## GOAL SETTING

1. Know what makes a good goal. Goals should meet the criteria of SMART\*:

S – Specific: Make them as clear as possible

M – Measurable: Develop a benchmark and a target so you know if you’re making progress

A – Attainable: It’s healthy to stretch, but ensure your goals are within reach so it’s worth the effort

R – Realistic: Create goals that are challenging enough to avoid underachievement and apathy

T – Time Bound: Assign deadlines to goals in order to create a sense of urgency, which fosters achievement

2. Do your homework. Look at past data and gather information in order to help you create goals. Without this insight, you can’t build on past successes or failures to know what worked and what didn’t.

3. Identify the rewards and consequences. Closely evaluate what you can gain or lose from not achieving your goal. Once identified, these factors can be powerful motivators. It’s important to be honest with yourself. If you genuinely care about it, you’ll make it happen.

4. List out the obstacles. By clearly identifying what’s holding you back from achieving your goals, you can minimize uncertainty and increase confidence. If roadblocks are identified, you can make plans to overcome them.

5. Brainstorm solutions for the obstacles. If you think through multiple ways to remove obstacles, you’ll be able to select the most effective solution for the situation.

6. Take action. Once you determine the most effective solution, identify the actions you need to take to achieve your goals. Also, establish deadlines for the actions and determine if you can delegate the task to someone else.

7. Get others on board with your goals. Gaining consensus and getting people to understand the why behind your goals is an important step in being able to achieve them. If people can get behind your motivations and your thinking, they will offer you support (which will come in handy when you need to delegate!).

8. Check in frequently. Depending on the goals you set, make it a point to revisit your goals on a weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. How are you trending toward achieving them? Do you need to course correct?

9. Celebrate achievements. This is one we often forget. We need to be kind to ourselves and others and take the time to acknowledge that we’re on the right track. This helps us to continue on the path of motivation, energy, confidence and positive goal setting.

10. Say no to things that don’t fit within your goals. Yes, this is hard because we often are forced to give something attention based on the needs of others. The important thing is to allow your goals to focus you, and to ask yourself if this new item is in line with your goals. Don’t let anything distract you from what’s most important.