

YOUR LIFE GPS

A lot of people are excited about the new decade. They see the difficulties of 2009 as behind them and are optimistic about the future. When I asked a couple of my friends why they were so optimistic they said “Because we have a whole year ahead of us – it’s exciting”

I agreed, and then asked them what they were going to do with the year and they looked at me with a blank look, like I was from Mars. It seems like many others the initial excitement was there but the action to make their lives any better or different just hadn’t been thought about. So, I proposed the following Goal Setting Plan.

Goal setting is like programming your car GPS to make sure you know where you are going and how you are going to get there. The initial plan may require some adjustments due to road closures or accidents or construction, then you just look at your plan and “recalculate the route” should things change or you take a wrong turn. The beauty of your Goal GPS is you have a direction and plan to reach what you want for yourself by the date you want to reach it.

Here are the steps to create your 2010 Goal GPS for yourself.

Imagine it’s Dec. 31st 2010, you are talking to your friends and you are so proud to say you have accomplished _____(fill in the blank for yourself) example a 2 week trip to Vancouver, an increase in sales by \$_____, you learned a new skill, spent more time with your kids, you are ___ pounds lighter and fitter. You decide on the goal.

What could you do over the next 12 months that if you did it would make a difference in your life?

Once you decide on your goals, you need to put the Action Plan in place to make it happen. A lot of people like the S.M.A.R.T. goal method of creating your plan.

S- Be **SPECIFIC** on what you want to accomplish. Describe it in detail, what does it look like, what benefits do you get for having accomplished it, how does it make you feel to have accomplished it. Be sure and describe it in as much detail as possible so every time you think or look at the goal you can get the pleasure of what it will be like when achieved.

M – Make it **MEASURABLE**. By putting measurements to the goal you can track your progress towards its success. Example work out 3 times a week, make 3 new customer calls per week, network with others at 2 industry meetings per quarter, put \$50.00 in the bank per pay check for the vacation .

A – **ACHIEVABLE**. Make sure you are setting yourself up for success. If you want to lose 25 pounds then break the loss down into 2 pounds per month don't expect to remain healthy and lose 25 pounds in 3 months. If you want to increase customer recommendations for your work, look at what got you recommendations in the past and how can you service them so they give you more. Better still ask them what you would need to do in service, quality wise so they would be willing to give you a reference.

R- **RESULTS ORIENTED** There must be a concrete result from your efforts to motivate you to achieve your goal. The bathroom scale shows the weekly and monthly loss. There are happier customers and less complaints, you learned basic French and new words every week along with your kids.

T- **TIME BOUND** Actions in your plan must be completed regularly. They may be weekly, daily, monthly. You need to have regular objectives to track your progress and celebrate your success along the way.

When reviewing your achievements along this path to your goals - Celebrate. Pat yourself on the back for saving \$100.00 each month for that dream trip. Show the customer reference letters to your office buddies, Have a (Light) beer with your friends to celebrate the 5 pound loss. Appreciate yourself for creating a goal and plan and working towards it daily.

And when the road washes out unexpectedly, realise it is just a temporary thing not the whole thing and get back on the right road as soon as possible. Relook at your goal, look at the plan and remind yourself why you are doing this. The benefits will become clear and reinforce your trip.

2 of my friends took up the challenge with me to create a great year in their work and their life. I'm cheering them on and expect to celebrate a great year for them as well as myself come Dec. 31st.

How about you?