

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/setting-aspirational-goals>

Emmy Sobieski, COO of Competitive Storytelling, Inc., recommends setting audacious, moonshot-style goals because the biggest risk is actually hitting your goals and arriving too early. Using examples from her life, she also advises being open to setting new goals when your life needs to change directions.



Transcript

- For many of the students, getting to college 00:00:04,260 and maybe getting to Stanford was the aspirational goal and they've achieved that.. So what's next? Can you tell us a little bit about how you think about goal setting? Kind of like the Goldilocks effect, like what's too low, what's too high? What seems just right? - I'm gonna argue that nothing is too high.. 00:00:24,083 - Tell us more.. 00:00:30,680 - Make a big huge goal, so big you couldn't even imagine 00:00:34,590 and then double it and then have milestones so that you can treat yourself, tell yourself you're doing well, see progress.. So you wanna have milestones in progress, but you wanna have a JFK, let's put a man on the moon.. And by the way, they didn't have any of the technology to get a man on the moon when he did that speech.. Because then you had some of the most incredible technology inventions made during that period of time because the goal was big enough.. I knew this woman who, Germany had won every single Olympics since 1952.. She's from Holland near Germany, but has a different style.. No way she's gonna win the Olympics..

But she's really, really determined and she sets a goal to get not one but two consecutive Olympic golds In two consecutive Olympics.. She hits that goal, which just blew everybody away 'cause the Germans were number one individually and as a team.. And she went and she beat them and she beat them two Olympics in a row.. And I saw her a month afterwards.. Her name is (in foreign language).. I saw her at her barn and she was depressed.. After her second Olympic gold, she was depressed and she said, "Emmy, I have no motivation.. I've done everything that I set out to do." So even her, she had this impossible goal.. She achieved it.. She should have had a bigger goal..

It is so much harder to pick yourself back up.. I wanted to run the number one fund in the world.. I wanted to work at a hedge fund.. I wanted to ride Grand Prix.. I hit all that and then I kind of, I kind of like faded and I didn't keep the gas on 'cause I hit my goals.. It's one of the biggest risks is hitting your goals, is arriving too early.. So you've gotta have much bigger goals than you think because a human, we are so incredibly capable, so much more than we think.. - I love that.. And you know, 00:02:47,883 sometimes we set goals that are multi-year.. And so we keep trying and trying..

How do you know when the goal might be too big, maybe? Is that ever a thing? - I don't ever think the goal is too big, 00:03:02,373 but it could be the goal is not serving you anymore.. - Tell us more.. 00:03:09,770 - So I really wanted to be in investment management 00:03:13,440 and I think I stayed too long because that's all I knew I wanted.. So I had to set new

goals about being an entrepreneur and being in startups and getting to be in the C-suite in a startup and helping to scale it, scale a really exciting startup that helps people.. So I had to set new goals.. It's of course much harder than just having an audacious goal.. But part of the problem was, maybe if my goal was a hundred million by age 50, then it would've fit into both investment management and the shift over to entrepreneurship.. But because my goal was a little too specific and a little too small, I had that lull in between and I had to find new goals and pick up the gas again...