

It does not matter if you are a beginner, a veteran college wrestler or an experienced coach, goal setting allows you to focus on the areas you need to improve on and objectives that you want to achieve.

To do full justice to the topic of goal setting or any other important topic would require more than just one page. However, I am going to outline some important goal setting guidelines below that will help you identify and achieve your highest goals during the upcoming season and the years to come.

1. Be Specific, setting technique and training goals, as well as performance goals.
2. Set a variety of goals, including a combination of short, medium and long-range goals.
3. Make your goals personal. Personal goals are more meaningful because they are what you want for yourself, not what others expect of you.
4. Make your goals challenging yet realistic. Many of your short-term goals should be easily achievable while others should be lofty. As you accomplish in proportion to what you attempt.
5. Post your goals. Write your goals down and refer to them often. Post your most important goals in your bedroom, on the fridge and/or in your locker.
6. Do not fear failure. If you only set easily obtainable goals, you will never reach your highest levels of achievement. There is no crime in not reaching your goal but only in failing to set one.
7. Evaluate your goals. Refer to your goals regularly. Check them off as you achieve them and set new goals. You must constantly evaluate where you are and where you are heading.
8. Design a strategy for achieving your goals. Decide how much and what type of work it will take to achieve your goals. Then design and follow a training schedule that will allow you to reach them.
9. Make a Commitment to your goals and work plan. Anyone can set a goal. Those who achieve their goals have the discipline to stay focused on their training and the perseverance necessary to work through the inevitable frustrations.
10. Believe in yourself! There is a big paperweight rock on my desk staring me in the face as I share my thoughts with you. It says if you do not believe in yourself...chances are that nobody else will. Allow me to elaborate below with a couple personal stories.

During the summer of 1984 I intensely watched many hours of the Olympics on television. That was the year seven American Wrestlers won Gold Medals, while my fellow West Virginia native, Mary Lou Retton, inspired the nation. I was watching with a group of my high school friends when Bobby Weaver won the Gold Medal and picked up his baby for a victory lap. I still vividly remember all the excitement. I told my peers that I was going to be on the next Olympic Team. They thought I was joking, but I was dead serious. I believed in myself! Four years of intense training later I made our U.S. Olympic Team.

In 1994 I left college coaching to focus on teaching and training young wrestlers. I set two lofty goals. To open a successful wrestling school in my hometown and to coordinate the most effective summer wrestling camp system in the country. Many people questioned my decision to leave a secure college coaching position to pursue my dreams. However, I never looked back. I believed in my ability to achieve my goals. I poured all my time and energy into training and motivating my young students, while improving and expanding my camps. I was armed with a variety of goals and a strategy to achieve them. I applied the same goal setting guidelines that I have outlined above. Today, three years later I have met my goals and am in the process of tackling new ones.

It does not matter who believes in you as long as you believe in yourself. If you wish to excel in wrestling or life, you must have meaningful, concrete goals and you must believe deep down inside that you will achieve them. I encourage you to make a commitment to achieving your highest goals today!

By Ken Chertow