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Hull & Associates

225 S. Swoope Ave., 210
Maitland, Florida 32751
Phone: (407) 628-0669
Website

www.HullOnline.com

Email:

DrMimi@Hullonline.com

Twitter: [DrMimi](https://twitter.com/DrMimi)

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Our Staff...

Dr. Mimi Hull

President
drmimi@hullonline.com
Lead Intern

Bella McDermott

Interns

Faith Brown

Alyssa Caccamo
Giselle Chaviano
Isabel Zenon

SMART Goals Are NOT Enough!

Whether you are starting a business, losing weight, or working toward a promotion, standard wisdom for achieving these is to set a **SMART** goal that's **Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timed**. SMART goals can be effective for small goals, but for the big ones, it is important to have an emotional connection with and a plan of action to the goal to ensure success.

We also need the emotional connection to fuel the fire because internal factors are more important than rational ideas when it comes to long-term changes. Here are eight things that you can do to reach your goals.

1. Be sure that the goal is something you really want to accomplish.

2. Picture the end goal and how great it will feel to achieve it.

3. Realize that achieving the goal will take you out of your comfort zone.

4. Develop new skills that will help you achieve the goal.

5. Ask for help and get coaching and counseling.

6. Realize that failure isn't fatal and that you will have setbacks.

7. Plan a celebration for reaching your goal and involve others in that celebration.

8. **CELEBRATE!** This is an important step as it will fuel you to set even more lofty goals in the future!

By creating an emotional attachment, your chances of success are multiplied. So...get ready, get set, and GO!!!!

You Must and Can Improve!

Throughout your life, you have acquired skills, abilities, and knowledge from your education, job, social situations, and experiences. These may include leadership, confidence, technology, teamwork, and, most importantly, the ability to learn.

To advance in today's world, you must both acquire new skills and improve the ones you have. First, recognize the skills that you have.

Without this recognition, it is easy to gloss over the various abilities that you have and maybe even lose them!

To continue growing, focus on areas that will help you, whether they be for your job or personally. For example, you may want to **work on your interpersonal skills and how to communicate better with others.** You may also want to better

organize your time, improve delegation skills, and be more efficient.

Development and growth are advantageous because as you improve yourself mechanically you grow psychologically.

How do you do this? Take a class. Find a mentor. Consider coaching.

Ask to attend trainings that your organization may offer. **If they are not offering training, suggest it,** as there may be others who would be interested if given the opportunity.

Put deadlines on your goals. Ask a friend or mentor to be tough and hold you accountable along with asking them to give you feedback and encourage you.

Practice your new skills both at work and in your personal life. The more you do, the better the mastery.

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Get the Right, NOT Perfect Employee

When looking for employees, you probably have an image in mind, BUT could your image be too restrictive? It is normal to have expectations, but if you cannot find the perfect employee, put your efforts into growing them or you will lose the candidates you have! **What to do...**

Focus on Potential. Your right candidate may not have all the credentials you expect, but have they shown they can earn them? Or perhaps a candidate hasn't worked in a managerial position, but they've taken on special projects and managed them well. This demonstrates their ability to take ownership of a task. Experiences like these show you their familiarity with the skills you need and may suggest how trainable they are.

Identify Necessary Personal Skills.

Encouraging Equity for Women

Studies show that the COVID-19 pandemic heightened the inequalities that women face daily – both at work and at home. Despite efforts to support employees during the crisis, women at work report feeling even more exhausted, burned out, and under pressure than their male counterparts. **What can you do to help?**

Ask them for suggestions. Women now require increased flexibility and **working from home is not the only solution.** To keep good employees, consider a full range of options to help women with their increased obligations. Because the best solutions will vary based on organization and individual needs, **gather anonymous data via interviews and digital tools**, such as online forms, to get more honest perspectives and better insights.

Be Upfront About Flexibility. The inflexibility of work environments is a huge stressor for women. Stating clear expectations on remote work and related issues early in the hiring process eases this stress.

Be Creative. Permit employees to work hours aligned with the school day or holding certain meetings via

These are the baseline, nonnegotiable skills that you expect from a candidate. Focus on their traits and thinking skills. Consider what they need to be successful: Do they need to work well on a team? Do they need to be self-motivated? Once you determine your nonnegotiable personal skills, use them as guidelines to narrow your candidate pool.

Keep an Open Mind. This is arguably the most important thing when it comes to scouting candidates. **Focus less on their resume.** A person cannot fit their entire lifetime of experiences and acquired skills on a single sheet of paper. **Pay attention to how the person responds during their interview.** Are they engaged? Eager? Do they have good communicative skills? Often, the interview can be more telling than their resume, so keep an open mind and give people a chance to achieve their potential.

teleconference during school hours or even while moms are in carpool lines. Have a casserole exchange or give out restaurant or supermarket gift cards so that women can try something new.

Be Honest. Don't make promises that cannot be implemented. Even if certain policies are subject to reasonable change, develop a clear framework around expectations and provide procedures for how, when, and why things can be done.

Encourage Communication. Hybrid workplaces have become the norm and this requires a strategic effort to develop good communication. Digital tools play a role, but also find opportunities for feedback and relationship building, especially for the women in your organization.

Team Building. Team building helps both men and women work better together. People like to laugh while they learn. **Have regularly scheduled feedback sessions**, training, mentoring/leadership programs, or simply designate a portion of meetings for small talk and idea exchanges. Make these short and fun so that they are a welcome and useful break.

Time to Create Leaders!

Leaders are created not born. Therefore, it is in your best interest to develop new leaders who will have a positive influence on your employees. When doing this, it is important to have benchmarks and standards for performance to serve as a useful guide in determining if employees are improving and acquiring new skills.

How do you do this? Here are four imperatives for an effective leadership strategy.

Have a blended delivery approach.

One size does not fit all. Include blending modalities – like having both online and face-to-face leadership trainings – and/or having both formal and informal programs including workshops, webinars, and other initiatives.

Focus on workplace realities. Make sure that the trainings being offered replicate on-the-job challenges that your leaders are likely to face. The most successful leadership development initiatives connect the trainings to real on-the-job possibilities. This results in these

trainings having a meaningful long-lasting effect on employees.

Interact and engage with employees.

Make your trainings more exciting by making them interactive and engaging. This can be done by including interactive questions, games, videos, and other techniques to keep your employees interested. Interactive activities are more likely to be remembered and utilized.

Use tools and assessments.

Use leadership assessments, like the DISC and other tools, to provide each employee with context about their particular leadership style. People love to learn about themselves! This also provides future leaders with a better understanding of their organization's needs while comparing their approaches to those of their peers and direct reports.

Investing in an effective leadership development program will drastically improve your organization's culture, reduce resignations, and benefit employees greatly. **If you can't implement it yourself, consider hiring an outside consultant, like Dr. Mimi Hull!!**

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 by Dr. Mimi Hull

THE corporate couch



Dr. Mimi Hull heads Hull & Associates, a team of trainers, speakers and consultants. A licensed psychologist, she has a master's in counseling and personnel services and a doctorate in psychology with specialization in business management from the University of Florida, Gainesville. Her B.A. in psychology is from Syracuse (N.Y.) University. Reach her at www.HullOnline.com or DrMimi@HullOnline.com.

Dear Dr. Mimi:

Is it illegal for me to clock in for work but not actually work? The last few days, I'll clock in, but just sit at my desk. I play on my phone, check the clock periodically and clock out at my given time. I know it's wrong, but I can't bring myself to actually work!

—*Clock-Watcher*

Dear Clock-Watcher:

It is probably not unlawful to clock into work and just sit at your desk, but it is certainly grounds to get you fired. And, it would probably not be unlawful for your supervisor to fire you. The bigger question is "Why?" Do you hate what you do? Are you depressed? Is this new behavior? Has something changed at work that has demotivated you? Come up with answers, and if this is not the right job for you, start looking for another one. Remember, it is always easier to find a job when you have a job.

—*Dr. Mimi*

 by Dr. Mimi Hull

THE corporate couch



Dr. Mimi Hull heads Hull & Associates, a team of trainers, speakers and consultants. A licensed psychologist, she has a master's in counseling and personnel services and a doctorate in psychology with specialization in business management from the University of Florida, Gainesville. Her B.A. in psychology is from Syracuse (N.Y.) University. Reach her at www.HullOnline.com or DrMimi@HullOnline.com.

Dear Dr. Mimi:

My boss keeps asking me why I don't apply for a higher position. It is because I know that I'm not smart. I do work extremely hard and seem to do fine where I am. Thankfully, I had a mentor when I got this job. I lack confidence and fear it will take me forever to learn how to do well in a higher position. Will I be able to succeed if I am promoted?

—*Insecure*

Dear Insecure:

You have what it takes to be successful. You work hard. You are aware of your shortcomings and you know how to ask for help. Everyone needs help, and hopefully, you will continue to ask and receive it. Be proud of what you are doing and that your boss has recognized your potential. I am sure that good things will happen to you, if you take the chance and apply for the promotion.

—*Dr. Mimi*