

10 Life Hacks for Using the Five Kinds of Goals in Life

We're just a few days into the New Year. With the odometer of life turning one more calendar-year digit, many people will think, hope, dream and plan about what's next in life.

What's been on your mind? What are you hoping to do next in life? What goal or New Year's resolution have you been pondering?

Perhaps a better question is, "Do you have a plan to make a plan?" If you were to go about setting a few goals this next year, how would you spend your time? This is a pertinent question right now, because the time between early in the New Year lends itself to reflection.

That's why this post jumps ahead to the fifth essential life design skill in the current series, [God's Plan for Your Life Plan](#). (This is the second post in the series that includes a free e-book giveaway for those that follow along.) The name of Life Design Skill #5 is "**Imagine Your Better Future.**" **It's all about thinking further ahead to where God is leading you and defining your life's biggest wins.** Again, now is a fantastic time to start practicing this skill.

As you know, the intentional living product market is saturated with books, events, and online courses. It can be a bit intimidating to navigate a wide variety of different approaches and even philosophies. The purpose of this post is to introduce you to some of the basics that have been integrated in the complete life planning system called [Life Younique](#).

To start, I want to explain the basic barriers that all people experience when they set goals. There are five common common obstacles.

5 Common Obstacles to Setting Goals

1. **People plan to do too much.** Another way to say it is that people over-plan. They simply set too many goals or make too big of a to-do list.
2. **People don't take enough time to plan.** This second barrier is related to why people plan too much. It's faster to make a list of 10 things to do than it is to make a list of the three most important things to do first.
3. **People hope for vague aspirations or outcomes.** All human beings long for a better future. We all dream to some degree. But most folks don't get vivid, precise or specific about what they want to do. This also requires time. It's important to know that allowing yourself to be guided by only a "general sense" of the future is your greatest barrier to setting life goals or creating a life plan. Fuzzy is your enemy.
4. **People never write things down.** There is something magic about writing down your life goals. It forces you to get specific and it enables ongoing attention and attentiveness. If fuzzy is your enemy, then focus is your friend. And writing is a key step in engaging your ability to focus.
5. **People don't use a system.** Ultimately when you succeed at setting and reaching a goal, you want to do it again. Goal setting done well is a repeatable process. And a good

process brings a myriad of benefits based on the input and experience of others. And others, I might add, who have accomplished more than you.

Given these barriers we can now assert the single most important step for setting life goals: **Set aside enough time to plan well.**

How much time is enough? That is different for everyone, but I recommend that you spend an entire day. This can be a special day during a holiday or weekend that you set aside to enjoy. Or, you might make a retreat experience where you spend two half-days planning while doing other activities that you love. For example, I like to travel for a weekend away while giving myself two, 4-hour time slots to plan and set new goals for the year. During the other times I will ride my mountain bike, kite board, snowboard, go fishing or just read.

The most important aspect of designing this time is to make it life-giving. What place energizes you? What activities motivate you? Do you like curling up with a warm cup of hot chocolate on the sofa, or would you rather sit a picnic table in the woods? Do you write your goals in a leather-bound journal or with an apple pencil?

Once you block the time on your calendar, you need to know how to spend it. To get started with that, you need to understand different kinds of goals. This topic is where the different approaches come in and can become confusing. **So I want to give you an extremely practical and powerful way of understanding different types of goals.**

I am not talking about different life domains when I refer to different types of goals. A goal may be set in your work life (make 10% more this year) or in your social life (go on one date per week) or with a personal hobby (run a half marathon). I am referring to the time-frame and complexity related to different kinds of goals. Losing five pounds and learning to play the piano, for example, take different amounts of time, preparation and steps in order to complete. In fact, its the failure to understand different types of goals and the different time horizons that relate to them that make most goal setting processes a waste of time.

When you survey all of the kinds of human accomplishment there are really five types of goals.

The 5 Types of Goals

1. **Ultimate or Lifetime Aspiration Goals.** These goals are those classic bucket-list kind of dreams. Many of these take a long time to prepare for or are things that you hope to do in different life stages. Generally speaking the will happen more than 3 years away. Included in this type of goal is the classic epitaph reflection. What are you hoping that people will say about you at your funeral? What do you sense will be the ultimate contribution of your life? While this may sound "heavy," I am a firm believer in the meaningful, imaginative work and planning on this level. It's the ultimate horizon of "before you die" thinking. I wrote a blog post series years ago on [how to develop your bucket list](#) with lots of examples. I have also shared some insights from [Steve Job's life](#) on how he used reflection on death to accomplish great things.
2. **Next Chapter or Life Prototype Goals.** These are goals you set for roughly the next 3

years. They require reflection that is not common or immediate (hence the full day needed to plan). They relate to all of your life domains, so you will be thinking as much about your job as you are your family. This kind of goal setting engages your thinking about life stages, personal values, and deeper aspirations. These goals are crucial because so many people get stuck in ruts with their life, like the job that doesn't challenge or that degree you didn't finish.

3. **One Year or New Year Resolution Goals.** These are the goals that define what you want different about your life as you take another lap around the sun. The most important aspect of this kind of goal setting is that you want to be able to accomplish the goal within a 12-month window. Examples include developing a financial plan this year, taking 4 camping trips with the family or finishing a job training certificate in the next 12 months.
4. **90-Day or Sustained-Sprint Goals.** This type of goal is very significant in the planning model that I have developed at Younique. A 90-day goal is just long enough to enable you get something really big accomplished. Yet it is short enough for an season of intense focus. That's why I think of it as a "sustained-sprint" goal. Examples include, reading 5 books or saving 1,000 dollars or losing 15 pounds in the next 90 days.
5. **Daily To-do or Weekly Task List Goals.** This type of goal is the smallest and most bite-sized. Some people couldn't go through life without creating lists every day while others resist this kind of short-term or daily planning. (After all God has wired human beings with an incredible variety of creative and productive capability.) I realize that in a post on setting life goals you are probably not thinking about this kind of goal. Yet, it is important to distinguish the mini-goals that make up our days and weeks and relate these to our bigger life goals. Examples include making calls to your top ten clients or purchasing everything you need for a work project at Home Depot.

Once you have a good handle on the kinds of goals you have to work with, it's now time to put the life planning puzzle together. **The secret to creating a simple yet powerful life plan is to have the right kind of goals at the right amount of time in the future.** I have personally spent a great deal of time learning, practicing and training others to optimize the recipe for human functioning. You will note how this recipe helps you navigate the five common obstacles to setting goals.

The best way to work with the five types of goals is to employ these 10 guidelines.

10 Life Hacks For Creating a Life Plan (Once You Know About the 5 Types of Goals)

1. Create a "future context" by working on goals furthest away first.
2. Develop one to three sentences that describe your ultimate contribution or what we call at Younique your "Tombstone tweet:" The 140-280 character tweet you would want to describe why your life ultimately mattered. This is the first part of your "Ultimate Goals"
3. Create a bucket list of 20-100 things you want to do before your life has expired. Every time you do a day of planning, try to add 5-10 things the list until you have a completed list of 100. Mark things off the list you have completed. This is the second part of your "Ultimate Goals"
4. Select a picture to describe your life 3-years from now. This the first part of your "Next

Chapter Goals."

5. Develop a list of vivid description bullets for your life three years from now (Next Chapter Goals). Think of this as your next chapter "prototype." A prototype is something fun that you get to tweak and design. Every time you do a day of planning revisit the prototype of what you hope your life looks like 3-years from now. I recommend having at least nine bullets that vividly describe your life. (In a future post in this series I will share my current list.) This is the second part of your "Next Chapter Goals".
6. Decide on no more than 4, one-year objectives (New Year's Resolutions) you would like to accomplish in the next year. More goals than that is futile for 98% of the population. You want to win so don't overcomplicate my recipe. If you do all four things this year, then you can consider adding more next year.
7. All goals longer than 90-days away may be qualitative only and don't necessarily need to be quantitative. But if goals you set in your bucket list or in your 3-year prototype or with your one-year objectives are quantitative that is okay. Just don't obsess about a number that is too far away.
8. Clarify one 90-day goal at a time. Get very specific about it. **Don't have more than one.** All goals 90-days MUST be developed as "smart goals." S.M.A.R.T. goals are Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Results-oriented and Time bound. You got this!
9. Focus every day on your one 90-day goal.
10. Set weekly and daily task list goals only after you have reviewed your other goals. While I recommend that you use a a list for weekly and daily tasks, I know many successful people who do not. But to the degree that you do set short-term goals, make sure you always review and activate steps toward your one 90-day goal before you do anything else.

It's now up to you to create a simple life plan and start dreaming about your future. Remember you need to block a good chunk of time. Why not get your calendar out right now and make it happen! If you don't create the margin you won't activate your imagination.

Here are a few things to keep you going. First, be on the look out for a free e-book that I am about to release to help guide your life planning this year. Second, I am going on a bucket list adventure of a lifetime in the first quarter of 2019. Are you interested in learning more about life design from me? If so get ready to follow along as I will give an unprecedented amount of free content and training live from a destination soon to be announced. It's a [#LifeDesignWithMe](#) initiative and you are invited.

> [Read more from Will.](#)
