



10 Steps to Achieving Your Life's Dreams

Using Goal Setting Theory
and Task Motivation

by JON BARTOS

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Want to make a substantial positive impact on your life? Start goal setting!

For most people, goal setting takes place at the end of the calendar year. It's not only a good time to reflect on what we've accomplished in our personal and professional lives, but it also allows us the chance to think about starting the next year with a clean slate full of fresh and exciting possibilities.

When looking back on the results of the previous year, you will likely note that while they you had the best intentions to make large strides or accomplish certain goals, when you take stock of where you are today versus a year ago, your life has not really changed measurably. You may have a little more or a little less money, you may have gained or lost a little bit of weight, but all in all, even with visions of grandeur, your life stayed relatively the same.

Don't feel badly. Most people are in the same boat. The reason? Most do not understand the true commitment and process required to attain goals and make life-impacting changes. So how DO people really make massive shifts in their lives to ensure they reach their desired state of professional and personal success?

First, let's take a look at what the research says about goal attainment.

In *Building a Practically Useful Theory of Goals Setting and Task Motivation*, Gary Latham (University of Toronto) and Edwin Locke (University of Maryland) summarize a 35-year-long empirical research study on goal setting theory. Most of their research focused on goal setting in business, in hopes of determining what truly works for business professionals and what does not.

Here is what they found:

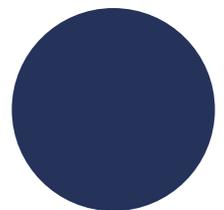
- The highest levels of goal attainment were found with moderately-difficult to difficult goals
- The most difficult goals produced the highest levels of effort, but did not necessarily correlate to the highest levels of goal attainment.
- Self-efficacy (the believe that one can accomplish a goal) was critical in goal attainment.
- Feedback on progress was critical to success.
- The more specific the goal, the higher the level of successful goal attainment.
- The level of importance of the goal affected the outcome

These important points mean that goal attainment has several components that can be clearly defined and used to develop a process that will increase our chances of achieving our goals.

A word of caution, however: change can be hard. If it were simple, everyone would be living the life of their dreams. Success takes personal sacrifice, the ability to overcome adversity, and a high level of personal discipline...yes, that's right, discipline. Success doesn't care if you were hugged enough as a child or if you grew up on the right street. Success and goal attainment are about taking full ownership of where you currently stand in life and having confidence in your own ability to make the necessary changes to produce the desired results. If you are willing to put your personal baggage and self-doubt on the back burner, read on—you may find the opportunity for REAL change and the true potential for living your dream.

STEP 1: FIRST THINGS FIRST

Congratulations! You've already completed Step 1 when you answered the questions at the beginning of this workbook. As you navigate the rest of their goal setting guide, keep in mind your answers to those questions. Here are the four questions again:



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1. What were my most notable successes in the last calendar year?
2. What were some of my shortcomings in the last calendar year?
3. What three things could I change professionally personal in the next year that would have significant impact on my life?
4. What am I truly grateful for?

STEP 2: SET SMART GOALS

SMART

Once we truly understand where we currently are, where we've been, and what is most important to us going forward, we can begin to set smart goals. In setting goals, keep in mind that they must be **SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely**. Be certain to put each of your goals through the SMART test. For example, let's say you'd like to bill \$500,000 in revenue in the next calendar year. Your SMART goal should look like this:

"I, Joe Recruiter, am committed to bill \$500K in the coming year. I will do this by billing \$100K in Quarter 1, \$125K in Quarter 2, \$125K in Quarter 3, and \$150K in Quarter 4. In order to do this, I am committed to 5 first-time send-outs per week, 4 hours of phone time per day, 2 new accounts per month, and improving my major account development skills."

Pay particularly close attention to the language. Joe is not going to *try*, or *attempt*, or even *work hard* toward achieving \$500K in billings. Joe is committed. In addition, Joe is very specific about how he will achieve his goal and the activities on which he needs to focus DAILY to achieve success. Not only must we set SMART goals, but we must also use committed and specific language about what and how.

STEP 3: DEFINE THE OBSTACLES AND DETERMINE HOW TO GET PAST THEM

There will always be obstacles in the way of achieving goals. Life happens fast and continuously. Kids need to get to soccer practice, the house needs to be cleaned, dinner needs to be made. There will always be a multitude of things vying for your time and detracting you from the activities you know you must do to attain your goal. In order to combat this, take the time to honestly and objectively identify the obstacles in your business and/or personal life that may hinder your ability to achieve your goal. Once they are defined, don't feel the need to eliminate them, but rather determine a course of action for taking care of what you need to and still performing the activities you specified in your SMART goal. Kids will still need to get to practice, dinner will still need to get on the table, and your house won't clean itself – you can't and shouldn't eliminate these important things from your life. What you can do is plan for them. Plan to get up an hour earlier each day, take part of your Sundays to prepare meals for the upcoming week, or do whatever you must to carve out the time you know you need.



STEP 4: DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN

Without a great plan to make it happen, your goal is just a wish – a wish that will most likely never materialize. An action plan is the key – a detailed outline of the steps needed to achieve the desired outcome. The more details in your plan (frequencies, times, days, amounts), the better. Your action plan is your daily reminder of your commitment and your road map leading you from where you are now to where you want to go.



STEP 5: WHAT ARE THE CRITICAL MILESTONES?

Milestones are "check-in point" to assess your progress toward your goal. If I am traveling to visit my parents

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in Corunna, Michigan from Cincinnati, Ohio, the most important milestones are getting through Lima in about an hour, Toledo in about 2.5 hours, and finally passing the Cabela's store in Dundee, Michigan in about 3 hours. But alas, if business-based goal setting was only as simple as driving up a highway.

Milestones are critical, as they measure your progress and tell you if you are ahead of your plan, or if you are lagging behind – which requires changes to your action plan to get you back on track toward achieving your goal within the original time frame set. In the recruiting industry, setting annual goals is very important. But backing them up with quarterly, monthly, weekly, and daily activity goals is even more essential. You can't expect to hit your weekly goals without first hitting your daily goals; your monthly goals without first hitting your weekly goals; your quarterly goals without first hitting your monthly goals; your annual goals without first hitting your quarterly goals.

STEP 6: ENLIST AN ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER



It's extremely difficult to hold yourself accountable. While you are doing your best to be as disciplined as possible and manage all of the day-to-day challenges that life throws your way, staying on track can seem overwhelming. Enlisting a trusted partner to help inspire you to stay on track and hold you accountable if you veer off your path can make all the difference in your success.

STEP 7: BELIEVE

In Claude Bristol's book *The Magic of Believing*, he spells out the incredible power of belief. In studying miracles that have occurred in various religions and all over the world, Bristol's findings were staggering. The specific religion made no difference in the

outcome; it was the strength of the belief that was the major factor in the miracle occurring. Your personal belief that you CAN achieve your goals is critical to your goal attainment.



A personal anecdote: I underwent my third left knee surgery at the end of 2008. I compete nationally as a pole vaulter in the Masters Track & Field event series each year, which gives individual athletes over the age of 30 the opportunity to remain in competition. After the surgery had been done on my knee, my orthopedic surgeon strongly recommended that I never run on it regularly again. That's right... never. As you can imagine, running is an integral component of the sport of pole vaulting. Needless to say, I was devastated...not what you want to hear when you have a true passion for something. After feeling sorry for myself for a few days, I began doing research on exercises to strengthen my knee. After my initial recovery, I began an intense workout program focused on plyometrics, strength training, and speed exercises. Progress was slow at first, but I kept the faith: I had to believe I could do it. In 2010, I won the Pole Vault National Indoor Championship in Boston, and took third place at the Outdoor National Championships in Sacramento in July. I know without a doubt that my belief in my ability to reach my goal – even if the experts said it was an unattainable goal – made all the difference.

STEP 8: DEFINE YOUR "WHY"

If there is one single thing you can do to ensure you reach any goal you set, it's developing a powerful WHY. Your WHY is the reason you want to attain your goal. It's what will motivate you to climb any mountain in the face of adversity. It could be your family, an important person in your life, an event that happened to you in your past, or anything that is highly motivating to you. By defining and embracing your WHY, and truly allowing it to become part of your everyday journey, you can become unstoppable in

WHY?

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anything you put your mind to.

One of my WHYs in my personal journey is the memory of the time, many years ago, when I couldn't afford to pay for my baby girl's six-month shots. I was 23 years old at the time and had just started a new job, had two car payments to make, and a had a mortgage that was bigger than I thought. Even today, decades later, the thought of not being able to afford basic medical expenses for my child strikes a chord of anger and a sends a rush of determined adrenalin to my heart. This WHY was one of the things that helped me over the years with my ability to overcome any type of adversity and carry on.

STEP 9: DREAM BIG AND SET THE BAR HIGH



In research on goal setting, Locke and Latham say not to make your goals TOO big. However, we are all capable of achieving great things. Every day, people break records and surpass the expectations of our human capabilities. We still have no idea of the true

potential of human beings; the only thing we do know is that we're far from reaching it. Whether in your profession, your personal life, your recreational pursuits, or in anything in life, you have no idea what your potential is. I don't claim to know why we were put on Earth, but I do know that it isn't to be average or to simply coast along. We are not sheep, born to follow. We were given life to excel, to push the boundaries, and to be extraordinary. I encourage you to set the bar high and see what unlimited potential your life holds.

STEP 10: REWARD YOURSELF ... CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESSES!



A reward system works wonders to keep you passionate and motivated. When you reach a milestone, celebrate it. When you overcome an obstacle, celebrate. In recruiting, when you hit your metrics, celebrate. You must develop a habit of rewarding yourself for

a job well done. Achieving a goal is like climbing a mountain – at each new altitude you reach, stop and look around to appreciate your own hard work and how far you've come. Celebrate your progress. In contrast, if you come up short, ask yourself honestly why it happened, make the corrections needed, and continue to go forward. Don't get too down on yourself or take too much time wallowing in a slight detour from your course. Believe! In the end, it's not about each individual game, but about being at the top at the end of the season. Your success and continued celebration of your progress will serve to motivate you to keep going forward.

My inspiration in writing this guide book is to help anyone who is struggling to reach the things they really want out of life. If you are like most people, there are many components you'd like to change in your professional and personal life. But change is not easy – it takes careful planning, self-discipline, and a well-defined SMART goal. Like so many things in life, the secret to goal attainment is a true understanding of the process required and the key elements involved in making the shift. Take time to honestly assess where you currently are before you attempt to set a goal. Set SMART goals, identify obstacles and your plan for overcoming them, establish milestones, and celebrate your successes along the way. If you develop a strong, detailed action plan and define a motivating WHY, you'll be well on your way to achieving anything you want. I look forward to celebrating your successes with you.

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- Knight, Don, Durham, Cathy C. and Locke, Edwin A. Reference article. The Relationship of Team Goals, Incentives, and Efficacy to Strategic Risk, Tactical Implementation, and Performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, Relationship of Team Goals 1.

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Goal Setting Workbook

Before jumping in and setting goals to make desired shifts in your life, it is necessary to evaluate where you are currently and what is most important to you going forward. Here are four key questions to help you in this process. Be sure to answer honestly so that you have the best chance to achieve your goals. Take time to truly reflect and think about these questions.

What were my successes in the past year – both personal and professional?

What were some of my shortcomings in the past year – both personal and professional?

What three things could I change professionally and personally to make a significant positive impact on my coming year?

1

2

3

What am I truly grateful for?

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PERSONAL VISION STATEMENT:

PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT:

Along with establishing a personal vision statement to provide guidance to you along the way, it is important to define the level of accountability you can hold yourself to when setting goals to achieve your life goals.

Personal accountability can be defined as: the willingness to take 100% ownership for the results that arise from your involvement, both individually and collectively with others.

Most people mistakenly believe that responsibility and accountability are one in the same. Responsibility involves the things you are required to do, whereas accountability is your expectation of the outcome of your action or inaction, or what others hold you answerable for.

To reach your desired outcome and achieve your goal, you likely need to think and act in ways that are different and uncomfortable for you. Effective leaders understand the importance of accepting responsibility for the results they create. When things go wrong, rather than blaming others or blaming circumstances, it is important to look inward to understand your individual contribution and to learn and grow in response. When one adopts the practice of personal accountability, there is less to blame on others and focus shifts to moving forward in pursuit of goals.

Personal accountability is the key to success in all areas of our lives. Take some time to write down your personal statement of accountability and it will provide you with a strong inspirational resource on which to draw while you work to accomplish the tasks you've outlined as necessary to complete your goal.

MY PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT:

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Goal #1:

TIMEFRAME:

MILESTONES (MONTHLY / QUARTERLY / WEEKLY):

WHAT'S MY 'WHY'?

ACTION PLAN:

OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME:

WHAT DO I BELIEVE I CAN ACHIEVE?

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Goal #2:

TIMEFRAME:

MILESTONES (MONTHLY / QUARTERLY / WEEKLY):

WHAT'S MY 'WHY'?

ACTION PLAN:

OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME:

WHAT DO I BELIEVE I CAN ACHIEVE?

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Goal #3:

TIMEFRAME:

MILESTONES (MONTHLY / QUARTERLY / WEEKLY):

WHAT'S MY 'WHY'?

ACTION PLAN:

OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME:

WHAT DO I BELIEVE I CAN ACHIEVE?

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Goal #4:

TIMEFRAME:

MILESTONES (MONTHLY / QUARTERLY / WEEKLY):

WHAT'S MY 'WHY'?

ACTION PLAN:

OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME:

WHAT DO I BELIEVE I CAN ACHIEVE?

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Goal #5:

TIMEFRAME: _____

MILESTONES (MONTHLY / QUARTERLY / WEEKLY):

WHAT'S MY 'WHY'?

ACTION PLAN:

OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME:

WHAT DO I BELIEVE I CAN ACHIEVE?

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Goal #6:

TIMEFRAME: _____

MILESTONES (MONTHLY / QUARTERLY / WEEKLY):

WHAT'S MY 'WHY'?

ACTION PLAN:

OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME:

WHAT DO I BELIEVE I CAN ACHIEVE?

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Goal #7:

TIMEFRAME: _____

MILESTONES (MONTHLY / QUARTERLY / WEEKLY):

WHAT'S MY 'WHY'?

ACTION PLAN:

OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME:

WHAT DO I BELIEVE I CAN ACHIEVE?

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Goal #8:

TIMEFRAME: _____

MILESTONES (MONTHLY / QUARTERLY / WEEKLY):

WHAT'S MY 'WHY'?

ACTION PLAN:

OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME:

WHAT DO I BELIEVE I CAN ACHIEVE?

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Goal #9:

TIMEFRAME: _____

MILESTONES (MONTHLY / QUARTERLY / WEEKLY):

WHAT'S MY 'WHY'?

ACTION PLAN:

OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME:

WHAT DO I BELIEVE I CAN ACHIEVE?

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Goal #10:

TIMEFRAME: _____

MILESTONES (MONTHLY / QUARTERLY / WEEKLY):

WHAT'S MY 'WHY'?

ACTION PLAN:

OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME:

WHAT DO I BELIEVE I CAN ACHIEVE?

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Goal Achievement Self-Evaluation

WHAT GOALS WERE ACHIEVED?

WHAT WERE THE MAIN FACTORS THAT LED TO THE ATTAINMENT OF THE GOAL(S)?

WHAT GOALS WERE NOT ACHIEVED?

WHAT FACTORS LED ME TO FALL SHORT ON THE UNACHIEVED GOALS?

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WHAT SHOULD I DO DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME TO ASSURE THAT I REACH THE GOALS I SET?

WHAT WERE THE MOST DIFFICULT THING(S) TO DO OR OVERCOME DURING THE PROCESS OF SETTING AND REACHING FOR MY GOALS?

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MOST IMPORTANT GOALS I HAVE GOING FORWARD?

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Quotes About Goal Setting

"You must have long-term goals to keep you from being frustrated by short term failures."
– Charles Noble

"Your role in achieving your goal must be giving your all. Involve yourself whole: with your heart, your mind, and your soul."
– Victoria Holtz

"Think little goals and expect little achievements. Think big goals and achieve big success."
– David J. Schwartz

"For away there in the sunshine are my highest aspirations. I may not reach them, but I can look up and see their beauty, believe in them, and try to follow where they lead."
– Louisa May Alcott

"When a goal matters enough to a person, that person will find a way to accomplish what at first seemed impossible."
– Nido Qubein

"The most important key to achieving great success is to decide upon your goal and launch, get started, take action, move."
– Brian Tracy

"See the things you already want as yours. Think of them as yours, as belonging to you, as already in your possession."
– Robert Collier

"Committing to a goal is the easy part. The true work is consistency, honesty, and self-discipline."
– Paul Fombelle

"No matter how carefully you plan your goals, they will never be more than pipe dreams unless you pursue them with gusto."
– W. Clement Stone

"Many people fail in life, not for lack of ability or brains or even courage, but simply because they have never organized their energies around a goal."
– Elbert Hubbard

"Some men give up their designs when they have almost reached the goal; while others, on the contrary, obtain a victory by exerting, at the very last moment, more vigorous efforts than ever before."
– Herodotus

"When a man does not know what harbor he is making for, no wind is the right wind."
– Lucius Annaeus Seneca

"Difficulties increase the nearer we approach the goal."
– Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

"Goals. There's no telling what you can do when you get inspired by them. There's no telling what you can do when you believe in them. There's no telling what can happen when you act upon them."
– Jim Rohn
"This one step – choosing a goal and sticking to it – changes everything."
– Scott Reed

"Emptiness is a symptom that you are not living creatively. You either have no goal that is important to you, or you are not using your talents and efforts in striving toward an important goal."
– Maxwell Maltz

"Make no small plans for they have no power to stir the soul."
– Unknown

"Your goals are the road maps that guide and show you what is possible for your life."
– Les Brown

"All who have accomplished great things have had a great aim, have fixed their gaze on a goal which was high, one which sometimes seemed impossible."
– Orison Swett Marden

"Big goals get big results. No goals gets no results or somebody else's results."
– Mark Victor Hansen

"The secret to productive goal setting is in establishing clearly-defined goals, writing them down, and then focusing on them several times a day with words, pictures, and emotions as if we've already achieved them."
– Denis Waitley

"The most important thing about goals is having one."
– Geoffrey Abert

"You, too, can determine what you want. You can decide on your major objectives, targets, aims, and destinations."
– W. Clement Stone

"We will either find a way, or make one."
– Hannibal

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“Goals give you more than a reason to get up in the morning; they are incentive to keep you going all day. Goals tend to tap the deeper resources and draw the best out of life.” – Harvey Mackay

“You must have an aim, a vision, a goal. For the man sailing through life with no destination or port of call, every wind is a strong wind.” – Tracy Brinkmann

“I'd rather be a could-be if I cannot be an are, because a could-be is a maybe who is reaching for a star. I'd rather be a has-been than a might-have-been, by far; for a might-have-been has never been, but a has-been has once been an are.” – Milton Berle

“I am not interested in the past. I am interested in the future, for that is where I expect to spend the rest of my life.” – Charles F. Kettering

“We aim above the mark to hit the mark.” – Ralph Waldo Emerson

“All successful people have a goal. No one can get anywhere unless he knows where he wants to go and what he wants to be or do.” – Norman Vincent Peale

“I do not try to dance better than anyone else. I only try to dance better than myself.” – Mikhail Baryshnikov

“To understand the heart and mind of a person, look not at what he has already achieved, but at what he aspires to.” – Kahlil Gibran

“Establishing goals is alright if you don't let them deprive you of interesting detours.” – Doug Larson

“You are never too old to set another goal or dream a new dream.” – Les Brown

“Man is a goal-seeking animal. His life only has meaning if he is reaching out and striving for his goals.” – Aristotle

“Don't measure yourself by what you have already accomplished, but by what you should have accomplished with your ability.” – John Wooden

“Goals that are not written down are just wishes.” – Unknown

“Goals are dreams we convert to plans and take action to fulfill.” – Zig Ziglar

“Arriving at one goal is the starting point to another.” – John Dewey

“A goal is a dream with a deadline.” – Napoleon Hill

“Setting a goal is not the main thing. It's deciding how you will go about achieving it and sticking with that plan.” – Tom Landry

“Give me a stock clerk with a goal and I'll give you a man who will make history. Give me a man with no goals and I'll give you a stock clerk.” – J.C. Penney

“The best angle from which to approach any problem is the try-angle.” – Unknown

“All you have to do is know where you're going. The answers will come to you of their own accord.” – Earl Nightingale

“An average person with average talents and ambition and average education can outstrip the most brilliant genius in our society, if that person has clear, focused goals.” – Mary Kay Ash

“Anybody can do just about anything with himself that that he really wants to and makes up his mind to do. We are all capable of greater things than we realize.” – Norman Vincent Peale

“If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now build the foundations under them.” – Henry David Thoreau

“I am looking for a lot of men who have an infinite capacity to not know what can't be done.” – Henry Ford

“Success isn't a result of spontaneous combustion. You must set yourself on fire.” – Arnold H. Glasgow

“God gives us dreams a size too big so we can grow into them.” – Unknown

“The reason most people don't reach their goals is that they don't define them, learn about them, or even seriously consider them as believable or achievable. Winners can tell you where they're going, what they plan to do along the way, and who will be sharing the adventure with them.” – Denis Waitley

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Jon is a premier thought leader, entrepreneur, trainer, speaker and consultant on all aspects of Human Capital, Talent Management, and Human Performance Management. Jon was the founding partner of Jonathan Scott International, started in 1999, Revenue Performance Management in 2008, Global Performance Coaching in 2012, Global Performance Search in 2015, and jonathanbartos.com in 2017.



As president and CEO of Jonathan Scott International in Ohio, Jon achieved industry-leading success as one of an elite group of executive recruiters who billed over \$1 million annually. In a ten-year period (1999–2009), he cashed in over \$10 million in personal production and established JSI as a top 10% executive search and staffing firm with 17 international awards in the MRINetwork. As of today, he has billed over \$16 million in personal production. Today, he also runs one of the fastest-growing retained search firms in the country, GPS, with offices in Toronto, Ohio, Kentucky, Colorado, Missouri, Colorado, Columbia, India, and the Philippines. GPS is the leader in talent solutions for Workday, Data Analytics, and Supply Chain Technology (www.globalperformancesearch.com).



In 2008, Jon founded Revenue Performance Management, LLC. The RPM Dashboard System is a business intelligence tool for metrics management and performance improvement used by over 400 companies worldwide (www.rpm-usa.com).



In 2017, Jon founded www.jonathanbartos.com, a services firm dedicated to the recruiting and staffing industry. The firm offers research services, contract staffing, back office, Sherpa groups, Sherp Big Biller programs, and marketing automation services via a targeted service called Alpine Double Black (www.alpinedoubleblack.com).

Additionally, Jon has helped hundreds of business owners worldwide to achieve their maximum potential. Jon has been a top-rated speaker at events all over the world. He has spoken to audiences in South Africa, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Aruba, the Dominican Republic, New Zealand, Ireland, Scotland, Bulgaria, Australia, Greece, France, the UK, and numerous locations across North America.



Wine, Weddings, and Weekend Getaways!

His two blockbuster seminars “Making it Rain – How to get 2-10x More Billings without Working Harder,” geared to the Executive Search Industry and “Hiring High Performing Teams,” which is targeted toward Hiring Managers and Human Resource teams, are both been highly praised and well received by over 200 clients worldwide.

In the last 10 years, Jon has published over 100 articles, 10 white papers, and 4 eBooks on the above topics. He has a BS in Advertising and Marketing from Michigan State University and a MBA in International Marketing from Amberton University in Garland, Texas.

Jon also owns and operates the Red Gate Farm and Vineyard in Quincy, Kentucky, which serves as the location for many training and coaching events (www.redgate-vineyard.com).

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