

TAYLOR'S TIPS for a more productive you...

Dear Friend,



Ever heard the saying..."one step at a time"? How about the phrase "stairway to the top"? The first expression is a reference to most twelve-step groups that teach you to eliminate a harmful habit or to replace a bad habit with a good one. The second is a nod to Zig Ziglar's teaching. I first heard him speak back in the 80s (I know -- can you believe I'm that old?) and I bought his cassette tapes (yup, cassettes, and I still have them).

Do you have a dream? A desire? A goal?

Let's look at [Zig Ziglar's Steps to the Top](#):

First, identify what you want.

Second, clearly spell out why you want to reach that particular goal.

Third, list the obstacles.

Fourth, identify the growth process--the things you need to know.

Fifth, identify the people you need to work with.

Sixth, develop a detailed plan of action.

Seventh, set a date on when you expect to reach that goal.

When I first started writing for more than fun back in 1995, I'd been receiving *Guideposts* for years and decided I wanted to publish a story with them. Here's what I did:

Step 1: I wanted to be published in the *Guideposts* magazine.

Step 2: Because the stories helped me so much and I wanted to help others in that same way.

Step 3: I'd heard it was super hard to break into this magazine, they only published a dozen stories a month, and I wasn't a very good writer.

Step 4: I needed to learn how to be a better writer. I needed to fine-tune my skills.

Step 5: What I needed were classes on how to write great inspirational stories taught by those who had succeeded.

Step 6: In 2000 I attended the Mount Hermon Christian Writers Conference and attended Hal Hostetler's class on How to Write for the *Guideposts* Contest. In 2002 I took the class again. In 2004, eight years after my first

submission, I won a spot in the Writers Workshop.

Step 7: I expected to reach the goal the first time I submitted. It didn't happen, but I didn't give up.

Do these steps work for goals other than writing? You bet they do. If you don't mind, I'd like to share how I used Zig Ziglar's Steps to the Top to lose weight. Here's how that goal went:

Step 1: My goal was to lose 25 lbs.

Step 2: I wanted to get my blood pressure down and to feel better about how I looked.

Step 3: I couldn't just cut out eating. I had to learn how to manage what I ate.

Step 4: Research showed me how to substitute this for that and how many calories were in the foods I was eating.

Step 5: Accountability was key for me. I found a partner who I could work out with and she helped me stay motivated.

Step 6: Realistic goals of 4-5 lbs a month were within reach and not too "pie in the sky."

Step 7: I began my journey in July of 2008 and my deadline was to lose it by December 10th of 2008. I made it.

What are YOUR goals?

Happy writing and blessings on your work.

What's Happening...



I need your help. Our new dog Charlie Bear is a scruffy little bugger with a big attitude and a bit of a history. He wants to tell his story on the dog blog and he's going to do it in his own voice. What should I call it? Suggestions have been: Charlie Chat; Charlie's Growl; Tales of Charlie Bear; Something to Chew On. Any other ideas? Please reply to me with YOUR IDEA and/or YOUR VOTE. *Thank you!*

Chicken Soup for the Soul Deadline is this weekend October 31 for Preteens book and December 31 for the Teens book. Also upcoming is the December 31 deadline for *Young at Heart*. Check out the website for additional books in the works. www.chickensoup.com

Follow your dreams...

B.J.

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