

A KICK ASS GUIDE TO GOAL SETTING

A ONE THING GUIDE



It's safe to say that when it comes to goal achievement, most people think in terms of crossing items off their daily to-do list. That is, they don't think of pursuing personal or professional aspirations that are less urgent but ultimately more important. What they are doing is often a day-to-day crisis management approach for tasks at hand rather than actually working toward something larger. It's a common problem with a simple yet uncommon solution.

If this is something you find yourself doing at times, don't lose hope. The authors of *The ONE Thing* can help you change your approach for the better. When you use their **Goal Setting to the Now** system, you are creating a functional way to both identify and achieve your long-term goals. It's a means for understanding what big things in your life need your attention and giving yourself permission not to sweat the small stuff.

“When everyone is in agreement on the big goal, it becomes a compass to direct them in their daily activities.”

This is a system that can help you in all facets of life. In other words, you can implement Goal Setting to the Now (GSTTN) to reach your personal summit in both business and in life. In your professional world, this can lead to greater collaboration and support for the work at hand. When everyone is in agreement on the big goal, it

becomes a compass to direct them in their daily activities. A similar effect can be experienced in your personal life—when those that matter most to you have an understanding of what you want to achieve, they will not only want to go along for the ride, they’ll want to support you too.

You start the GSTTN process by setting your long-term goals. We’ll get into more detail for each step of the GSTTN process later in this guide, but for now, use the image below to help you better understand what the process for reaching your goals entails. In the first step, you’ll look ahead in your life and think about where you want to see yourself someday. What are you doing in your work and in your personal life? Take this opportunity to really think about what accomplishments will make you happy in the long run and write them down. You can then drill down further to shorten your timeframes, such as what you want to see yourself achieve five years down the road and even one year from now.

STEP 1: Set your long-term and 5-year goals.



STEP 2: Use the GPS to lay out your annual goals.



STEP 3: Break your goals into monthly and weekly pieces with the 4-1-1.



STEP 4: Time block your calendar to make time for your most important work.



WHERE THE ACTION HAPPENS

STEP 5: Create a task list to work from when time permits.



STEP 6: Capture any other thoughts or tasks that arise.



Once you understand where you want to go, you need to figure out how to get there. What needs to be done to achieve these lofty goals? This is where step 2, the GPS part of the process, comes into effect. The GPS, for all practical purposes, is a road map that lays out what you need to focus on to reach your goals over the next year. For each big goal you set, you'll write out a step-by-step plan to use in the year ahead in order to reach it. With the GPS, you'll break down each long-term goal into the priorities set around it and the strategies that must be implemented to achieve it. Accomplishing the priorities and strategies laid out in the GPS will get you closer to your ultimate goal.

“Once you understand where you want to go, you need to figure out how to get there.”

After you've determined the priorities and strategies you'll put into action to achieve your long-term goals over the next year, you'll need to pinpoint what to do in the present time to get the ball rolling. Step 3 of the process, the 4-1-1, helps you break your aspirations into smaller and more attainable pieces for the here and now. Think of the 4-1-1 as an at-a-glance look at what you want to accomplish in the month ahead, broken down into weekly increments. The 4-1-1 holds you accountable to doing what is required right now to achieve your ultimate goals, because without completing these short-term action items, you won't get where you need to go.

Once you've identified what needs to be done in the short term to reach your long-term goals, you need to set aside the time to do it. Step 4 of the process is time blocking, which, to put it simply, involves taking a calendar and marking off adequate time to complete this essential work. Think of this time as an appointment you've made with yourself—you'll need to keep the appointment if you want to make progress toward accomplishing your goals.

When the work you must do to achieve your big goals is mapped out for the year and accounted for on your daily calendar, you can finally turn to some of your smaller tasks. This is where steps 5 and 6 come into effect. It goes without saying that there are always going to be things going on in your professional and personal life that, while not part of your big goals, may still warrant your attention. Once you have the necessary work accounted for each day to take the steps toward accomplishing your big goals, you can guiltlessly turn to other items you may have been pushing off.

With this brief overview complete, we can now take a closer look at each step of the GSTTN process.

STEP 1: PINPOINTING YOUR LONG-TERM GOALS

Whether you are focusing on your professional or personal life, each step of GSTTN will help you get crystal clear about what's important at that moment in time.



When you first sit down to attack your goals using the GSTTN process, you should think about setting the vision for your goal-achievement journey. Consider it your first foray into working through this thought process. Step 1 (which you can find marked as exercise 2 in the back of this guide) is about getting clear on what you'll need to do to reach your end goal. Defining your far-off "Someday" goals establishes your road map for the future and should not be something you rush through. Plan to share your future goals with your business partners and family; many of your goals will include them, so involving them in the process makes sense. Plus, their feedback might guide you to make valuable revisions and refinements.

After you've laid out these Long-Term Goals, refer back to the preliminary GSTTN thoughts you put on paper and determine what has to be in place in five years in order to reach your Someday Goal. You'll need to be completely honest with yourself as you will want to set

realistic expectations for yourself for both the future and the present.

For example, if you're looking to open additional offices outside of your local area, you'll need to map out

a cohesive strategy to get there. Along the same lines, if you're hoping to move into a new home, you'll need to get real clear about your family's finances over the next five years.

STEP 2: THE GPS

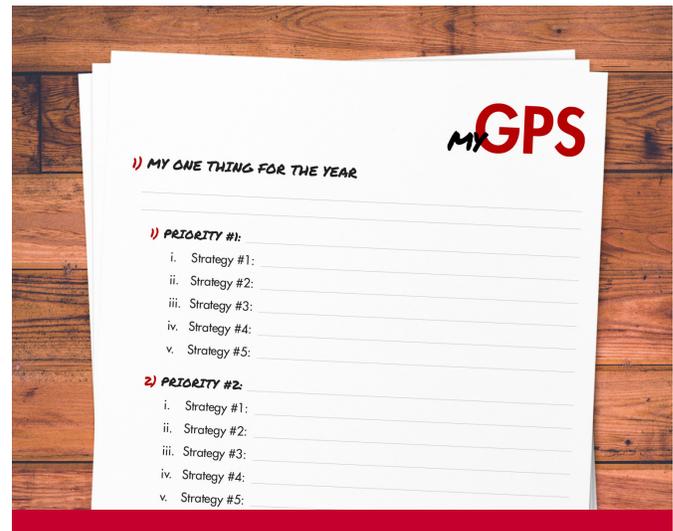
At its simplest, the GPS stands for “goals, priorities, and strategies” and is based on your Long-Term Goals. It's a straightforward, no-frills business plan (see exercise 3 in the back of this guide) that looks at what you need to accomplish in the coming year to be in alignment with what you want in the future. When you finish your GPS, you'll be able to see where you're going and you'll know how you're going to get there.

- **Goal:** What do you want to accomplish this year?
- **Priorities:** What key things will you need to focus on in order to achieve your goal?
- **Strategies:** What actions are necessary to achieve each priority?

Remember, a GPS outlines your plan of attack for one specific goal. This means it's possible to have more than one goal for the coming year that requires a GPS. You can complete this activity for each of your goals and determine which need your immediate attention.

While there is no exact science to the number of priorities or strategies that will help you reach a specific goal, a good rule of thumb is to have approximately three priorities and five strategies per goal. And remember, reaching any big goal requires personal growth, so be sure to account for the thinking, skills, and habits you'll need to develop in the priorities and strategies section of the GPS.

In your professional world, for example, if your goal was to grow your consulting business by a certain year-over-year percentage, you might plan to achieve it by focusing on prospecting for new business, marketing for



new business, and developing key relationships. To do this, you'd brainstorm a handful of strategies that would ultimately move the needle for each priority and help you achieve the year-over-year growth you wanted.

Like the first step of this journey helped you set your vision, and your Long-Term Goals helped to set the course, you'll find that the GPS is incredibly helpful when planning for the year ahead with your team. Even if team members have drastically different roles, the GPS can show you—and them—where their responsibilities affect one another and contribute to the overall mission. With this clarity, you'll be able to determine if too much or too little responsibility has been assigned to any one teammate.

STEP 3: THE 4-1-1

Your Long-Term Goals and your GPS are complete. The next part of the GSTTN process involves breaking down your annual goals into monthly milestones and weekly targets. That's where the 4-1-1 comes in. It stands for four weeks, one month, and one year of goals, which

are laid out in front of you in an action plan. Remember, each week on the 4-1-1 is a step toward achieving your ultimate goal.

We suggest laying out your 4-1-1 on one sheet of paper, like the one illustrated on the following page.



You can refer to exercise 4 in the back of this guide to create your own. Why just one sheet of paper? Because you only need one glance to easily see and internalize the plan for your year, month, and week.

At the top, under “My Annual Goals,” copy over the priorities specified in your GPS, whether professional or personal. Refer back to these annual goals often to keep a clear picture of what you plan to accomplish during the coming year. Then each month, work backward from your annual goals to set monthly and weekly targets. As much as you’re focused on and driven by the Someday Goal outlined in your Long-Term Goals, the key to success is being able to zero in on the actionable items of today. To do so, ask yourself the following question around each of your goals: “Based on my annual goal, what’s the ONE Thing

I can do this month such that by doing it everything else will be easier or unnecessary?” This question, called the Focusing Question, helps you prioritize the most important things so that they get done first. Asking it helps you to form your plan of attack, as your answers to it get listed as “My Monthly Goals.” From there on out, you can update your 4-1-1 at the beginning of every week to set “My Weekly Goals” for the rest of the month. As each week is about to begin, look back on what you accomplished previously and determine what you need to get done in order to stay on track to hit your monthly goals. When the month ends, start a new 4-1-1 by filling in the annual goals first (note: they may have changed given how the year is progressing), followed by what you need to get done for the month in that first week.

If you plan to succeed at a high level, you need to expect to be accountable for your actions—and the 4-1-1 helps people to do just that. In fact, in a research paper entitled, “Why Do Some People Succeed Where Others Fail?” Dr. Richard B. Gunderman noted: “One of the traits shared in common by successful people is a sense that they make things happen, as opposed to the sense that things happen to them.” People who achieve their goals connect the dots between their actions and their outcomes, and they are clear that they alone are responsible for their own success.

And when it comes to others who are on the goal achievement journey with you, the 4-1-1 is helpful because it acts as a form of ongoing communication to ensure that the right work is being done to maintain the trajectory toward the goal.

STEP 4: TIME BLOCKING YOUR CALENDAR

Once you’ve decided to take action on the goals outlined in your 4-1-1, you need to grab your calendar and schedule time to work on the key activities that will move you toward them. That’s what time blocking is—making an appointment with yourself so that you can work on what really matters. And this doesn’t mean just putting time aside, but actually using it for what you’ve planned to use it for. Trust us, you won’t accomplish your goals if you allow yourself to take your eye off the ball. And yes, both your professional and personal life goals need to be time blocked for.

It may surprise you, but the part of the day where you schedule your time block can also impact your likeliness to

succeed. In a professional setting, the morning is generally the best time to time block for those key activities that are essential to your goal, unless your profession operates on a different timetable. It’s when your willpower is freshest, your energy is highest, and distractions are lowest. And when you work on your key tasks early in the day, even if you’re less focused later on, you’ll still get a lot accomplished. This is because you will have created so much momentum and power in the morning that what you do during the afternoon will become about supporting what you accomplished during your time block. And, as a side benefit, you’ll know your most important work is completed for the day, which is a feat to be celebrated in itself.

Time blocking as a team is also beneficial. And believe us, it's actually easier than it sounds to set up a uniform time block. Companies such as National Instruments, 3M, Facebook, and Google are proponents of meeting-free days or hours of the day to allow their employees to focus on their work. If they can do it, you can too. When everyone abides by the same rules, employees experience an increase in productivity because there are fewer interruptions and distractions taking them from the task at hand. These time blocks also remove some of the inconsistencies of a workday that can contribute to unnecessary disruptions. When a coworker or team member knows when you're unreachable but also knows when you will be available to collaborate or answer questions, you'll find they can hold questions, comments, or meetings for the periods of time that

STEP 5: YOUR TASK LIST

The GSTTN process helps you to plan your approach for accomplishing your big goals, although it's true that some of your smaller to-do items will never disappear completely. We suggest creating a task list that accom-

THINGS TO TIME BLOCK ON YOUR CALENDAR

1. **Your time off:** Time to recharge, rest, and relax.
2. **Your most important goal:** That thing that will single-handedly help you reach your Someday Goals.
3. **Your planning time:** Adjust your time block accordingly based on whether or not you've dedicated enough time to your most important goal.

aren't part of your time block. This gives you uninterrupted periods of time to focus on what matters most for hitting your goals.

panies your 4-1-1 for these items. Your less important undertakings go here. And when you've completed your daily time block for your most important goal, you can refer to the task list and work on one of these items.

STEP 6: STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING EVERYTHING ELSE

If you're somewhere without your 4-1-1 and GPS sheets, or you are in the middle of your focused time block and a thought arises relating to one of your goals or tasks, it's important to have a mechanism in place to handle these stray thoughts. You need to be able to capture ideas when they happen so you can stay focused. In our offices, we encourage everyone to carry a notebook throughout the day to be prepared to track thoughts and projects.

While jotting a key thought down with a pen and paper is an easily implementable option wherever you are, there are also a multitude of digital alternatives available for managing the tasks that arise to better meet your goals.

For instance, **Wunderlist** is one of the many task management systems that has piqued our attention. This program manages your to-do list across a variety of platforms and enables you to share it, ensuring that it is always up to date and you are always in the know. Another benefit of Wunderlist is that it allows you to prioritize your list, versus simply keeping it in order of the task's inclusion. This allows you to glance at the list and quickly take action on your most important items.

FollowUp.cc is a different yet equally compelling tool for keeping your tasks on goal. This system allows you to set reminders to tell you when to follow up on lower priority tasks and communications.

Finally, **Evernote** belongs on this list of strategies for keeping track of your goals. This program works across mobile and desktop platforms in order to help you stay





Here's a real-life example of a woman who used the GSTTN system to determine how to take action on her Someday Goal. This woman, an attendee of a ONE Thing seminar, determined her ultimate goal was to become the main act at a jazz venue. Recognizing this was no small feat, she used the GSTTN process to work backward and plan her path to success:

IN FIVE YEARS

Have 25 jazz classics mastered—enough for an entire performance

IN ONE YEAR

Have the first 5 of 25 jazz classics mastered—on track to excel at 5 per year

THIS MONTH

Start practicing the pieces

THIS WEEK

Identify the 25 jazz classics to focus on

TODAY

Start research on the library of jazz music

organized with notes, to-do lists, idea captures, and reminders, just to start. It's a searchable collection of your notes, thoughts, and tasks, conveniently all in one place so that you can quickly find what you need and stay on the task at hand.

New options for managing your goals, tasks, and time crop up all the time. The important thing to note is that you don't have to go it alone. There are a variety of products to help you streamline your tasks and to-do list and be your most productive self.

NEXT STEPS

Inspired and ready to get started? Turn the page and begin the journey toward your Someday Goal by outlining it and then breaking it into smaller more attainable goals for the moments in time leading up to it. There's no better time than the present to get started on your future.

THE GOAL SETTING TO THE NOW PROCESS AT A GLANCE

Step 1: Determine what your big Someday and Five Year Goals are, and share them with the people who are impacted by these goals. Commit to your goals by putting them on paper and work backward from these goals to determine what you'll have to accomplish in the year ahead.

Step 2: Using the GPS format, break your goal for the year down into the priorities you'll focus on and the strategies you'll use to achieve each priority.

Step 3: With the 4-1-1, indicate the annual goals you are working toward and how this translates to the work you must do this month. Then, design an action plan for the first week of the month you're in based on what you are aiming to accomplish.

Step 4: Time block on your calendar for the important activities highlighted on your action plan that will help you accomplish your key goals.

Step 5: Create a task list to work from for your less important items when available time presents itself.

Step 6: Carry a notebook to capture any additional thoughts or tasks that arise over the course of your day. By writing things down, you don't have to commit to remembering them and can stay focused on the task at hand.

EXERCISE 1

GOAL SETTING TO THE NOW

SOMEDAY PROFESSIONAL OR PERSONAL GOAL:

What's the ONE Thing I want to do someday?

FIVE-YEAR GOAL:

Based on my Someday Goal, what's the ONE Thing I can do in the next five years?

ONE-YEAR GOAL:

Based on my Five-Year Goal, what's the ONE Thing I can do this year?

MONTHLY GOAL:

Based on my One-Year Goal, what's the ONE Thing I can do this month?

WEEKLY GOAL:

Based on my Monthly Goal, what's the ONE Thing I can do this week?

DAILY GOAL:

Based on my Weekly Goal, what's the ONE Thing I can do today?

RIGHT NOW:

Based on my Daily Goal, what's the ONE Thing I can do right now?

Source: Adapted from Keller, Gary and Papasan, Jay. *The ONE Thing*, 2013.

EXERCISE 2

LONG-TERM GOALS

1) SOMEDAY GOALS

Personal

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Business

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

2) FIVE-YEAR GOALS

Personal

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Business

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

3) ONE-YEAR GOALS

Personal

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Business

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

EXERCISE 3

THE GPS

1) MY ONE THING FOR THE YEAR

1) PRIORITY #1:

i. Strategy #1:

ii. Strategy #2:

iii. Strategy #3:

iv. Strategy #4:

v. Strategy #5:

2) PRIORITY #2:

i. Strategy #1:

ii. Strategy #2:

iii. Strategy #3:

iv. Strategy #4:

v. Strategy #5:

3) PRIORITY #3:

i. Strategy #1:

ii. Strategy #2:

iii. Strategy #3:

iv. Strategy #4:

v. Strategy #5:

EXERCISE 4

THE 4-1-1

MY ANNUAL GOALS

Personal

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Business

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

MY MONTHLY GOALS

Personal

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Business

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

MY WEEKLY GOALS

WEEK 1

Personal

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Business

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

WEEK 2

Personal

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Business

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

WEEK 3

Personal

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Business

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

WEEK 4

Personal

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Business

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Read *The ONE Thing* and refer to the resources at www.the1thing.com to develop the insights, skills, and habits that will help you take each step of your journey with power and passion. Find up-to-date information on seminars and coaching programs, as well as exclusive ONE Thing tools that will keep you on the journey you want to be on. It matters. It's your life.



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