

Are Goals Passé?

By
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*...Goals allow
you to quit...*

A friend of mine is an old football coach and he made the comment that he does not believe in goals. He clarified his comment by explaining that people approach goals with the attitude that once a goal is reached, they can quit. He believes that one has to have visions that continually demand their growing.

*...Customers
expect even
more.*

I was quite taken by this thought, but after reflection I began to understand what he was telling me. Ironically, this idea was supported by the article “The Performance Paradox” by Jena McGregor in the April 2005 issue of Fast Company. The article discusses how organizations strive to a goal of being excellent and when they reach that plateau, the customers expect even more. The desire to stop and rest could have a devastating effect.

The idea of goals may have been applicable when the world stood relatively still. One could define goals and when reached, realize progress. The world is no longer standing still and the idea is not so much to gain position as it is to remain relevant and have the tools and knowledge to continue to generate value in this new world. As we all know, it does not matter what you have contributed in the past, but only what value you can contribute today and tomorrow.

It reminds me of the conclusions made by Jim Harris in his book, The Learning Paradox. He suggests that there are three things to be secure in today’s environment and they are:

- Our ability to continually learn.
- Our ability to change (personally and organizationally).
- Our ability to cope with uncertainty.

*..only secure
people.*

He further suggests that, *there are no secure jobs, only secure people.*

Wow, those are the very things that we, as adults, do not want to hear, let alone do. We used to believe that organizations are forever and people die, but that has dramatically changed in the last few years. Now companies die and people move to nurture new ideas. The fundamental way business is done has changed and no legislation or treaty can change that. We do business with anybody, anywhere, anytime at the lowest world cost.

*...Scenario
Planning...*

Many authors predict that most of the white collar jobs as we now know them will be outsourced or automated in not too many years. We have to be willing to follow Harris' advice to continually learn, embrace and expect change, and cope with uncertainty. I suggest that you protect yourself and become very aware of the environment around you and changes that could impact your life. Can you honestly say that you are contributing value or are you complacent in your comfort zone? Do some Risk Management or Scenario Planning and look at those situations that could immediately impact you and how would you mitigate those situations. Explore how those situations could become opportunities.

*...customer
moving faster
than you?*

The ability to react and change is equally important for an organization. You have to be moving faster than your customer and ***Accelerate your Visions to Reality.***