



### Setting Goals that Set You Apart

The French philosopher Geoffrey F. Abert once said, “The most important thing about goals is having one.” In today’s fast-paced world, business professionals, including actuaries, have no shortage of personal and career goals--we can easily check off Abert’s box of *having* a goal.

However, just setting goals isn’t necessarily enough to help you get where you ultimately want to go. Especially in today’s competitive market, it’s important to set smart goals--ones that help you become more well-rounded and marketable.

The featured articles in this month’s *ImageWatch* will help you put Abert’s advice into practice by walking you through the process of setting relevant, meaningful, motivating and achievable short- and long-term goals (sometimes even by working backwards).

Apart from the insight provided by these featured articles, we also sat down with David Benton, a global actuarial recruiter with DW Simpson and asked him to help us identify what is marketable in today’s environment. Here’s what we learned:

According to Benton, both actuaries looking for a new position and those just looking to advance within their organization should concentrate on setting focused career goals that extend beyond their technical capabilities. Currently, Benton is finding that his clients (potentially, your employers) expect technical expertise as a basic requirement. So, according to Benton, the candidates that really get noticed are those who bring additional skills to the table, such as excellent communication skills. Do your career goals include developing business skills outside of your technical expertise?

For those looking to climb the ladder within their current company, Benton recommends setting networking goals and seeking out opportunities to conduct presentations in front of your peers. “Volunteering for special projects to get exposure to peers is crucial. This will also help you hone your presentation and public speaking skills,” he says.

Benton also underscores the importance staying on top of the actuarial industry and the financial world’s current events. “It’s important to know what is happening in your industry and in those that directly affect your industry in order to understand the full picture.”

### Featured Articles

[Backward Goal Setting](#)

[How to Set Truly SMART Goals](#)

[Empowered and Powerful - How to Achieve Your Goals](#)

### How Actuaries Have Turned Risk into Opportunity



Did you know that in 2007, The *Seattle Times* featured an article, “Actuaries Are Financial Wizards,” discussing the broadening roles actuaries are playing and how opportunities are increasing for actuaries in financial services?

If you would like to learn more about this and other facts in the actuarial profession’s history, visit the interactive [timeline](#) on [ImageoftheActuary.org](http://ImageoftheActuary.org).

### Actuaries in the News

- [Can You Afford to Retire?](#) This July 2 *BusinessWeek* special report highlights ways to secure your retirement.
- [Washington: Reworking Retirement Savings Plans](#) This July 2 *BusinessWeek* cover story explores lawmakers' debate over how to protect 401(k)s from market swings and ensure workers don't outlive their savings.
- [Three Initiatives to Reduce Costs and Increase Health Care Efficiencies](#) A follow-up to his recent essay on health care reform, Dale Yamamoto's, FSA, EA, FCA, MAAA, July 8 post on [TheHealthcareBlog.com](#) outlines three potential initiatives that may be undertaken by the government and the private sector to help achieve the objectives of reducing health care costs and improving the quality of health care delivery.
- [Retirees Become More Conservative, Frugal](#) This July 16 story from [USNews.com](#) cites the results from the "[What a Difference a Year Makes](#)" report from the Society of Actuaries, InFRE and LIMRA.
- [Insecurity Grows Among Retirees](#) This July 22 post on [RetirementIncomeJournal.com](#) highlights the findings of the "[What a Difference a Year Makes](#)" Retirement Report by from the Society of Actuaries, InFRE and LIMRA.
- [The New Retirement](#) Mike Boot's, FSA, FCA, MAAA, recent [ProducersWeb.com](#) posting, references a June Capitol Hill presentation sponsored by the American Academy of Actuaries and the "[What a Difference a Year Makes](#)" Retirement Report by from the Society of Actuaries, InFRE and LIMRA, and provides perspective on how financial advisors can use this research.

### **Upcoming Opportunities**

Looking to sharpen a specific skill or learn more about what is happening throughout the profession? If so, consider attending these [upcoming conferences, webcasts or meetings](#).