

GOAL POWER

Learn from the Olympic elite how to set your goals

You are told that unless you set goals, your success in sport will be limited. And this is not just idle talk. Ongoing research on goal-setting in sport psychology has provided an abundance of information that you can use for continually setting new PR's. Still, there are certain shortcomings in this research. As an example, little research has been done to clarify by exactly how much your performance will increase if you follow research-based principles for setting goals (as opposed to some of the silly recommendations you will see on the Web and hear from unqualified athletes and coaches). Also, researchers have not accessed elite athletes to any large extent to investigate their goal-setting practices. Therefore, a group of researchers collaborated in research aimed at finding out what Olympic athletes' perceptions about goal-setting might be. More specifically, the scientists wanted to find out what sort of patterns, strategies, and beliefs these elite athletes held in regard to goal-setting. In addition, the research team wanted to find answers to three questions: 1. Can meaningful goal-effectiveness dimensions be identified? 2. Can goal-effectiveness profiles be identified? 3. How might goal-effectiveness profiles differ in regard to sports success?

Power Key: elite athlete, goal-setting, goal-setting effectiveness



When you're confident, you'll perform well. One of the secrets to high confidence and exceptional performance is setting goals.

Photo: [József Szaka](#)

Original Research

Burton, D., et al. The competitive goal effectiveness paradox revisited: Examining the goal practices of prospective Olympic athletes. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology* 22:72-86, 2010.