Baby Steps To Powerful Goals Setting

Ricky Murugan

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By

Ricky Murugan

Hello there, that's me; *Ricky Murugan*; Business Research Analyst with Finance and Management Accounting and Compliance.

I have a quick question to ask of you.

Do you set goals for yourself, for example setting New Year's resolutions, but you find that you consistently fall short from the mark or achieve insignificant results from there.
If you are; rest assured that you are not alone, as I too have encountered these experiences and many times considering to give up on my goals.

In the following pages, there may lie the solution to your woes.

Happy discovering and All Success to you.

Ricky Murugan

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Thank You and To Your Success.

Ricky Murugan

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What is Kaizen? How Can It Help In Your Goals Setting?

Kaizen means 'positive change continually' and more specifically is generally used to describe the application of continuous improvement through the use of small, incremental changes to your lifestyle akin to taking baby steps– as opposed to anything big and too challenging.

So if your goal is to become a rock star, Kaizen would mean making lots of little changes to your lifestyle and habits to move you in that direction. It might mean taking up guitar lessons, it might mean giving up some bad habits so you have more time and energy for practice, or it might mean saving a small amount

of money each day so that you can eventually make a *lot* of money cumulatively.

Either way, kaizen means taking little steps to eventually go a long way.

Why Kaizen Works For You

What makes Kaizen so effective is the simple fact that most people struggle when trying to make extreme changes in their lives. We are creatures of habit and trying to make huge shifts in our lifestyle requires a huge amount of energy and discipline – factors which themselves are finite.

Kaizen works wonderfully because each little change has real benefits but is easy to implement. What's more, these changes add up over time giving us a sense of reward and achievement.

Even more than that, making continuous small changes will make subsequent changes easier and easier. That's not only because you'll become used to changing but also because you'll have created the right conditions to make future change easier.

Believe it or not, it's easier to work out when you're saving $1 a day on coffee. Why? Because that $1 a day adds up to $365 a year.

And that makes us feel richer. And that makes us feel happier. And that gives us more energy. And that means we're less stressed and more full of beans in the gym.

You see the difference? The more of these little changes you make, the more they will build and grow and the more momentum you'll gain.

The Downside

But nothing is perfect and of course Kaizen also has drawbacks. One downside is that smaller changes are also much easier to forget and to undo. This means there will be times when you might be taking one step forward and two steps back.

The key here is not to get disheartened by this. This is relatively normal and no cause for concern. If you aren't moving constantly forward all the time that's not the end of the world: you just need to keep going and keep trying!

Kaizen and Personal Goals Setting – Where Do I Begin?

If you've come across the concept of 'kaizen' then you'll know that making lots of small changes can help you to build towards big goals. It's very hard to encourage yourself to take on some huge new project when you're already struggling to juggle all the balls you have in the air, so making *small* changes will likely be much more likely to be successful than trying to make one huge one.

But now you have a new problem: where do you start?

Say your goal is to be richer, or happier, or fitter… and your aim is to make tiny changes that will help you to achieve that. Where do you begin? It's going to be a long, slow process, so where is it best to direct your energy at this point?

Well, often it makes sense to think in currency. And when it comes to your personal goals, your currency is: time, energy and money.

The Currency of Success

With time, energy and money, everything becomes suddenly more achievable. To workout you need time but you also need energy at the end of the day or first thing in the morning. To eat well you need money and the time to cook. To work on a side business you need time and maybe money so that you can invest. To take up a new hobby you'll need all three. And relationships thrive when you have those things too…

So a great place to start with kaizen *no matter* what your personal goals are, is to increase your time, your energy and your money.

What small changes can you possibly make to do those things? There are tons…

- Giving up one of your two coffees a day to save money
- Turning down the heating one degree to save on the heating bill
- Going to bed 10 minutes earlier to get more energy
- Removing the sugar from your tea
- Buying yourself a steamer to save yourself 5 minutes ironing
- And etc…

Start With Subtractive, Not Additive

The great thing with kaizen is that change is exponentially. Successful change one aspect of your life and other will follow.

So your main directive at this point should *simply* be to successfully make change. Even if it's miniscule.

This means starting with what's easiest and that in turn means starting with goals that are subtractive rather than additive. What's this mean? It means that it's easier to do one thing *less* than it is to do one thing extra.

More on this in the next chapter.

10 Minutes a Day Nurturing Your Goals and Make It Happen

Want to achieve something great?

Then you need to be constantly focused on your personal goals and you need to be all the time tweaking them and building on them.

Arnold Schwarzenegger – who is undoubtedly one of the most successful individuals to have been born in the last century – says that you can have the very best ship in the world but that if the

captain doesn't know where he's going… he's not going to get anywhere fast.

Having a vivid goal that you feel passionate about and driven towards is something that will help you to make everything else happen.

If your goal is to write a best-selling novel, then it's really visualizing and believing in this goal that will allow you to stay on track and to keep moving towards that goal.

If you really believe you can one day be the next JK Rowling then you *won't* miss that writing session.

Why Take a Kaizen Approach to Nurturing Your Goals

That's why having goals you're passionate about can make all the difference in your success. Likewise, knowing the precise steps you need to take to make those goals happen is also equally important.

Unfortunately though, too many people simply don't have the right goals. That is to say that they forget their goals, they aren't

passionate about their goals, or their goals don't have the correct steps involved to help them get to where they need to be.

So what do you do? Sit down, write out your goal for a few hours, and forget about it?

How about instead, you take ten minutes every day to spend some time writing your goals and going over them. This way you are constantly keeping your goals in the forefront of your mind, you are constantly reminding yourself of them and you're constantly able to refine and perfect them.

This way you can keep adapting them to your changing circumstances, your changing desires and the things you learn in the journey.

Goals for Every Area of Your Life

By investing just ten minutes a day on goals as well, you'll be able to look at setting goals in other areas of your life. Your career, your relationships, your fitness… and the more you do this the more you'll have a systemized way to improve *every* aspect of your life.

Why Setting Big Goals Could Be Detrimental For You And How To Avoid It!

If you could change anything about your life, what would it be? Perhaps you'd be stronger, perhaps you'd be thinner, maybe you'd be richer, or maybe you'd just be happier…

Those are all great goals but chances are that you've had these goals since you were first an adult and quite possibly you're no closer to achieving them now than you were when you first turned 18. This is the case for many people because guess what? We *all* want those things.

The problem is that these goals are too big, too daunting and too abstract and that's why we never achieve them. But there is another way.

If You Could… You Would!

Continuous improvement, sometimes referred to as 'Kaizen', means making lots of changes all the time that only have a small impact on your goals and on the quality of your life – but which will ultimately result in large beneficial changes.

Say you want to lose weight. What you might then do is decide that you're going to start running every forty minutes and that you're going to cut out all your day time snacking. Sounds great doesn't it?

Except it's really not that simple. Because if you *had* the energy that you would need in order to be that active every evening, then you would *already* be exercising. Think about it: do you feel like you have tons of free time? Or tons of free energy?

The answer is probably not. So adding on 200-280 minutes of exercise *and* removing some of your fuel isn't exactly going to be an easy and straightforward objective. You still will be too busy, too stressed and too tired to do anything else… and so you'll really struggle to suddenly just add a huge commitment *on top* of everything else.

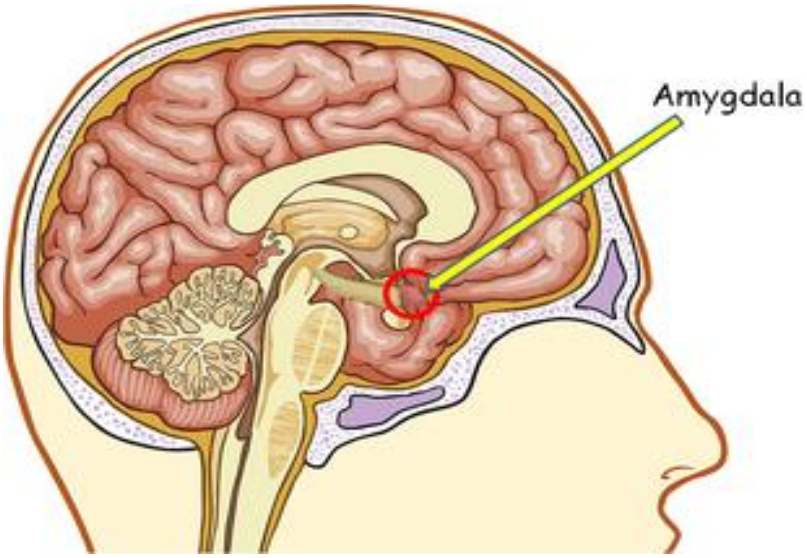
The Continuous Improvement Approach

Instead then, think about setting your-self lots of smaller goals that will impact on every aspect of your life. That means perhaps just removing one item of junk food from your lunch box. Going to bed 30 minutes earlier maybe. Then maybe starting to add in *one* jogging session a week.

This way you've taken very small, very manageable steps. But what you've also done is created the space and the energy necessary to start doing that little bit of running.

The best bit? These changes are cumulative. Make a few small ones and you'll start moving much faster towards your personal goals!

Taking a Gradual Step Approach to Nurturing Your Personal Goals



All of us have goals and ambitions but unfortunately many of us find we don't reach them as quickly or as efficiently as we would like. Take New Years for instance as the perfect example: how many times have you heard people tell you their resolutions to lose weight, build muscle or give up smoking… only to then give up on the idea only a few weeks later after they've started to find the whole thing too tiring.

The problem is that these goals are too large and too abstract and thus too easy to just kind of… forget. The solution then is to break those goals down into much smaller things that you

actually can accomplish and that will nevertheless add up to provide cumulative benefits over time.

Too BIG or too sudden a move, will trigger your amygdala into a panic mode and might throw you out of balance.

Why Smaller Steps Work Better and more Effective

This is the idea of 'Kaizen' – taking small steps to achieve big goals. Not only does this make your goal more manageable and less daunting, but it also makes it more concrete and measurable.

So say your goal was to build muscle by working out. If you were to make your body look like a cover model's by the end of the year, you would almost certainly fail. Not because the goal is too ambitious (though this may be a factor) but rather because it's so vague and so 'far off'. Your goal can be to look like that in a year but this doesn't prevent you from eating cake and slacking off tomorrow. Why? Because you can simply 'make up for it later'.

Instead then, make the goal be simply to 'exercise two a week'. This is a much smaller goal but it's also a much more *concrete*

goal. In other words, it's something you can either succeed at or fail at within a week. That means you can't talk your way out of doing what you need to do and it means you can't skip workouts.

But while you're busy focusing on this small goal, you'll find that you end up achieving the big one overall.

It's great to have an end destination in mind, but it's even more important to have each step mapped out for you. This is how you can make sure that you're making the right moves and right decisions every single day to move you closer to that goal.

So look at your current goals and ask yourself – how can you break them down into smaller, manageable chunks?

A Blueprint for Continuous Improvement

Kaizen is often used to describe the process of continuous improvement. That means making lots of small changes on a regular basis in order to ultimately improve the operation on a larger scale. It's often applied to business and particularly to things like manufacturing and engineering.

But it can also be applied to your own personal goals. If you take the approach of continuous improvement – of making lots of tiny little changes in your life on a regular basis – then over time you'll be able to 'upgrade' every single aspect of your life and in a few years you can be in a whole different place.

Countless studies tell us that **people resist extreme change**. That is to say that if you think you can wake up one morning and

become a highly disciplined individual, then you're in for a big surprise.

In order for change to be successful it must be incremental and it must be holistic. You have to change every aspect of yourself and your lifestyle to support yourself in the pursuit of your new goals. And to do this, you need to make lots of small, manageable changes.

How to Use the Process

So how does this actually look once you start using it? How do you take this idea and turn it into a reliable blueprint that you can follow?

A good place to start would be at the beginning. So look for one small change you can make to your lifestyle that can help to serve you in some tiny way in achieving your goal.

Let's say you need more time. Perhaps then the thing you need is to get more sleep. So maybe you want to wake up half an hour later. So why not buy yourself a steamer and save a lot of time ironing? Or replace all your shirts with ones that don't have to be ironed.

That's a tiny change you've made – switching your shirts – but the result is half an hour of extra sleep. That's a huge difference to your energy levels throughout the day.

What else do you need to achieve your goals? If you need a little more money then perhaps you could look for a way to save $1 a day. $1 a day is a tiny thing to have to change, so maybe it just means that you have a cup of tea in the morning instead of a coffee, or get off the bus one stop earlier.

Now you have 30 minutes of extra sleep *and* an additional $20 a week. Those are two tiny changes but they've just made it much easier for you to accomplish *anything* else you want to in your life because you have more energy and more money… What else might be possible?

There you go and I hope that these articles have added value to you and feel free to drop by the other articles for you.

Thank You and To Your Success.

Ricky Murugan

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