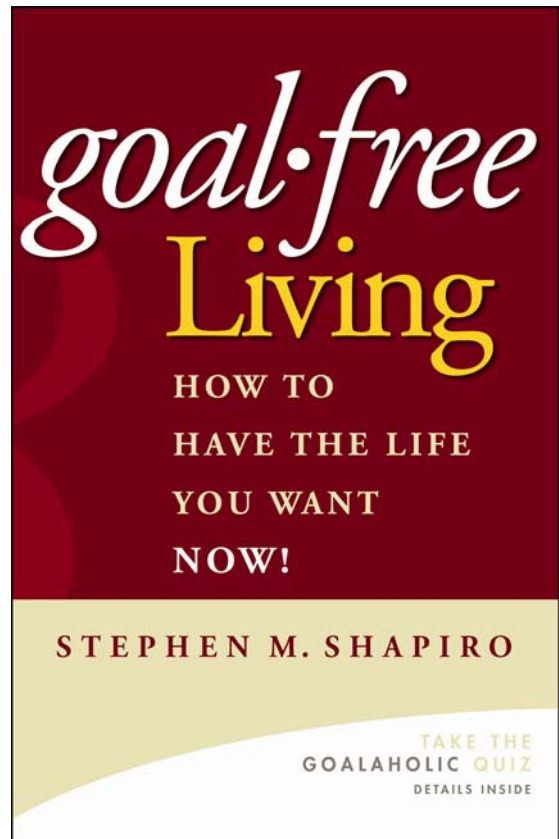


Goal-Free Living

***How to Have the
Life You Want
NOW!***

**By Stephen M.
Shapiro**



Included

- ***Determine Your Preferred Success Style Quiz***
- ***Compass Driven Strategic Planning***
- ***Reading and Discussion Guide***

Reading *Goal-Free Living* will change the way you see the world. Reading *Goal-Free Living* while using this discussion guide will change your life – NOW! You can purchase *Goal-Free Living* from Amazon.com. Be sure to visit us at goalfree.com where you will find hundreds of articles.

DETERMINE YOUR PREFERRED SUCCESS STYLE QUIZ

For each statement, choose the most appropriate answer.

1. To create success in your life, do you:

- A. Visualize what you want and then allow success to find you.
- B. Use your passion as a barometer for determining the appropriate course of action.
- C. Create plans with detailed steps, and then execute each step accordingly.

2. When you encounter an obstacle, do you:

- A. Reaffirm your convictions.
- B. View the obstacle as an opportunity.
- C. Dig your heels in and work hard to remove the obstacle.

3. As it relates to your happiness, do you find yourself saying:

- A. "My happiness is a state of mind that I can control."
- B. "Although I am typically optimistic, I allow myself to be present to - and embrace - whatever emotion I am currently feeling."
- C. "I will be happier when _____ (fill in the blank)"

4. Which motto best describes how you live your life?

- A. "If I believe it, I will achieve it."
- B. "I live for today while being mindful of the future."
- C. "I am willing to delay gratification today for the promise of a better future."

5. If you were single and wanted to be in a relationship, would you:

- A. Visualize the woman/man you want to meet and wait until s/he is manifested.
- B. Have a great time socializing rather than focusing on finding that perfect mate.
- C. Research several options for finding a mate and then pursue the best ones.

6. If you were in a job interview, would you:

- A. Believe that you will get the job if it is meant to be.
- B. Listen carefully and answer honestly, without concern about the outcome.
- C. Focus on getting the job.

7. When you set a goal and do not achieve the desired result, do you:

- A. Believe that everything happens for a reason.
- B. Appreciate the experience you had.
- C. Beat yourself up and then commit to trying harder next time.

8. When making a decision, do you:

- A. Wait for a sign.
- B. Use your gut instinct to make your choice.
- C. Analyze the pluses/minuses and make a choice based on the facts.

9. When you set a goal, do you:

- A. Believe you will be guided in the right direction.
- B. Remain open to changing direction for better or more interesting opportunities.
- C. Stay committed to achieving it.

10. My current career is...

- A. My destiny - what I am meant to do.
- B. My passion - what I love to do.
- C. My obligation - what I need to do.

Turn to the next page to score your quiz.

SCORING YOUR QUIZ

Mostly A's

THE MANIFESTER

You believe in destiny and that the universe has a plan for you. Visualization is the cornerstone of your success model. Through this approach you attract and manifest what you want in life. People who have this belief system have an exceptional ability to remain positive regardless of the circumstances. The key is to balance this belief system with action. Rather than waiting for success to find you, proactively go out and get it.

Mostly B's

THE EXPERIENCER

You are largely motivated by the journey, not the destination. You choose endeavors of interest rather than those specifically designed to make you successful. It is your tendency to keep your options open and think about what is possible. These are the 'goal-free' people. Their experiences matter more than their accomplishments. The key is to avoid getting stuck in the possibility phase without taking action. For these individuals, it is critical that they love what they do. This approach leads them to both passion and success.

Mostly C's

THE ACHIEVER

Your preferred success style is through goal setting. You tend to write down your goals and timetables for reaching them. Then you focus on attaining them, one by one. You rely heavily on facts. As you tend to over-analyze decisions, you may be slow to change direction. Your ability to focus and stay on course helps you make progress toward your chosen target. You are so attached to your goals that you become more susceptible to stress and self-defeat. If you can allow yourself to enjoy the journey and remain open to new opportunities, you have a winning combination.

COMPASS-DRIVEN STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

If you run a small business, you have the opportunity - the necessity - to focus your energies on strategic opportunities. This does not imply you need to create detailed blueprints. In fact, the most successful and entrepreneurial businesses have a sense of direction and then "meander with purpose." They use a technique I call "Compass-Driven Strategic Planning."

FUNDAMENTAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

All businesses, no matter what size or industry, have four fundamental sets of activities (also known as "*processes*" or "*capabilities*"):

- *Develop Products and Services*: Research & development, intellectual property creation, product design and development, etc
- *Generate Demand*: Marketing, sales, customer acquisition, customer service, etc
- *Fulfill Demand*: Manufacturing, distribution, inventory management, service delivery, etc
- *Plan and Manage the Business*: Strategy, finance, technology, etc

As a starting point for your business, generate a list of all activities that fall within these four fundamental processes.

In order to create a sustainable business, proficiency in all four areas is necessary. Sole practitioners and small businesses tend to focus their attention on only one or two of these processes, exposing their company to great risk. Here are some of the most common pitfalls:

- Excessive focus on the delivery of product or services (fulfilling demand) leaving limited time to create and maintain a pipeline of work (generate demand).
- Mismanagement and neglect of finances due to a lack of immediate priority.
- Reliance on one product or service with insufficient time for the development of new products. One sure way to end up out of business is to rely on one product indefinitely.

Why are small businesses so susceptible to these pitfalls? As with most companies, but more notably with small organizations, resources are at a premium; time being one of the most precious commodities. The challenge is that there is never enough time to directly manage every piece of the business. One solution is to focus on differentiators and outsource the rest. However, the real solution, especially for a small business, is a bit more complex.

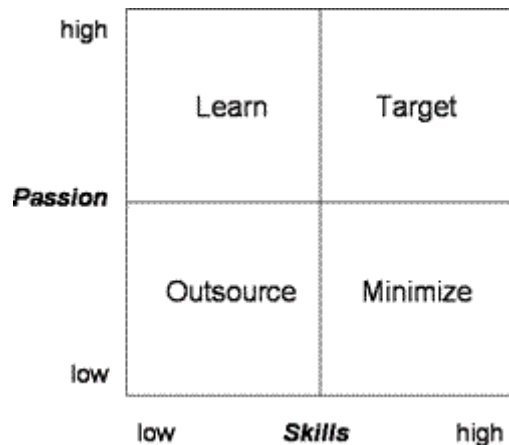
TARGETING

In the *Goal-Free Living* secret, "Use a Compass, Not a Map," I discuss the concept of finding your compass: This is the intersecting point between passion (what you love to do), skills (what you are good at), and value (what creates value - for you and others). These three attributes should drive your planning strategies.

We will start with the two dimensions that are more personal in nature, passion and skills, then overlay the value dimension later.

Create a 2 x 2 matrix. One axis is passion—from high to low. High passion implies this is an activity you love to do; low passion is something you would rather not do. The other axis is skills—from high to low. High skills are the activities where you have the necessary skills; low skills are those where you do not. Now, that you have this 2 x 2, plot your previously listed fundamental activities onto the matrix.

Then, let's look at the resultant quadrants.



Low passion/low skill: *Outsource*. If you don't like doing something and you don't do it well, then the best solution is to "outsource" this work. Find someone else who enjoys this task and has the skill set to execute it at a higher degree. This can be done through bartering, hiring employees, using contractors (I use elance.com), summoning friends and family, revenue sharing, or any other creative collaborative strategy. In short, get someone else to do these low passion, low skill activities.

Low passion/high skills: *Minimize*. If you don't want your job to become work, you probably want to outsource these capabilities as well. However, if you are starting out and finances are an issue, you may want to continue doing these activities for now. To keep yourself motivated, try to find a way of getting yourself excited about these activities. One way may be to turn them into a game. In general, you want to "minimize" the amount of time you spend on these tasks.

Low skills/high passion: *Learn*. If you love doing these activities, then you may wish to acquire the necessary skills. This can be done through a variety of means including training, mentoring, or researching. If you anticipate a steep learning curve, you may wish to find a partner during the learning process who possesses these talents. This will help to ensure that your business keeps moving forward while you gain the necessary skills.

High skills/high passion: *Target*. This is the sweet spot of your business. "Target" these areas. If you love the work, are good at it, AND it adds value to your market, put most of your energies here. If this is your core business, then you have chosen wisely. If not, maybe it is time to re-evaluate the business you are in.

These last two quadrants should reflect your business priorities, with an emphasis on the high skills/high passion work. By combining passion with skills, you are likely to be more effective, efficient, and satisfied in your work.

VALUE

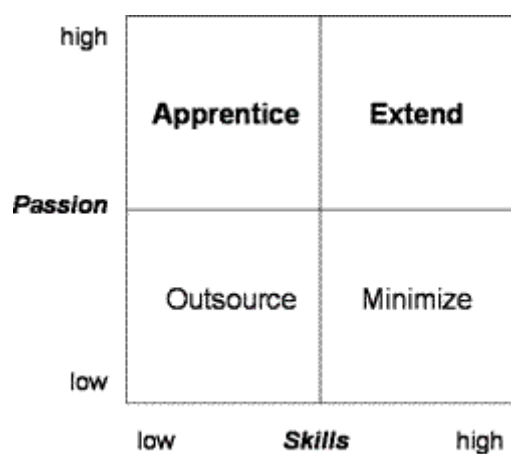
Once we are clear where our skills and passion lie, to ensure success, we must now overlay one additional dimension: value.

The final test is to validate your priorities against the “value” equation. Just because you love to do something, does not mean it is vital to your business. Conversely, some less than desirable activities may be critical to your business success.

Although there are many dimensions of value (e.g., value you create for customers, revenue you generate for your business, etc), for our purposes here, we will focus on “strategic” importance. Strategic activities are those that define the organization’s special nature, differentiate them from the competition and are fundamental to the direction of the business. We will define activities that are not strategic as being “tactical.” Tactical activities support the business, but are not THE business.

Unfortunately, determining whether an activity is strategic or tactical is not necessarily black or white as there is a range of “strategicness”. For example, if you are Apple Computers, financial work would most likely be tactical. It adds value, but it is not strategic. Although Apple’s ability to manufacture high quality iPods is of great importance, their ability to design innovative products is most important. Therefore, *design* is clearly strategic and *manufacturing* falls somewhere in between the two ends of the spectrum.

If we add in “value” to our matrix and plot our *tactical* activities, we end up with some new strategies that look something like this:

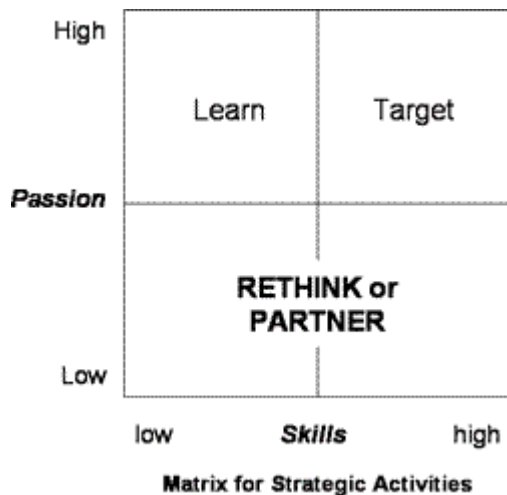


Matrix for Tactical Activities

high passion/high skill: *Extend*. If you are passionate and skilled in a particular area and it is not currently strategic, consider how you might “extend” that capability. Ask yourself, “How can I make this a strategic part of my business? How can I create extraordinary value for customers by leveraging this expertise?” Perhaps one way is to offer this service to others who are in a similar business. For example, professional speaking is my core business. However something that I am both skilled and passionate about is securing business with large corporations. Therefore, I could potentially offer this as a service to other professional speakers as a source of additional revenue.

high passion/low skill: *Apprentice*. If you are passionate, but not skilled in a tactical area, these activities will become a distraction to the business if you invest too much energy in learning. One alternative is to use the apprentice model, whereby you hire someone to perform this activity, while you learn from them. In the future, you may choose to do this activity yourself.

If we add in “value” to our matrix and plot our *strategic* activities, we end up with some new strategies that look something like this:



For strategic activities with **low passion**: *Rethink or Partner*. If you find that the predominance of your strategic activities involves work that is not of interest to you, you may need to “rethink” the business you are in - especially if you lack the necessary skills. Although it is difficult to be successful in business where you are neither skilled nor passionate, this does not mean you are fated for failure. Maybe you hate sales, yet the sales function is critical to the success of your business. In this case you may wish to “partner” with someone who enjoys this work and excels in this area. In this sense, we are moving beyond the traditional outsourcing model where activities are transactional in nature, such as: hiring someone to build your website, do your taxes, or create marketing materials. Here, the partnerships are more extensive and deeper in that your collaborator becomes part of your business. Their role is strategic. Bottom line: build a strong relationship with a compatible business partner, and your business - and your partner’s business - will thrive.

Conclusion

By focusing your energies on those areas that matter most, you create a greater opportunity for success. When you leverage your personal skills and interests, you not only become more productive, motivated, and creative, your work becomes less stressful. This, in turn, will give you more energy and perhaps boost your desire to “work” longer hours. When you are focused on what you love, work is miraculously transformed into fun. By surrounding yourself with capable people who are committed to your success, you end up with a repertoire of skills and talents to compliment your own. In doing this, you create a more flexible business with the ability to respond quicker to changing market conditions and evolving personal needs. This means that you need fewer plans and can operate from a more “experiential” perspective. You become more successful with less effort. Isn’t this what everyone wants? This is Goal-Free Living.

4. How was Shapiro's cross-country trip a metaphor for Goal-Free Living?

5. Shapiro says, "Success without satisfaction is failure."

- What successes have you had where you felt little or no satisfaction in your personal life?

- At work?

- So what?

6. What successes have you had where you felt great satisfaction in your personal life?

- At work?

- So what?

GETTING STARTED IN GOAL-FREE LIVING

Introduction: Setting the Stage for Goal-Free Living

1. How can you be both goal-free and goal-focused?
 - Why should you be both in your personal life?

 - At work?

2. What would your personal life look like without goals?
 - Your work life?

3. What does enjoying every moment of every day look like?
 - How does it feel?

4. How might “following your bliss” look?

5. How does he characterize goals?

6. What are SMART goals?

7. How does he characterize living goal-free?

8. What are the differences between goals and aspirations?

9. What are the differences between being goal-free and being goal-less (i.e., no goals)?

10. What are the attributes of “healthy goals”?

- In what ways have you had an unhealthy relationship to your goals?

- In what ways have you had a healthy relationship to your goals?

- Which way produced better results as measured by satisfaction?

THE EIGHT SECRETS OF GOAL-FREE LIVING

SECRET #1: Use a Compass, Not a Map

Use this space to answer Shapiro's questions about...

1. *Discover your passion:*

- What did you enjoy doing as a child?

- What have you often thought about doing but have said, "I don't have enough time or money?"

- What have you believed in your heart was your passion, but others told you was a crazy idea?

- What is a hobby or interest you have that could be transformed into a career?

- What would you do if money were not an issue?

- What do you wish you would have done?
- If you could, what would you still like to do?
- If you could do one thing, what would that be?
- What dreams do you feel you have had to leave behind?
- What do you want to do before you die?
- What is something you would like to do that you don't think will ever happen?
- What are you interested in that never feels like work?
- What activities do you do where hours fly by yet it only feels like minutes?

2. *Get the skills:*

- What are you good at?
- What are you willing to learn?
- Who else could you involve to complement your skills?
- What do you know for being good at?
- How can you gain other necessary skills?
- What additional skills may be useful that are not traditionally considered?
- How can you differentiate yourself from others to help you stand out from the crowd?
- Who can you collaborate with to fill your skill gaps?

3. *Create value for yourself and others:*

- Are you willing to change your lifestyle to have a life you love?
- How can you make money at your chosen endeavor?
- What do you “give” to others?
- How can you make a living at this?
- How can you help the world value your contribution?
- How can you creatively stay true to your passion while having the success you desire?
- How can you make a difference?

4. When have you felt “bigger than” yourself in your personal life?

- At work?

5. Instead of resolutions, what one or two word theme might you chose to live by in your personal life?

- At work?

6. What are the items on your “could do” list look like in your personal life?

- At work?

7. Shapiro talks about finding your “compass setting.” What does he mean by this?

- What is your compass setting in your personal life?

- At work?

8. What new things can you try in your personal life?

- At work?

SECRET #2: Trust That You Are Never Lost

1. What does Shapiro say about making decisions?

- How does his approach free you?

2. Shapiro says, "Fear of failure prevents action."

- When have you experienced this principle in your personal life?

- At work?

3. What advice does he give in this chapter that will help you most in your personal life?

- At work?

- How?

4. Where has your “safety” net held you back?

- What could you do differently in the future?

5. Where have you moved down a path without commitment only to later feel regret?

- How would events have been different if you had committed and did not look back?

- How would events have been different if you had changed paths and committed to a new direction?

SECRET #3: Remember That Opportunity Knocks Often, But Sometimes Softly

1. When have you been able to turn trash into treasure in your personal life?

- At work?

2. When have you been able to turn outrage to opportunity in your personal life?

- At work?

3. When have you been able to find opportunity in tragedy in your personal life?

- At work?

4. How are life's distractions (iPod, cell phone, email, television) stopping you from being connected to others and your surroundings?

- How would life be different if you gave up those distractions?

5. Use this space to answer Shapiro's questions...

About finding hidden opportunities:

- What or who in your immediate surrounding can be the next big idea for you?
- How could a local store, restaurant, or friend be the stimulus for creating a new opportunity?

Before you open the door, look inside:

- What comes easily to you and seems natural?
- What do others see that you do well?
- How could you leverage these skills?

SECRET #6: Become a People Magnet

1. What can you do to connect better with people in your personal life?
 - At work?
2. What is your teaser/hook used to describe your aspiration?
3. Who can you speak with that you might not normally approach?
 - How might this have an impact on your life?
4. What can you do to create lasting connections?
5. After reading an article, book, or website, what might be possible if you contacted the author?
6. Where can you go to meet new people?
7. What can you do/carry to attract people to you?

SECRET #7: Embrace Your Limits

1. Use this space to answer Shapiro's questions to help you embrace your limits:

- What is your worst nightmare?
- What always hurts your feelings?
- What is your shadow side, the ugly truth you hide from others?
- Why does this have such a strong grip on you?
- What do you worry that people will think about you?
- What drives you to live the way you do?
- Why?
- How can your inadequacy become a conversation starter?
- How can it differentiate you from others in a positive way?

2. How do you envision this secret will help you in your personal life?

- At work?

3. How can your “unique” knowledge/experience set you apart from others who might have “more experience?”

4. Where in your life have you turned a perceived failure into a success?

How could you do this more often in the future?

SECRET #8: Remain Detached

1. How does Shapiro define detachment?

2. What have you had a scarcity mentality about in your personal life?
 - Why should you overcome this?

 - How might you overcome this?

3. What have you had a scarcity mentality about at work?
 - Why should you overcome this?

 - How might you overcome this?

4. What bad habits should you get rid of in your personal life?
 - In your work life?

 - What good habits could replace them?

5. What outcomes should you let go of in your personal life?

In your work life?

6. How might you serve others better in your personal life?

In your work life?

7. How should remaining detached help you in your personal life?

At work?

8. How can you create the future as “context” rather than as a destination?

9. Use this space to answer Shapiro’s question about the difficulties of detachment:

- In what areas of your life do you feel insecure, or the risks seem too high?

After Reading the Book: Setting Your Compass

1. What direction will you take in your personal life? In your work life?

2. What are your three top takeaways from this book?

•

•

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3. So, what are you going to do?

4. What else do you need?

5. Whom else do you need?

Some Follow-up Ideas...

1. Create (or re-create) an activity to share with the group that illustrates some concept from this book.
2. Suggest additional readings.
3. Create an individual or group action plan to focus on implementing concepts from this book.
4. Develop a “book chat” to share with other teams to sell them on the idea of doing a discussion with this book.