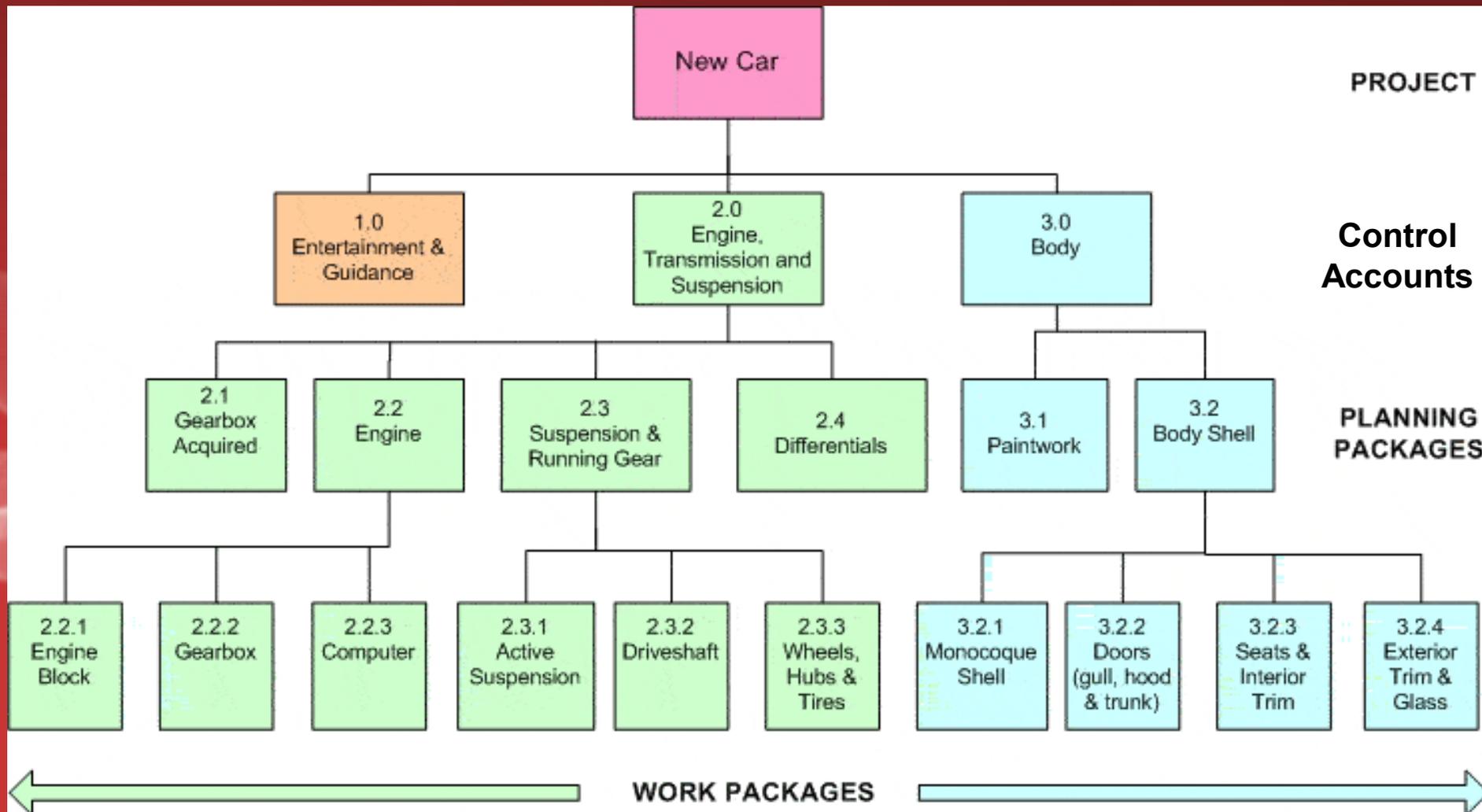
Task Milestones and Relationships
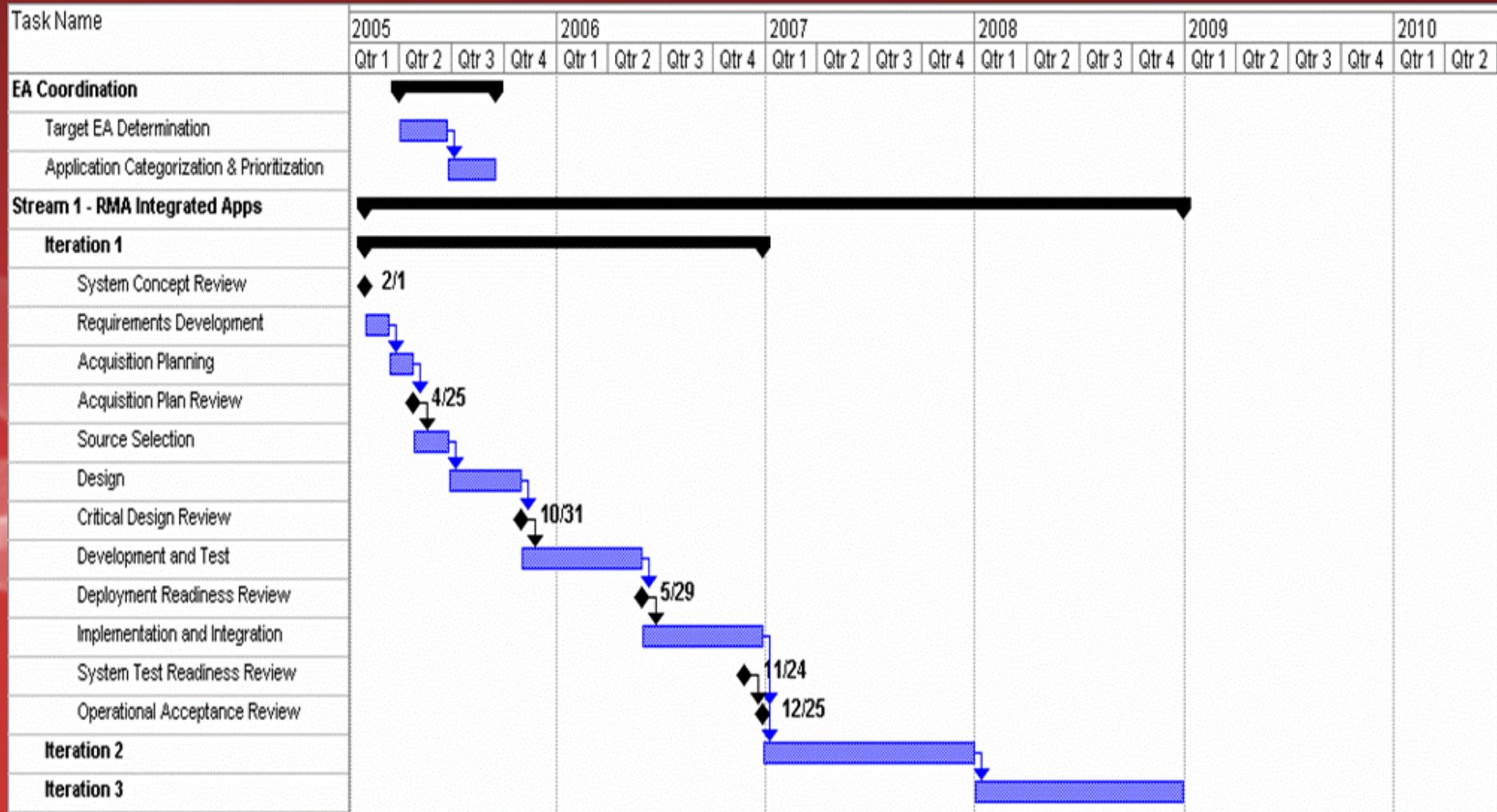
So Many Options – How to Select

- **Possible to objectively consider many alternatives to make reasonable choices.**

- **Use an approach that helps you systematically eliminate alternatives.**

- **No perfection on this earth but possible to proceed to a worthwhile conclusion.**

- **Apply decision table as clear process.**

Decision Table (Building)

- **Selection alternatives on Y axis**
- **Decision criteria on X axis**
- **Cells contain scores for each criteria as it applies to each alternative**
  - *how well that criteria is met for that alternative*
- **Scoring (any number in range 0 .. 100)**
  - *0   (criteria not met)*
  - *25   (criteria met somewhat)*
  - *50   (neutral)*
  - *75   (good match)*
  - *100 (criteria perfectly satisfied)*

Decision Table (Using)

- **Populate all cells.**

- **Sum the scores in columns for each row.**

- **Eliminate low scoring rows.**

- **Repeat process until one or two remain.**

- **Gives you a chance to carefully consider your alternatives relative to your goals.**

- **Basic Questions:**
  - *Does an alternative help me achieve my goals?*
  - *Does an alternative meet my personal criteria?*

Decision Table (Example)

- **Y axis: specific career or job**
- **X axis: personal needs/values/goals**

  - Ability Utilization
  - Achievement
  - Advancement
  - Aesthetics
  - Associates
  - Social Interaction
  - Authority
  - Autonomy
  - Creativity
  - Economic Rewards
  - Economic Security
  - Environment

  - Intellectual Stimulation
  - Life Style
  - Participation in Decisions
  - Prestige
  - Responsibility
  - Risk Taking and Safety
  - Spiritual Values
  - Supervisory Relations
  - Variety
  - Cultural Identity
  - Physical Activity

Decision Table (Picture)

Criteria (required features, values, goals, desires, …)

Alternatives
- career
- job
- product
- project
- …

Decision Table (Example)

- **Lets say that you are a realistic person**
- **You like to work with tools, objects, machines, animals; physical things**
- **You would like to develop manual, mechanical, agricultural, electrical skills**
  - *skills needed to work with physical things*
- **You prefer occupations that involve building, caring for, or repairing things**
- **You tend to be down to earth and practical**
- **You then start to consider specific careers**

Decision Table (Example)

Criteria \ Career	Involves Skills in Electronics	Install Electronic Equipment	Repair Electronic Equipment
Administrative Assistant			
Telephone Installer			
Computer Installer			
Information Technologist			

Must Set Priorities

- **Gather Information**
- **Be Specific, Not General**
- **Keep Doors Open**
- **Realize budget and priority are not the same**
- **Know you and your organization's strengths and weaknesses**
- **Do only tasks that support your priorities**
- **Pre-evaluate opportunities**
- **Review your progress**

- **There is only one top priority**
- **There is only one second priority**
- **Maybe there are two third priorities**
- **"Critical" does not make a priority**
- **Capacity must exist to undertake new activity**
- **"Priorities" of others not necessarily yours**

Focus on Priorities

- **Apply solid time management**
- **Do the difficult tasks when you are the sharpest.**
- **Learn to say "No". Do not let red-herrings distract you.**
- **Reward yourself for effective results.**
- **Gain cooperation from people who benefit from your efforts.**
- **Create win-win situations to achieve mutual success.**
- **Don't procrastinate. Attend to necessary things immediately.**
- **Have a positive attitude.**
- **Be realistic in your approach in achieving your goals.**
- **Do not necessarily be discouraged when "wiser" people tell you something can not be done or that you are not capable of the goal.**
- **Do no let yourself be trapped in a culture of failure.**
- **Reality rules. -- Strive for well-considered balance between dictates of reality and urge to achieve.**

How to Kill Goals and Priorities

- **Store information in your head**
- **Failing to stick to priorities**
- **Underestimate the time a task will require**
- **No planning or poor planning**
- **Not using a calendar to track schedule**
- **Multitasking – Too many tasks at same time**
- **Lack of effective systems and processes**
- **Failure to track progress and adapt as needed**
- **Allow social media to drive day's activities**
- **Disorganized, cluttered desk/office**
- **Not saying "NO" when necessary**

Goal Setting: Personal Example

- **Assigned to a new branch to assist**
  - *no experience in management at this time*
- **Asked to take over branch after two weeks**
- **In another two weeks, asked what my branch did within the organization**
- **Realized why past branch chief was fired**
- **Realized I did not know the answer to what my branch did, in specific terms**
- **Realized I had better find out**
- **GOAL: Keep myself from also being fired**
- **PROBLEM: Find out what my branch did**

Goal Setting: Personal Example

- **GATHERED DATA**
  - *financial records existed on what projects my people were billing for*
  - *asked to see those records*
- **APPLIED DATA**
  - *made my own continually-updated database of past year's billings (very new for that time)*
  - *sorted records in various ways*
- **MADE FACTS EVIDENT**
  - *what projects each person billed for*
  - *what projects supported by my branch*
  - *percentage of time supporting projects*

Goal Setting: Personal Example

- **CAME TO REALIZATION**
  - *branch billing only 30% of time to projects*
  - *70% of time billed to overhead, killing profits*
  - *very very bad situation, branch about to die*
- **MADE RECOMMENDATION**
  - *no more billing to overhead*
  - *all time must be applied to contracted projects*
- **RESULT**
  - *recommendation accepted*
  - *branch doubled in size*
  - *got promoted instead of fired*

Goal Setting: Personal Example

- **Downside Happens**
- **Expect It – Deal With It**
  - *financial people upset that I reported their data*
    - *assured them that I was not trying to do their job*
    - *showed I was not changing the data, just sorting it*
    - *they ended up liking what I did*
  - *branch personnel did not like policy change*
    - *showed them how they would lose their freedom if not their jobs if they did not cooperate*
    - *gave them every support for what they did*
    - *was even able to add additional personnel to help with workload*
    - *our number of projects almost tripled*

Goal Setting: Personal Example

- **Downside Happens**
- **Expect It – Deal With It**
  - *other divisions lost their power over my branch and its personnel*
    - *they considerably increased pressure to maintain control without affect*
    - *I did not just play defense*
    - *executives did not want to interfere with success*
      - *told me that they did not [want to] know what I was doing but to keep doing whatever I was doing*
    - *they enjoyed the additional profits and customers*
    - *only those who fail to succeed were disgruntled*

Goal Setting: Personal Example

- **Takes Risk**
- **Expect It – Manage It Well**
  - *lots of complaints that I was not following policy and regulations*
  - *no complaints from anyone who mattered*
  - *told complainers that profit from paying customers was my top priority*
  - *explained that "policy" and "regulation" did not appear in my job description*
  - *even threatened slander suit when rumors of my conducting illegal activity began circulating*
    - *exposed complainers to their own high-risk situation*
    - *nobody wanted to be outed to the organization*

Goal Setting: Personal Example

- **In the end, all was well**
  - *promoted instead of fired*
  - *people in my branch said that the branch would be closed when I was reassigned because nobody would do what I had done*
    - *turned out to be true*
    - *all my people still had jobs within the organization*
  - *gained reputation as someone you go to when you really do want to accomplish something*
- **Found that early stress and effort can lead to later relaxation and an easier path**

Be Encouraged

… if thou be diligent, thy harvest shall come as a fountain, and want shall flee far from thee. (Proverbs 12:24)

This therefore hath seemed good to me, that a person should eat and drink, and enjoy the fruits of their labor, wherewith they hath labored under the sun, all the days of their life which God hath given them, and this is their portion. (Sirach 5:17)

Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings; they will not serve before obscure people. (Proverbs 22:29)

If you get labeled as a black sheep, so be it. Stick to your guns, your dreams and ambitions. Do not let anyone talk you out of what you truly believe. Such enthusiasm is the sustaining power of all great actions. (Bruce Mallinson (2012, Apr) "High Fuel Mileage Diesels with a Touch of Performance", BigRigOwner.com Magazine, pp 48,50.)

If they stare, let them burn their eyes. (Argent, http://friartucksrockoftheday.blogspot.com/2012/01/hold-your-head-up.html)

Summary

- **Setting life goals takes concerted effort**
- **More so to carry out worthwhile goals**
- **Do not fear - God is with you**
- **Lots of tools available to help**
- **Use these tools**
  - *make good goal choices*
  - *objectively consider options*
  - *structure your efforts*
  - *measure your progress*
- **Your success awaits your resolute action**

Resources

Much of this material was adapted from:

- **Dreams vs. Goals – What is the Difference,** http://informationanthology.net/CareerMentor/Dreams-vs-Goals.html

- **Goal-Setting Worksheets,** http://informationanthology.net/CareerMentor/Clear-Goals.html

- **Values vs. Goals,** http://informationanthology.net/CareerMentor/Values-Goals.html

- **Successful Goal Setting,** http://informationanthology.net/CareerMentor/Goal-Setting.html

- **Top 10 Time Management Mistakes,** http://informationanthology.net/CareerMentor/Time-Management.html

- **Personal Time Management,** http://informationanthology.net/CareerMentor/Personal-Growth-Through-Time-Management.html

- **For details on career needs/values see: Macnab, D., Fitzsimmons, G., Casserly, C. (1987) "Development of the Life Roles Inventory-Values Scale", Canadian Journal of Counselling, Vol. 21:2-3, http://cjc-rcc.ucalgary.ca/cjc/index.php/rcc/article/download/1341/1220.**