



"A goal properly set is halfway reached."
— Abraham Lincoln

**WatchGlass
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By isolating a single aspect of a broader situation and focusing on it, great progress can be made...

Fast Track Your Goals

by Rosanne Scriffignano, CRC, ACC

Athletes at the Beijing Olympics inspired the world by demonstrating what's possible when focus, goal setting, and perseverance come together to create impressive results.

As spectators of this historic event, we learned that age and nationality were not as important as the athletes' desire to reach their goals. For those athletes who returned home without a bronze, silver, or gold medal, their participation earned them recognition in the shape of national pride and honor.

If you're like most people, you'll never compete in an Olympic event. However, there is much to be learned by these athletes. When meaningless activities seep into your life or you're not happy with the direction you're taking, consider turbo-charging your **Focus**, **Goal Setting**, and **Perseverance**. To get started, consider the following tips:

- **Focus**—In a world full of distractions, it's easy to get sidetracked. Technology, such as e-mail, voice mail, and television, can fill up precious hours that could otherwise be spent engaged in more meaningful activities.

If you find that you're losing control of your daily calendar, keep track of how you spend your time over several days. Do you notice any patterns? Are you filling up your high-energy time with mundane or filler tasks? Once you identify the troublesome activities, try to minimize, eliminate, or "outsource" them.

- **Goal Setting**—Goal setting is critical because without goals, it's difficult to know how to spend your time. All Olympic athletes set goals. You should too! After you identify your goals, make a list of tasks or mini-goals that will help you to achieve your overall goal. For example, if you want to earn a Master's degree, your mini-goals might include researching programs, completing applications, and applying for tuition assistance.

With the list of mini-goals ready, the final step is to add them to your daily to-do list or calendar. No matter how insignificant they may seem, every action you take will bring you closer to your goals.

- **Perseverance**—Franklin D. Roosevelt suggested that "When you come to the end of your rope, tie a knot and hang on." After you've identified them, find ways to hang onto your goals. To keep yourself on track, enlist the help of friends by telling them what you plan to accomplish each week. Another option is to work with a Career or Executive Coach.

No matter how daunting they may seem, goals can give you purpose and a sense of hope. By combining focus, goal setting, and perseverance, you'll be on the fast track to achieving your goals. You'll also be the judge of whether those goals earn you a bronze, silver, or gold.

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