

Maintain a bucket list



A bucket list is a list of things you want to accomplish in your lifetime. They are typically out-of-the-ordinary experiences, not mundane, predictable ones. For instance, you wouldn't include *maintain personal health* on your bucket list or *buy a car*, but you might include *tour Europe* or *plant a vineyard*. They are usually big, challenging goals (*get my pilot's license*) and not small, simple activities (*buy a water bed*).

Most people think that a bucket list is just for old people: "I'm 70 years old. What do I want to do before I die? On my deathbed what will I regret having not done?" But a broader perspective would suggest that everyone should have a bucket list and that the earlier you start your list the better. In a recent [post](#) I wrote about the advantages of setting goals early in life.

I've had a robust bucket list for years. It's fluid: I'm constantly adding, subtracting, and tweaking the items. Here are a few items on my list.

- Attend the Art Basel art show (in Switzerland) and buy a painting
- Eat at the best restaurant in the world
- Taste all the great wines of the world
- Take a one-week course at Oxford
- Give a TED talk
- Have 50,000 subscribers to my blog site
- Run the NYC marathon at age 65 (I ran it when I was 35)
- Visit 60 countries (I've been to 44; I try to add one new country a year)
- Visit the source of one of the four great rivers of the world: Nile, Amazon, Yangtze, Mississippi
- Stand for 30 minutes by myself in 130°F and -30°F temperatures

In his good book, *never eat alone*, Keith Ferrazzi posits a strong argument for setting life-goals.

"In a study cited in *Success* magazine researchers asked Yale's class of 1953 a number of questions. Three had to do with goals: Have you set goals? Have you written them down? Do you have a plan to accomplish them?

"It turned out that only 3 percent of the Yale class had written down their goals along with a plan of action to achieve them. Thirteen percent had goals but had not written them down. Fully 84 percent had no

specific goals at all, other than to 'enjoy themselves.'

"In 1973, when the same class was resurveyed, the differences between the goal setters and everyone else were stunning. The 13 percent who had goals but had not written them down were earning, on average twice as much as the 84 percent of students who had no goals at all. But most surprising of all, the 3 percent who had written down their goals were earning, on average, ten times as much as the 97 percent of graduates combined!" (page 23)

If you aim at nothing you will always hit it.

I have also found that sometimes the journey is just as satisfying as reaching the destination. Planning how you're going to accomplish a goal and taking incremental steps forward is, in itself, fulfilling.

For instance, I've been strategizing for years about how to spend 30 minutes in 130° F temperature (see the above list). Early in 2015, Mary and I planned a trip to Dubai (United Arab Emirates) and I did some research into how hot it gets in that Arab emirate. The hottest temperature on record is 125° F in the city, but Dubai is on the Persian Gulf and is cooled (relatively speaking) by the sea breeze. Perhaps I could get closer to my goal by going south into the desert.

So when we were in Dubai I hired a car and driver and ventured out into the desert. When we were far from civilization the driver dropped me off and I walked the dunes, taking temperature readings as I went. Fortunately for me, a heat wave was ravaging the area that week



so I recorded 132° F where I stood. Mission accomplished. I asked my driver to take my picture.

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