



**Cloud Effective**  
... turning ideas into results!

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# Set and Achieve Goals



# CLOUD EFFECTIVE – turning ideas into results!

## Productivity Management Software to Unlock Your Growth Potential

*Our flexible cloud-based collaboration app aligns your teams to focus on work that matters – goals, projects and tasks all in one easy-to-use platform, quickly turning ideas into results!*

### The Problem

If you're like many organizations, most teams show up to work each day resolved to reach their most important goals. But we know that most struggle with missed goals, misunderstood priorities, misaligned resources – and overall lack of focused productivity.

### Are you finding the same kinds of challenges?

**Learn from the past, set vivid, detailed goals for the future, and live in the only moment of time over which you have any control: now!**

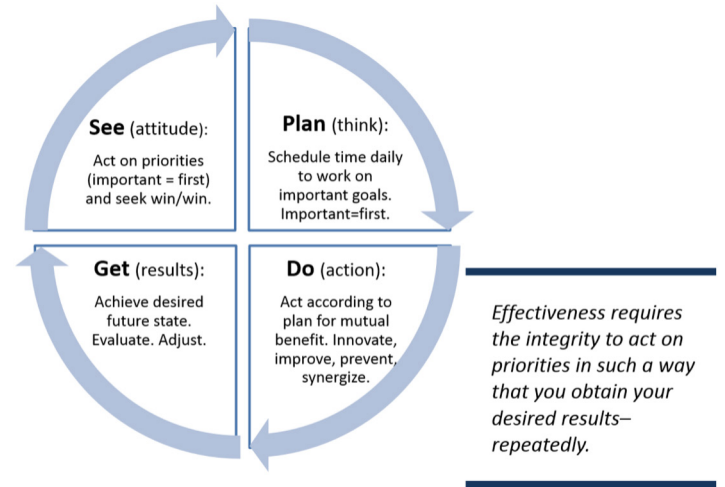
- Denis Waitley

**Setting goals is the first step in turning the invisible into the visible.**

- Tony Robbins

To set and attain goals is to manage change. Recall the see-plan-do-get change-management model (refer to VerAegis Relationships, Embrace Change). How do you see your world today versus what you desire it to become? How committed are you to turning the invisible into the visible? Who do you hope to become? Do you plan to achieve goals that will help

you become a better person and make the world a better place, or that will facilitate you acquiring more material wealth? What is your attitude? Do you seek win-win or look out for number one? Will you commit time to plan, or will you cut corners, jumping straight to execution because the solution is “obvious”? Do you strive to do it right the first time, measuring twice, then cutting once, or do you shoot from the hip? Do you believe that planning is prudent and haste makes waste? Do you balance resources so that goals are achievable, or do you continually add projects and tasks until something breaks? Be honest.



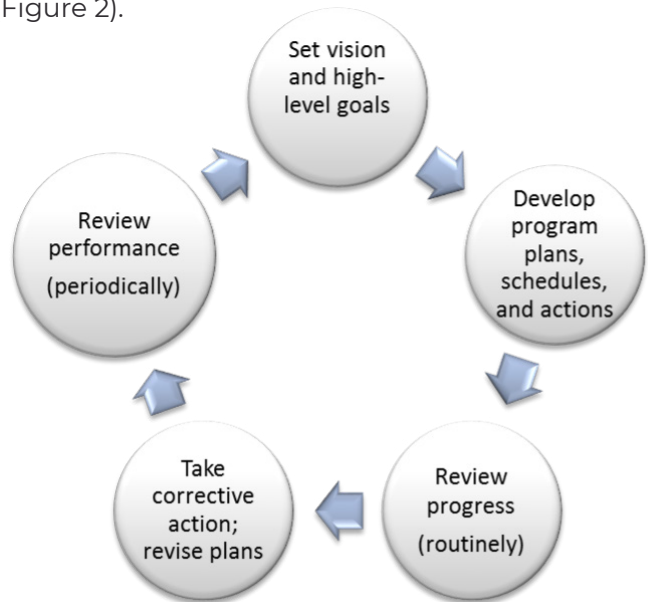
**Figure 1:** Effectiveness—achieving your desired results repeatedly—requires a pragmatic yet optimistic outlook combined with the integrity needed to plan and act.

The answers to these questions indicate whether we will achieve our desired results in such a way that we obtain them repeatedly or haphazardly (Figure 1).

Successfully setting and achieving goals over the long run requires a healthy attitude that embraces the idea that it is vital to act on priorities first and seek win-win outcomes. It involves planning, thinking ahead, and scheduling time on your calendar to work on important activities before the urgent has a chance to consume our time. In executing a plan, one must continue to seek mutual benefit, innovate, improve, and identify and steer around pitfalls while seeking synergy with others. Finally, success requires monitoring results and adjusting as necessary. We need to identify our strengths and then use them for the betterment of ourselves and others—our family, teams, and organizations.

Whether we refer to priorities as “WIGs” (wildly important goals), “BHAGs” (big, hairy, audacious goals), “SMART goals” (Specific, Measurable, Agreed upon and Achievable, Relevant, Time-based), “objectives,” or simply “goals,” effective individuals and organizations alike require a process for establishing, monitoring, and executing our top priorities. Goals are a set of actions and deliverables that, when successfully implemented, move individuals and teams closer to the desired future state. Goals represent our destination. However, managing objectives and goals is not a black-and-white process with a definite beginning and end; it is a continuous cycle. This cycle begins with our high-level vision, which leads to long-term objectives (e.g., corporate or family) aligned with lower-level, shorter-term goals (e.g., department and individual goals). Goals are managed through project plans, near-term deliverables, and imminent supporting tasks for individuals or teams. Project plans, Gantt charts, action boards, and the like are additional tools that facilitate the management and communication of progress. These plans are blueprints detailing scheduled activities and the resources required to meet the goal, execute our mission, and move

toward our vision. Progress is routinely monitored relative to cost, schedule, and performance targets. Furthermore, preventative or corrective actions are launched when risks are predicted or encountered. Once performance is appraised, the cycle continues (Figure 2).



**Figure 2:** Management by objectives (MBOs) is a continuous cycle of setting and monitoring progress toward goals and an associated vision.

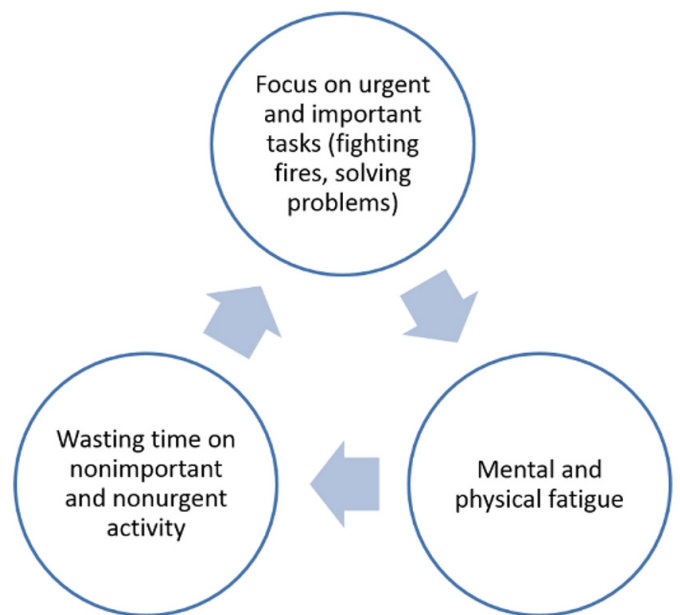
Donning our optimistic (yellow) thinking cap, we find there are several clear and tangible benefits to such a cycle: (1) high-level inspirational goals when linked to the lower-level group and individual goals evoke emotional commitment, (2) resources are aligned to goals predetermined as necessary, thus reducing the need for firefighting, (3) team members understand what is required to succeed, since principal shareholders agree in advance to plans and metrics of success, and (4) when plans are aligned, focus, and thus performance improves at all levels, leading to a more satisfied and motivated family or workforce. Teamwork is enhanced. Results are delivered. Together, we reach our desired destination.

Once deployed, the MBO cycle (Figure 2) changes how time is managed: time becomes currency. The established vision and high-level goals set the direction that, in turn, dictates your calendar. In other words, you and your teammates allocate time on calendars to work on top priorities, and the calendars dictate how we spend our time. This change management process encourages relationship building by aligning objectives—between family members, supervisors, subordinates, and colleagues, providing structured opportunities to participate in decision making, alignment, and empowerment, thus improving ownership and buy-in. This concept of alignment and agreement works at home and “in the office.”

There are many benefits to such a process. Still, many potential stumbling blocks (time to don the black hat and employ critical thinking) must be avoided up-front or corrected if encountered during progress reviews to reap these benefits. The first potential problems are those of attitude and discipline. Establishing goals and plans is a necessary activity; it is essential, but it is not urgent. It is an unfortunate reality that many prefer to put off until tomorrow that which could and should be completed today. We allow our days to be filled solely with urgent items, themselves often important tasks that were neglected to the point that they have now taken on urgency. These self-created emergencies (firefights) are insidious because they displace other essential activities and set the scene for future fires.

It is ineffective to habitually prioritize the urgent over the important, and the subsequent stress leads to mental and physical fatigue (emotional debt). This pressure drives people and organizations to spend spare time escaping urgent and important activities. In other words, when taking a break from fighting fires, individuals and organizations don't rush to

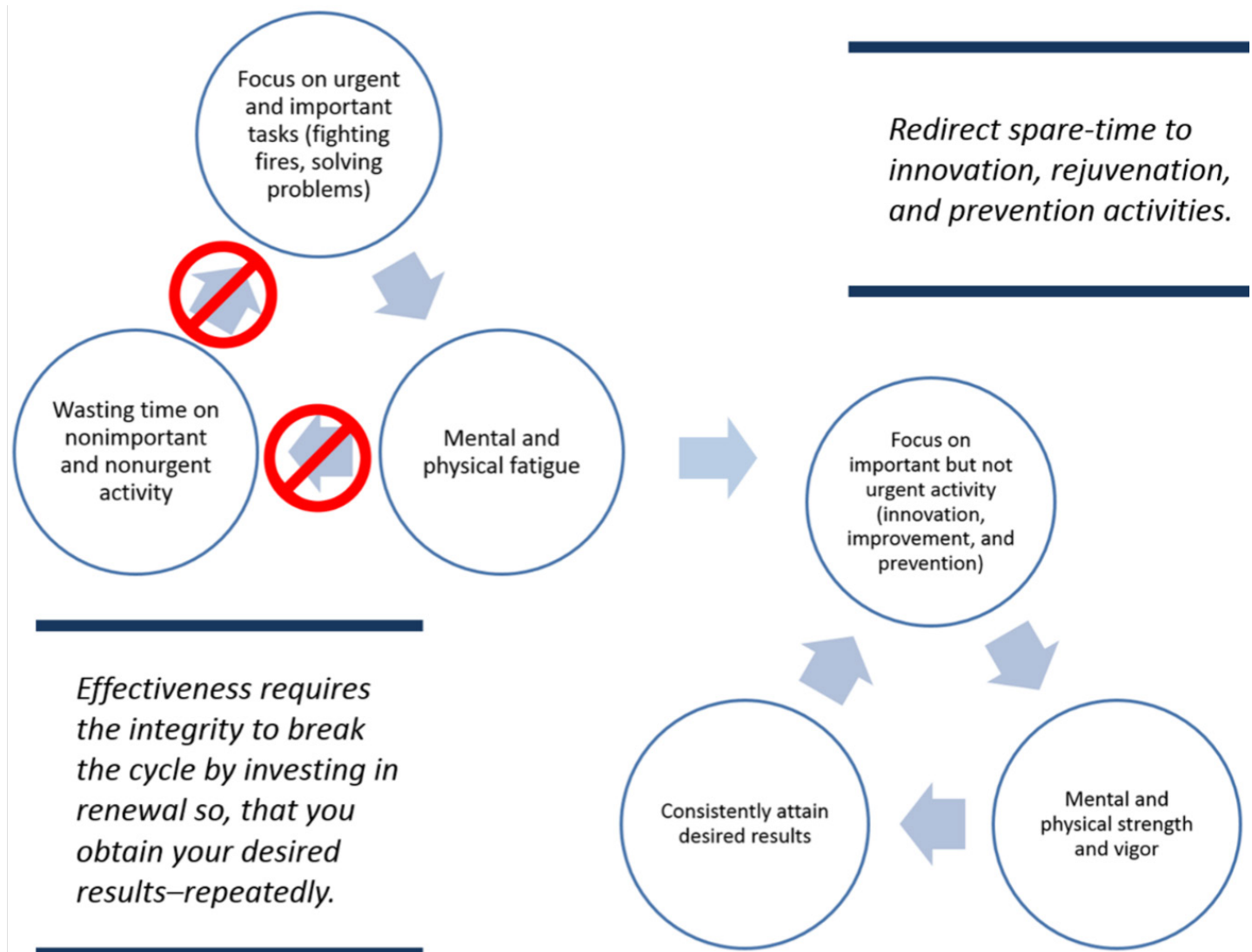
other important activities. Instead, we seek activities that are both not important and not urgent (this is the apex of ineffectiveness). We seek respite by squandering our precious spare time rather than spending it wisely on activities aimed at renewal, improvement, and prevention of the next fire. Without continuous improvement and prevention, however, future fires are guaranteed, and the cycle continues until one fire overlaps the following, threatening individuals' and organizations' physical and mental health (Figure 3).



**Figure 3:** Constant firefighting leads to fatigue and wasted time.

To be effective, we have no choice but to break the firefighting cycle. Though weary from firefights, we must redirect our spare time to innovation, rejuvenation, and prevention activities. We must shift our focus to essential activities, perhaps not urgent (Figure 4). While rest and revitalization are valid and crucial, we must avoid wasting time by sinking too much of our spare time into non-important activities that we may view as stress relievers. Remember,

too much of anything is not good! When stressed from continuously fighting fires, we must employ self-discipline and integrity, putting important things first. Only then will we, as individuals and organizations, be able to break the firefighting cycle to deliver desired results consistently.



**Figure 4:** Trading firefights for renewal yields the strength and vigor necessary to produce desired results consistently.

There are additional potential stumbling blocks in the MBO process. Still, if individuals and organizations are on the renewal cycle, they will have “gas left in the tank” to understand and prevent or resolve any predicted or encountered problems.

**Potential Management-Caused Stumbling Blocks**

1. Failure to embrace the process and lead by example
  - a. The MBO process is allowed to be perceived as “just another initiative.”
  - b. Failure to communicate the hierarchy of priorities, failure to indicate both what is most important to do and that which will not be done
  - c. Failure to gain “buy-in” and seek win-win
2. Failure to plan adequately
  - a. Constant change of direction and priorities prevents MBOs from taking hold
  - b. Failure to establish a hierarchy of priorities
  - c. Tracking too much—for instance, tracking daily or weekly tasks as MBOs
3. Failure to execute and systemize
  - a. Failure to empower the organization
  - b. Too much “paperwork” involved in performance management
  - c. Failure to provide a workable system that includes administration of both high-level goals and daily tasks
  - d. Failure to drive accountability
  - e. Inability or unwillingness to establish clear and concrete measures of success for each goal
4. Failure to monitor results
  - a. Lack of follow-through once goals are set
  - b. Performance-reward disconnect

**Potential Contributor-Caused Stumbling Blocks**

1. Failure to buy in and lead by example
  - a. The MBO process is perceived as “just another initiative.”
  - b. Lack of ownership (buy-in)
2. Failure to plan and prioritize
  - a. Failure to understand and embrace priorities
  - b. Failure to translate goals into program plans and more detailed tasks
3. Failure to execute and systemize
  - a. Lack of self-discipline in following the process
  - b. Lack of constructive feedback to improve the process
  - c. Allowing low-priority items (tactical minutiae) to drive out important goals by mismanaging one’s time (spending time on the wrong things)
  - d. Inability or unwillingness to establish clear and concrete measures of success for each goal
4. Failure to monitor results
  - a. Lack of follow-through once goals are set
  - b. Failure to proactively communicate results

## The Cloud Effective Solution

What's often missing for companies facing the challenges - of missed goals, misunderstood priorities, misaligned resources, and lost productivity - is an easy-to-use framework to guide their efforts each day, provide focus, and accelerate progress toward the end goals. A flexible app that aligns your teams on work that matters – goals, projects, and tasks all in one place.

If you've struggled to manage your organization's goals across spreadsheets, multiple apps, emails, documents, and endless meetings, you're not alone. *Left to their own devices, organizations stink at collaboration, and their systems don't scale.*

[Cloud Effective provides an easy-to-use and scalable platform](#) that improves *collaboration* and *alignment*. Before your team falls behind the competition and misses yet another critical goal, visit our website, [Cloud Effective](#), take a look at our productivity management solution - it will unlock your growth potential – like no other app on the market. Take a minute to set up a brief initial demo; [click here](#).



**Learn More at:**  
[cloudeffective.com](https://cloudeffective.com)

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