

Why You Should Stop Focusing on Goals This Year

I don't know about you, but I struggle with goals. Sometimes I set them and forget about them. More often than not, I never meet them. I feel like a failure most of the time.

Of course, the problem isn't with goals. Goals are a wonderful tool. I've even started using Michael Hyatt's *Full Focus Planner*, and love it. Highly recommended. But if you've been disillusioned with goals, I recommend trying a different route this year.

One of the best books I've read this year is *Atomic Habits* by James Clear. There are many books on habits. I also enjoyed this one. But what I loved about *Atomic Habits* is how motivating and actionable it was. It got me thinking about habits for those of us who lead a worship team in a local church.

I won't go into too much detail about habits in this article. I'd recommend picking up one or both of the aforementioned books. For our purposes here, this is the main idea:

The power of habits is in the power of automation."

Habits enable us to automate important tasks so we don't have to think about them. Based on experience, much of local church ministry is spent reacting. We set goals, but often fail to meet them.

Instead, we put out fires on a regular basis. Finding a drummer for next weekend, picking songs for this weekend, and responding to emails eats up most of our time. Rather than being proactive about our schedules, we react to everyone else's demands and don't focus on what's really important for

the areas we lead.

"You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems." –James Clear

Goals won't get you anywhere if your systems are broken.

Here's what I mean:

- What if instead of having a goal of adding five new team members this month, you created a system of regular recruitment?
- What if instead of a goal to get ahead in your song planning, you created a system for staying five weeks ahead in your song lists?
- What if instead of a goal to do a live recording, you created a system of regular songwriting appointments with your team?
- What if instead of a goal to communicate with your team, you create a regular communication system of emails, text messages, phone calls on certain days of the month?
- What if instead of a goal to increase congregational engagement, you created a system to review your creative service programming on a monthly basis?

Every singular goal can be exchanged for a regular commitment.

You no longer need to rely on willpower. It's a system. It's on the calendar.

Imagine if you didn't have to think about scheduling because it's on your calendar to schedule from 9-10:30 on Mondays. Imagine you didn't have to think about recruiting because it's on your calendar to make phone calls on Thursday afternoons.

Make your calendar a sacred space. Keep the appointments you agree to. This creates sustained productivity over time.

What's also great is these activities become regular

appointments. Then you're not recruiting only when it's crisis mode and you have no drummers. It's a regular rhythm. You're not picking songs last-minute, you're regularly maintaining a habit of staying ahead.

I'd love to hear from you. What are you struggling with in your team? What would change if you went through the process of creating a habit in that area?

Let's talk about it in the comments. {eoa}

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This article originally appeared at .