

Accomplish Your Goals

**7 Proven Steps
To Achieve Your Resolutions**



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When I became aware of personal leadership principles and practices as a college student, the seeds of my calling were planted. I knew then that schools, colleges, professional organizations, as well as places of worship needed to help those they serve to learn and use common denominator principles for people to do their best regardless of academic, professional, or other life choice.

Planning and personal leadership are in the top 3 in every reputable resource on student, personal, professional, and leadership development. The best colleges and other schools will eventually require and reward plans for life and personal leadership. This planbook is provided as a resource for people who care about discovering, developing, and devoting themselves to their callings as well as helping others to be and do their best.

I appreciate the invitation from students, faculty, and staff who care about student and professional development for the invitation to share this resource and how others have succeeded more often by using it. - David

7 Best Practices to Lead Your Life

These actions provide a core strategy for thinking, planning, preparing, and persisting as your *best-self*:

1. **LEAD your LIFE.** Choose to identify and fulfill your callings, gifts, and talents as your *best-self*—increasingly prepared, strong, resilient, and focused on areas of purpose, passion, and value to you and others.
2. **PLAN for LIFE.** *Pray. Listen. Act. Now.* (PLAN). Answer life's important questions: mission and vision, values and beliefs, and strategy for your *best-self*. Discern your callings and write your choices for the life you feel called to lead in your constitution, legacy, and lifestyle vision.
3. **Have an IMPACT.** Identify IMPortant ACTions to fulfill your mission and vision synergistically with others through your priority roles and goals in the *7 areas of life*. Write resolutions to contribute or change for critical priorities—to “be, know, and do” with accountability to self and others.
4. **Balance your Life.** Choose time priorities for your 168 hours per week to fulfill your goals for the *7 Areas of Life*. Plan to invest needed *quantity T.I.M.E.* (time, inspiration, money, and energy) to create *quality* results with balance—for your priorities, including relationships with others.
5. **Live your Priorities.** Make your calendar and checkbook reflect your priorities. Target blocks of time for whom and what matters most, maximizing your *prime times*, to create habits and instincts to guide you, *even under stress*.
6. **Act and Adjust.** As you take action, compare desired and actual *Plans, Actions, and Results* (PAR) to adapt thinking and adjust behavior in the flow of action, persisting positively, choosing to make the best of circumstances.
7. **Renew and Improve.** Spend a foundation of 5-20% of time planning and developing *mind, body, and spirit*, plus *service capacity and stewardship for callings, gifts, and talents* so we can *succeed with significance, giving to others*. Invest in earning, assessing, improving, and transforming of *attitude and ability* needed to fulfill your *callings with commitment, courage, and confidence*.



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I also recommend [The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People](#) by Dr. Stephen Covey. A few years after I outlined my 7 Best Practices, I read his 7 Habits book. His habits and my best practices complement each other—mine focuses more on personal leadership and his adds more interpersonal leadership.

1. *Be Proactive*
2. *Begin with the end in mind*
3. *First Things First*
4. *Think Win-Win*
5. *Seek first to understand, then to be understood*
6. *Synergize*
7. *Sharpen the saw*

In principle-based publications, you will see strategies of *Planning Your Life* and *Leading Your Life*—or the equivalent—in the top three recommended actions or best practices. Add your *best-self strategy* to your plan. You can use those provided here or you can edit or add your preferences. You are answering a key life leadership question: *how do I do my best?* This applies to *Personal Leadership* for you, *Interpersonal Leadership* when you teach or coach others, and *Organizational Leadership* when you help everyone in the group to have a plan with best-self strategy along with statements of purpose and priorities.

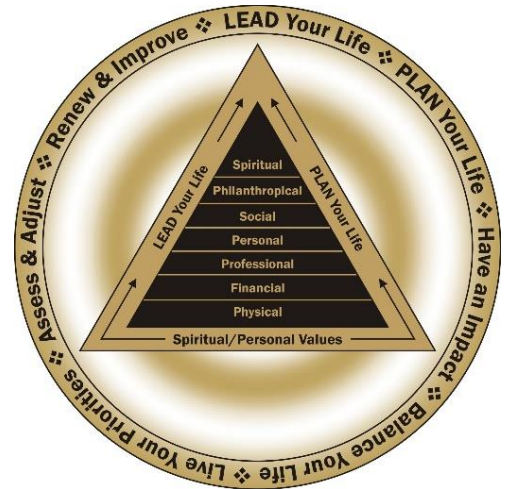
7 Areas of Life

Everything we do falls into one or more of the *7 Areas of Life*. Consider these *7 Areas* as you list priority goals, actions, and ideas. You can still use the traditional approach of long-term and short-term goals though you can achieve more balance asking and answering questions through the lens of the *7 Areas* of your life.

Activities listed cover most things we do in our 168 hours weekly:

1. **Physical:** breathe, eat, sleep, bathe, groom, and exercise to survive and care for physiological needs, providing a platform of health and energy.
2. **Financial:** budget, purchase, and invest to satisfy needs for survival, security, hope, and freedom to pursue callings.
3. **Professional:** plan, prepare, learn, and work for distinctive, ethical service to meet financial needs, enjoy personal success, and provide value to society.
4. **Personal:** primarily for you – *plan for life*; develop yourself for emotional health, intellectual development, and independence; nurture your home, read, enjoy music, hobbies, play.
5. **Social:** share and do, with and for others – through recreation and responsibility, for fun and fulfillment – to belong, care for, love and serve interdependently.
6. **Philanthropical:** contribute time and resources for communities, charities and causes that match your mission and improve society – synergistically with your other goals to serve and improve.
7. **Spiritual:** pray, study, worship, serve, give to fulfill your callings, gifts and talents and the *purpose of life* – to live a spiritual journey faithfully, love and serve others meaningfully, and do my best joyously.

The *7 Areas of Life* in the pyramid are the center of the *Personal Leadership Model*. The *7 Best Practices* are in the circle around the pyramid signifying the continuum of planning and persistence in action.



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7 Steps to Set Your Achievable Resolution

To Plan, Decide, and Act to Achieve, Improve, Solve, Change, Transform

I developed this 7-Step Method to help my seminar students who often set the same “New Year Resolution” year after year. Both they and I have done better identifying priorities and taking action.

7 Steps to Set a Resolution that increases your chance of success:

If you answer these seven questions as an outline for your plan, you will boost likelihood of success. You will better internalize the results you seek and why you should follow through, plus have a plan that helps you invest enough time to give you a chance to succeed. Research – mine and others – suggests over 50% of people quit on resolutions, most within one month.

1. Mission (Purpose)
2. Vision & Goals (Desired Results)
3. Solutions (Strategy that could work if implemented)
4. Motivation (Results if you succeed, if you quit, why you should persevere)
5. Choice (Decision on if the resolution results are worth the time and resources)
6. Systems and Structures for Success (Create automatic actions to set you up for success)
7. Assessment and Accountability (Integrity and feedback)

Main reasons for failing:

1. Lose focus on the result, benefit, and commitment felt at the time of setting the resolution. There is science behind the benefit of writing your resolution result and plan plus reading regularly to remember and internalize.
2. Never truly get started because they do not plan for the hours and times to invest, which includes appointments with self and others, plus identifying what to reduce to make time for the new priorities. If you need 10-20 hours per week to get something done and do not plan for or implement that time commitment, most fail and often never know why. This often requires new habits or at least re-defining balance for awhile. An Olympic athlete or a working professional going back to school at night for a few years usually chooses to invest more time in the bigger goal and less time in less important activities like excessive tv, social media, or hanging out (note: “excessive” because some of those can be good). The average person spends over 20 hours weekly watching tv – the dedicated Olympian or parent going to school to make a better life makes better choices – at least until the resolution is completed.

Stories of Succeeding using this Method:

Writing books. Col. Stretch Dunn (USA Retired, 1943-2017) and I wrote two books, Professionalism Under Stress and Patriotism in Action, on time and budget using my *7 Step Method*. We used the plan template to outline what we wanted to do, why, and how, then decided together and signed the accountability partner agreement. If you want to keep a promise, ask a West Point graduate trained in doing “the harder right” to be your partner 😊. If you have a big enough “why” and internalize the importance to you and others you value, plus outline a plan with potential to succeed, then persist, you can do most anything.

Graduating school. I finished my doctoral dissertation and graduated a year faster than most in my class mainly because I realized early on I needed to invest more hours in the main thing that final year--research and writing on my dissertation. Like most students, I felt motivated and busy though an honest assessment of how I was spending my time motivated me to make changes in time priorities that made the difference.

Stopping bad habits. A grandmother attended my weekend workshop. She confessed, she had tried to quit smoking for years. Question 4 helped her finally succeed: Motivation. She wanted to live to see her grandchildren graduate school. I suggested she post a photo of her grandchildren on her mirror and ask daily, which is most important: “my grandchildren or my cigarettes?” She grinned at the suggestion, paused, thought, agreed, then she quit smoking. She internalized her big “why” and that made the difference.

Roles, Goals & Important Actions (Impact) Summary

The 7 Areas of Life

Use this plan sheet to list important roles, goals, and actions to start or succeed for the 7 Areas.



<u>Area of Life /Role/Activity</u>	<u>Goals / Desired Results</u>	<u>Actions to Start/Succeed</u>
1. Physical		
2. Financial		
3. Professional		
4. Personal		
5. Social		
6. Philanthropical		
7. Spiritual		



Plan for Your Achievable Resolution

To Plan, Decide, and Act to Achieve, Improve, Solve, Change, Transform

Plan

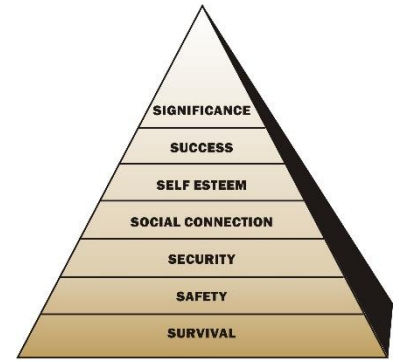
1. Mission (Purpose) – state what you want to achieve, improve, change or transform, “Goliath” to master:
To...

2. Vision & Goals (Desired Results) – list what you feel led to do/want/should do; what success looks like:

3. **Solutions** (Strategy that could work) – attitude, ability, action (habits, time, money) vital to success by you, involvement by others (assistance, accountability), structures (appointments, events...that will guide flow of thoughts and actions automatically). Consider your *Time-Inspiration-Money-Energy* including hours per day/week needed and blocks of *prime times* best for you and others. Identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT), including barriers holding you back, and solutions. Admit if you have low maturity or integrity of habits in this area – if so, choose a time frame you can do and ask for support.



4. Motivation (Admit “why” you should persevere – results if you succeed and if you quit) – list reasons to follow through, such as impact on you and people “looking up to you” or counting on you. Post printed goals or photos of people impacted on a wall or mirror or create a “vision board” if that may help keep you focused. Admit what you need for empowerment. Consider the 7 *Motivating Values* that inspire you and which you would like to focus on more.



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Decision

5. **Choice** (Decision) – choose if you are motivated (#4) to do actions (#3) and get results (#2) more than continue activities you must reduce time for or prune to establish new priorities, habits, and results.

If no:

postpone adjust let go to focus that energy on priorities with less mental distraction.

If yes:

I will work my plan with inspired action and expectation until: date: __/__/__ I succeed _____

Signed _____ Date __/__/__

Action

6. **Systems and Structures for Success** (Create automatic actions) – target times/set appointments with self/others to insure time/energy needed (*live your priorities*). Read, speak, shape the resolution daily to sculpt your plan, focus your thoughts, build a sense of calling to condition your mind for instinctive action/habits (*internalize inspired plans*).

I will read/improve my plan and act daily weekly at these times _____
until I succeed change my mind this result happens _____

I will invest ___ hours per week in these primary actions: _____
 plan learn assess actions/results _____

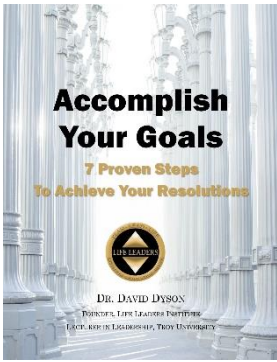
I will spend ___ hours less per week in these lower priority activities to make time for priorities:
 tv social media games hanging out _____

7. **Assessment and Accountability** (Integrity and feedback) – *Assess and adjust* (assess efforts and results compared with vision, adjust to close gaps; *renew and improve attitude and ability*).

Share your resolution with a trusted partner/coach/mentor and state specifically help you need – ask for assistance and make promises you intend to keep.

I will ask _____ to assist me for ___ days weeks months _____
 listen/sounding board feedback & suggestions encourage remind call me teach me
 hold me accountable tough love if needed participate with me _____

Accountability partner _____ Date __/__/__



About the Goals and Resolutions Planbook

In this planbook, you get two main templates you can use to plan and take action on goals and resolutions:

- ◆ summary sheet to list your main roles, goals, and actions for the 7 Areas of Life.
- ◆ pages for you to outline your resolution to boost your chances of success.

Concepts and instructions are summarized for brevity in compressed seminars.

Author

Dr. David Dyson serves as author, teacher, and coach to empower people, organizations, and communities to PLAN and LEAD in LIFE. Planbooks include *Plan for Life*, *Plan for College and Life*, *7 Steps to Set Your Achievable Resolution*, *Master Your Goliaths*, *Best-Self Strategy*, *Best-Self Leadership*, *Earning and Delegating Empowerment*, *Assess Attitude and Ability*, *Veterans Making Comebacks*, *Hierarchy of Motivating Values*.... Books include *Professionalism Under Stress* and *Patriotism in Action* (with Col. Stretch Dunn, 1943-2017), plus *The Career Planner* and *Suggestions for Successful Living* (out-of-print).

David founded Life Leaders Institute and serves as trustee. He is a lecturer at Troy University, 2017-2018. He cares for adopted and rescued horses, donkeys, dogs, and cats.

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Life Leaders Institute

Life Leaders America is a 501 (c)(3) public service organization based in Alabama started in 1988, founded in 1992, and U.S. approved charitable nonprofit in 2012.

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Services: Donated publications, services, and web resources to Troy University, National Veterans Day, Southern Museum of Flight, colleges, schools, civic clubs, and other programs called to help people and organizations develop their callings and capacities.

Institute: research and publication of books, planbooks, and models, plus teaching and service to leaders, true professionals, teams, organizations, and communities.

Association: public seminars, workshops, and events, such as *Best-Self Leadership*, *Plan for the 7 Areas of Life*, *Master Your Goliaths*, *Freedom to Flourish*; *Financial Fitness*, *Personal Leadership for Patriots*, and *Tribute to the Founder of Veterans Day*....

Ranch: for people planning and developing better through workshops, coaching, and events with animals in nature, plus sanctuary for 21 animals needing homes.

Funding: Trustees, members, friends, foundations, and other citizens wanting action provide grants, donations, sponsorships, and volunteerism.

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