

URL: <https://indigocrest.com/blog/when-talents-do-not-line-up-with-goals>

By Shira Sagal

When Talents do not Line Up with Goals

Why would anyone have goals that they do not have abilities to accomplish? The gospel of possibility can blind us to the reality of what we have to work with. Possibility thinking is helpful when we need to counteract overwhelming negative voices but we need to choose our goals carefully otherwise we consistently misfire. This leads to a depression failure feedback loop or living in the duality of fantasy and reality. We then lose credibility with others and ourselves.



Many people will once again make this mistake at the start of this year. They will make a random determination of something that would be nice to accomplish with no evaluation of what personal resources they realistically have to attain a goal. Common goals of sheer discipline such as “I will do 100 sit-ups and 50 push-ups every day for the next 3 months” or fixing weaknesses such as “I will become a better communicator” are often ill-fated. These types of goals will never be accomplished unless there is a way for your natural talents and resources to line up behind them.

We need to stop staring at our deficiencies and take a long hard look at our natural talents. This year, take stock of what unique strengths and resources you do have, then set your goals. Your probability of success will skyrocket.

In *Soar with your Strengths*, Clifton and Nelson address the concept of self-expectations. There are marked differences between false expectations and right expectations. False expectations are usually generic and without regard to who you are or your situation. Right expectations consider personal talents, performance history and internal drive apart from fame, wealth, and health. Here are a few other ways to identify them.

False Expectation Identifiers

- You have the desires for success but nothing to show for it.
- You are taking no active steps to pursue your goal.
- You have learned the basics but made little progress.
- You are constantly disappointed with what actually happens to your imagined outcome.
- You tend to set goals that are too big to accomplish.

- You feel demotivated when you think about the goal.

Right Expectation Identifiers

- You have the desires for success in an area you already have success in.
- You are already doing some things that can help accomplish your goal.
- You absorb learning in the goal area quickly.
- You have surprised others by superseding expectations in the goal area.
- Your goals have room for growth once you reach them.
- You feel empowered when you think about the goal.

To find out if your talents line up with your goals, evaluate what category each of your goals fall into. Begin by identifying where you might have false goal expectations. For example, let's use the goal of writing a bestseller and go down the question list. Do I have any success in writing? Have I ever written anything? Have I made progress in my writing? Am I or others disappointed by what I produce? Do I end up avoiding writing, or do I like to do this? If you answered yes to the questions above, chances are the goal of writing a bestseller this year is a false expectation.

Setting right goal expectation identifiers would be answering yes to most of the following: Have I demonstrated success in some area of writing? Am I currently writing? Do I improve quickly in writing or can I do this quickly? Have I surprised myself or others at the quality of works I have produced? If I were to write a bestseller, what could be my next goal? Does the thought of being a best-selling author (even without the money or fame) make me feel happy?

There is also a situation where you might have some of the right expectation identifiers of your goals, but your talents do not line up with them. Using the previous example, it would be that you have written best sellers in the past, but the process took a significant negative toll on you personally. In this case, you are likely burnt out or will quickly become so. Ill-fitting goals grate on our relationships, health, and overall energy. Some people have a type of generic driver which can sustain performance for some time. But if enough inner and outer congruence is not found, a negative life combustion will take place at some point. Most individuals beyond the pale of forty years old have experienced this in some fashion.

Overall, if your goals and talents are aligned then your goals will be able to pass the right expectation category test and give you energy thinking about them. If your goals and talents are not aligned, you might very well have false goal expectations. Don't worry, it is not terminal! Take a moment to shift and regroup. There is still a bright outlook for you. View your life from a different angle and embrace the possibility of accomplishing all your goals this year. Below are three tactics to do so.

1. **Shift Goals.** Let a false expectation goal die, grieve it then move on. It has probably been sucking life out of you for years, so better to be rid of it. Maybe there are better and more fulfilling things for you to accomplish. Maybe you decided on a goal because it was the

“right thing to do” or it was “what was expected”. Every single person has a completely different set of skills and experiences. There is no exact life pattern to follow that will fit your optimal life pattern. Acknowledge this and find a goal that can live in the right expectations category.

2. **Change Tactics.** It could be that the goal is not wrong, but the way in which you think you need to reach it is wrong. Often people try to conjure up a talent they do not have. For instance, I will never be able to use sheer discipline to get to a goal, it is virtually non-existent for me. What I can use is my natural vision of the future with a strategic drive to get there while being strongly geared toward resolving problems I encounter along the way. Basically, my drive to reach a goal has nothing to do with what is typically touted such as “just follow these steps regularly”. It could be that you are trying to use an engine you do not have. Identify your strengths and you will find your engine.
3. **Scale Down.** Experiment with MUCH smaller goals. For some, a goal does not matter unless it seems significant. However, the only way we feel significance is if we have inner and outer congruence. Goals must be set at a level that can be reached within an amount of time you have ample patience for. If you succeed, a positive feedback loop will be established and you can begin to increase your goal expectations. If you fail, you have not lost much and it may be time to change tactics or shift goals.

This year do yourself a favor and create some goals that you can’t wait to accomplish. What would you feel joyful about doing? Ask others to help you see what you are talented at or hire a strengths coach who will get your talents lined up with your goals and keep you on track. There is only one stage to live on and that is our own. While we live, we all have the option of making great choices. It’s time to play the primary role in your own life and write a script that you can’t wait to wake up to every day.