

## How to make your goal *Shared*

Two heads are better than one right? I'm going to challenge that saying and replace it with "Two heads are more productive than one." Two people can easily get together to plan something and brainstorm, but the result won't necessarily be the best outcome or better than what you alone could come up with. This comes down to who it is your pairing your mind with.

At some point in your life, you've probably worked closely with someone or had to collaborate on a task or project with a co-worker with whom you didn't necessarily like or see eye-to-eye with. Or perhaps you were seeking advice from the wrong person? Sometimes we have to work with those who aren't of our choosing, and as you'd also know it's more effective to find a way to work with that person, despite your differences.

But when it comes to setting your goal in relation to The SMARTEST Method, you can choose whoever you want work with in attaining it. And you want to choose wisely.

This section is going to talk about the power of Accountability. For those of you not familiar with this concept, it basically entails sharing your goal with another who will support you and reinforce what you need to do in order to achieve your outcome. They don't need to have achieved what you're going for exactly, but can see it with clarity and have some form of investment in your success so they will assist you to get there.

## Who will be your Accountability Partner?

Firstly, you need to respect them. They should have achieved a level of success that you admire or resonate with. Preferably, they need to be a person who exhibits qualities and character traits you recognise as positive qualities and would like to emulate within yourself.

This person should also have belief in you and your abilities. It would help if you already have rapport with them and a relationship that is built on recognition and similar values. Once that foundation is set, it will make the process of sharing your goal with them and having the ongoing conversations and feedback sessions more productive and enjoyable.

To assess how strong this person's belief in you is, first sound them out. Before you propose they be your Accountability Partner, talk about your goal first. Tell them about it, explaining what that outcome will bring you and briefly outline the process you intend to follow in making it happen.

Notice their responses to what you say. Do they appear curious and ask questions. If so, you've got a safe bet this person believes you can or will achieve this and wants to see where your self-belief is at. The more interest they show in your goal and your commitment to it, the more inclined they'll



be to help you get it. Overall, go with your instinct; if it tells you this is the person that will help you, ask for their help. If your instinct tells you different, then proceed no further than just sharing with them the goal you wish to pursue.

So with this person you respect and who believes in your potential in return at your access, it's time to determine their level of readiness and availability to be your accountability partner. Begin by asking them if they are currently working on any goals or if they'd like to be. Ask questions and listen as attentively as they did for you. Find a connection with their goal you can be a part of. Through their explanation of what they're working on, you should be able to piece together clues that tell you how much time they spend on their goal, when and where they work on it and the amount of energy and focus they put into it. If you can see yourself contributing or offering input to their journey in any way, go back to your goal and ask if they would be willing and able to support you. In exchange, offer to help them out somehow, preferably in an equal way.

## Set up a space to share

Next, strategise an ongoing time and means of meeting up where the two of you can talk about your goals. Find a way to bring the two of you together, and be flexible. Ask your partner what works for them first, and try your best to work yourself in and around their availability. Initially you are seeking their help, so you must be willing to go out of your way to get it. I've always found if you offer more of yourself to people first, they are more likely to help you just as much in return. It's the old adage of "Give before you take".

A good goal sharing session should go for at least forty-five minutes to an hour. Too short a time and you can't get into the guts of the goal. Too long a time, and the conversation can wonder off and you'll lose track of your goal and the purpose of the meeting. If your partner can commit to about an hour a week, then lock them in!

Another crucial element to this kind of collaboration is to set clear boundaries and expectations of each other up front. Tell your accountability partner how you like to be communicated to and what you think you'll need help with the most. Be honest. Identify your weaknesses or areas of improvement that could hinder your progress, and ask your partner what they would suggest to counteract those obstacles. Hopefully, your partner is willing and able to challenge you. We all slack off at one point, lose focus and have our off-days, and the solution to that can be associating with someone who will give you a nudge, a shove or a kick in the butt to get you going again.

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