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Four action steps for setting career success goals

Unbelievable, but true, the end of the first quarter is upon us. Now is a prime time to take a step back and review the career goals you've set for the year 2015. Haven't developed any goals? Well, you still have time.

Ask yourself whether what you are doing today, career wise, is getting you closer to where you want to be by the end of this year. On the other hand, you may ask me, "Is goal setting even worth it?" Of course, my answer will always be yes. Goal set-

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ting is a necessary step toward success. Goals give us a much-needed sense of purpose. Goals give us a vision that keeps us pressing on. So, whatever your situation, here are four goal-setting action steps that will enable you to meet greater challenges and achieve career success.

- *Action step 1 — Write down your goals.* I realize you probably have heard this many times before, but this process helps you to crystallize your goals. In fact, put them on a screen saver or print them on a credit card-sized card and keep them in your wallet so you can look at them often. These strategies can help be a constant reminder of what you plan to achieve. In addition, make a list of

all the benefits that will accrue when you accomplish your goals. Then, develop an action plan that will help launch your goals and, as the Nike commercial says, "Just do it."

- *Action step 2 — Be committed.* Commitment gives you new power. For no matter what comes your way, you never turn your eye from the goal. Commitment guarantees victory. It's hard to keep committed people from success. Place stumbling blocks in their way and they take them for stepping stones. If difficulties are thrust in front of them, they go around, under or through them. To reach your goals, you must be totally committed and do what it takes to accomplish them.

A quick story: More than 60 years ago, Florence Chadwick decided she would become the first woman ever to swim the English Channel. For years, she trained and disciplined herself to keep going long after her body cried out for relief. Finally, in 1952, the big day arrived. She set out full of hope. As she neared the coast of England, a heavy fog settled in and the waters became increasingly cold and choppy. Finally, exhausted, she asked to be pulled aboard the boat — just a few hundred yards from her goal. She was defeated and heartbroken, especially when she discovered how close she had been to reaching her goal. Later, she told news reporters, "I'm not offering excuses, but I think I could have made it if I had been able to see my goal."

Chadwick was committed to trying

again. She memorized every feature of the distant coast and fixed it clearly in her mind. On the appointed day, she encountered all of the choppy waters and fog she had met before, but this time she made it.

I encourage you to be committed for that vision that keeps you pressing on.

- *Action step 3 — Be change oriented.* Change-oriented professionals are curious, innovative and constantly seeking ways to improve. Change helps us to refocus. Change gives us new opportunities. So, rather than being too resistive, too reactive and too closely tied to old habits, like you know we can be, get out of your comfort zone. Stretch. View change as the beginning of taking new and bold steps to achieving career success this year.

- *Action step 4 — Think positively.* Charles Swindoll wrote, "The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life." The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. You are in charge of your attitude. Make it work for you in achieving your career success goals.

Career success is a self-fulfilling prophecy. If you expect to succeed and you put forth the effort to achieve your goals, you will! Have a rewarding remainder of the year 2015.

For more information on Dr. White's programs and publications, visit www.successimages.com or call (225) 769-2307. •