

Harvard Business School Goal Story

Study about goals at Harvard MBA program, 1979.

From the book *What they don't teach you at Harvard Business School* by Mark McCormack:

In the book *What They Don't Teach You in the Harvard Business School*, Mark McCormack tells a study conducted on students in the 1979 Harvard MBA program. In that year, the students were asked, "**Have you set clear, written goals for your future and made plans to accomplish them?**" Only three percent of the graduates had written goals and plans; 13 percent had goals, but they were not in writing; and a whopping 84 percent had no specific goals at all.

Ten years later, the members of the class were interviewed again, and the findings, while somewhat predictable, were nonetheless astonishing. **The 13 percent of the class who had goals were earning, on average, twice as much as the 84 percent who had no goals at all.** And what about the three percent who had clear, written goals? They were earning, on average, **ten times as much as the other 97 percent put together.**

In spite of such proof of success, most people don't have clear, measurable, time-bounded goals that they work toward.

In the bestseller *"Goals!"*, Brian Tracy teaches you how to identify in the clearest terms the things you want out of life, then how to make the plan to help you achieve those things. Brian Tracy says there are **four reasons why people don't set goals:**

- They don't realize about the importance of goals. If the people with whom you spend the most time — family, friends, colleagues, and so forth — are not clear and committed to goals, there is a chance that you will not be, either.
- They don't know how to set goals. Some set goals that are too general. These are, in reality, fantasies common to everyone. Goals, on the other hand, are clear, written, specific, and measurable.
- They fear failure. Failure hurts, but it is often necessary to experience failure in order to achieve the greatest success. Do not unconsciously sabotage yourself by not setting any goals in which you might fail.
- They fear rejection. People are often afraid that if they are unsuccessful at achieving a goal, others will be critical of them. This is remedied by keeping your goals to yourself at the outset; let others see your results and achievements once you've accomplished your goals.

Make a habit of daily goal setting and achieving, for the rest of your life. Focus on the things you want, rather than the things you don't want. Resolve to be a goal-seeking organism, moving unerringly toward the things that are important to you.

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