

Making the Most of 2021: Midyear Goal Resetting

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Think back just a few months. If you are like me, this year seems like two separate time periods. Early in 2021 how we were functioning as individuals, as groups and communities was very different than what is happening now. That reality got me thinking ... maybe it is time to rethink what we want to accomplish in the 2nd half of 2021?

It is a traditional practice to set goals or “New Year’s resolutions” in January but seldom do we think of doing that mid-year. But since nothing has been very ‘traditional’ for a while, perhaps a new practice is in order for 2021.

Setting goals mid-year, THIS year, could be perfect timing to take advantage of all the changes that are taking place. These goals could be for you individually, for a group or business or even for a community. Regardless of where the goals are targeted, there are some helpful guidelines to remember when you establish and ultimately implement them. They are often referred to by an acronym – SMART goals – with each letter giving you guidance so that the goals are not just wishful thinking but really propel you down the desired path of action.

To take advantage of this unique opportunity and to make goals the most useful, incorporate ways to be S M A R T:

S – Specific – this is about what needs to happen, how it will happen and who will do it.

M – Measurable – how do you know you are making progress? What can be measured – number of people involved, dollars brought in, increase in media exposure? Increased use of a public facility?

A – Attainable – this is where the rubber meets the road. Is it doable, given the resources that you have at hand? Can the action and effort you put forth make it happen? A wish list and a goal are two very different things.

R – Relevant – Is this important? Do other things hinge on it? Is it worth investing in? If something is highly relevant, maybe it is worth some time to rethink how you might need to scale something back to make it more attainable.

T – Time-bound – You want something to happen within a certain time period. As a goal, you want to see something accomplished by a specific time so that you can move on to the next goal.

Setting a goal is a great accomplishment but achieving it is an even greater accomplishment. Here are a few tactics to help push that goal into reality:

First, write it down and make it visible. You want it front and center, especially if this is a group goal. If this is a community goal, perhaps you post it at the beginning of every community meeting or post it as part of every agenda?

Second, when it is visible, it is so much easier to check in with the goal. What progress was made this month? What steps are we taking to make the goal a reality? It will become a habit to see what progress has been made. It almost forces the group to act, which is good! You don't want the goal to be out of sight and out of mind.

And finally, third, celebrate small successes along the way. If this is a major goal for a community, there should be places where you can acknowledge the progress and let people know their efforts are making a difference. It can be as simple as thanking people, providing special refreshments after the meeting, or sharing accolades through the local media.

2021 is providing us with a unique opportunity to set new SMART mid-year goals. With a little help by writing them down, regularly checking in on them and then celebrating success along the way, you may find yourself and your community accomplishing more than you thought was possible in a few short months.

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