

You Need to Have Desire to Achieve Your Goals

By [Harrison Barnes](#)

In order for you to achieve the things you are capable of, you need to constantly be creating goals for yourself and create a massive desire deep down to achieve these goals.

There is nothing more important than having a desire deep down to achieve goals. Every single day, you should have both long and short term goals that are fueled by desire. The larger your goals are, the greater your desire needs to be.

A wish is far different than a desire. Everybody has wishes, but wishes are meaningless without desire:

- I am sure every single freshman entering a college class each year wishes that s/he would get all "A's." However, only a small fraction of these people ever end up with all A's. The people who get all A's figure out how to make it happen. They work harder than most of their other classmates. They often take classes they know they will do well in. They push themselves to get the best results they possibly can, and get these sorts of grades because of the incredible effort they put in.
- Every single person wishes they had all of the money they wanted to fulfill all of their dreams. However, only a small fraction of people ever have all the money they want. The people who do have all the money they want have a massive desire to get these results. This desire enables them to work more than others and to see opportunities where others see none.
- Most people wish they could make a huge impact on the world by doing something positive. However, only a small fraction of people ever do this. Instead, they have no particular desire to do anything of major significance and just meander through life watching other people in the world who have managed to do great things. They may sit on the sidelines and criticize these people. They may watch others living lives from a distance. The people who are out there achieving great things are the ones who have the most desire.

You will not have the career you're entitled to claim for yourself if you're only wishing for it. Wishes can't give you what you're seeking. When you have a wish that's backed by a desire, you will start to achieve what you're looking for because you will create opportunities for yourself and your desire will drive you to excel.

In *Alice in Wonderland*, Alice gets trapped in a wonderland, and not knowing how to get out, she moves between here and there. One morning, she reaches a crossroad. She stops at the crossroad, confused over which road to take. She looks around her for advice and sees a white cat sitting on a boulder enjoying the warmth from the rising sun.

'Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?' questioned Alice.

'That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,'

'I don't know where. . .'

'Then it doesn't matter which way you go,' said the [Cat](#).

This parable shows that without a desire and a goal, you will just wander aimlessly through life. When you replace wishes with desire, then the map becomes clear. Rather than wandering aimlessly through life, you will have a destination and the path toward your goal will always be in front of you.

On two separate occasions when I was in college, different people that I was extremely competitive with announced they were planning on going to the same [law school](#). This story is not notable for any one particular reason but it is instructive because of the way I reacted to it and the lesson it taught me about desire.

The smartest guy I knew from my childhood was attending the University of Michigan when I ran into him one evening in a restaurant in Detroit. From the time I was around five years old until I graduated from elementary school, this guy had infuriated me to no end. We would always get the #1 and #2 grades on every test we took in each class we were in together. The problem was that no matter how hard I tried, I would always be #2. If he was a 97, I would be a 96 or a 95. It happened for several years of my life. His name was Josh and his dad was a professor at a local college. He was a really smart kid that consistently did better than me in every course.

I hadn't seen Josh from the time I was 12 years old until I ran into him at that restaurant one evening. At the time, we were both around 21. Josh announced to me that he was planning on applying to and going to the [University of Virginia Law School](#). I have no idea why he'd chosen this law school other than he told me he it was inexpensive compared to other schools. Josh was attending the University of Michigan at the time and I was attending the University of Chicago. I had heard nothing about the University of Virginia Law School but the second he announced that he was planning on applying there, my radar went up and it immediately became something that I too decided I was interested in. I decided that if he was interested in attending this particular school, it must be a really good one. I felt the fire of competitiveness well up in me because I had spent a good portion of my boyhood competing with him. I was a couple of years away from being far enough along in college to apply to law schools, but at that moment I knew I had found a worthy desire and goal. Josh told me how hard the school was to get into and that it had been his dream to attend this school for several years. In that instant, I started thinking that I should probably do whatever I could to attend this school as well.

When I got back to school, my girlfriend introduced me to a friend of hers who was incredibly smart. He had achieved a perfect score on his LSAT and had some of the most incredible grades I'd ever heard of anyone getting at the University of Chicago. My girlfriend and this individual had a strictly platonic relationship. However, I'd been hearing for the past year of dating her how incredibly smart and talented this particular guy was. It was starting to piss me off a little. Since I had the experience of running into Josh a few months previously, I was understandably even more intrigued when this incredibly smart friend of my girlfriend announced that he too planned on going to the University of Virginia Law School. I was at a

dinner with him and several other people, and everyone was sort of hanging on his words. Everyone seemed interested in what he was going to do. This guy was older than me by a few years and when it was time to apply to law schools, he got into the University of Virginia Law School and just about every other law school he applied to. But he chose the University of Virginia. For the next year or so, I had to listen to my girlfriend talk about what a great law school this was. Between that and my competitor back in Michigan, it was all too much. I decided that I was interested in this law school, too, and became determined to do everything I could to get in.

At this particular point in my life, it looked as if the last thing I should be doing was going to law school. I'd been having a great time in the asphalt business during the summers and was enjoying this particular line of work more than anything. In fact, I couldn't wait to get out of school each year so I could do asphalt work. But this particular goal energized me to no end.

When I first learned about this school, I had a B+ average in school. Once I realized I would need almost all A's if I stood a shot in hell of getting in this school, I started arranging my life so I got all A's. I have no idea how I was able to do this to this day. Before taking various classes, I would call up the Dean of Admissions at the University of Virginia Law School and ask them if this was a good class to take. I think he was amused at me calling him, but they remembered me. As a third year college student, I went to meet the Assistant Dean of Admissions when he came to a law school fair in downtown Chicago, and I chatted with him for a long time. I told my teachers that would be writing recommendations for me in the future that I wanted to go to this law school. I took classes from people who had gone to the college there. I did everything within my power to establish an affiliation with the school, even though I was very far away. What I was doing was create an incredible desire to go.

I even visited the school and spent a day attending classes. I did this on my own without an invitation from the school then wrote the school a letter telling them how important this experience had been to me. I dropped names in the letter of the students I met.

During my last year of college, I wrote another 10 page, single-spaced letter to the Assistant Dean of Admissions as to why I should be let into the school. I remember that I had the letter photocopied at Kinko's and when I picked up the letter, there were other students working there who had read it. They were making fun of me and laughed when they gave it to me. However, what I'd done was create an incredible desire to go to this school, and put everything I had behind this desire. I'd even gotten a job in Washington DC my last year of college so that I could live in Virginia to establish residence for a year if I didn't get into the school initially. Having residence in Virginia would have assisted me in getting into the school because there was a preference for in-state students at the time. In summary, I did everything within my power to put myself in a position where I would get into the school, and when the time came to apply, I was accepted despite not having test scores anywhere near what I should have had and some other factors that worked against me.

The point is that once you set goals for yourself you can achieve practically anything. You need to "get angry" and put some passion behind your goals in order to achieve them. In this particular instance, I used all of my competitive urges and directed them towards this school. I'm very glad I did this in this particular instance, because there were a lot of really nice people at the school and attending has enriched my life immeasurably. Without this goal, I wouldn't be where I am today. Without having made this goal an obsession, I am 100% confident I never would have gotten into the school. I gave the school a filing cabinet of information about myself when I applied, and I am sure they saw I was obsessed. We want to be around people who like us.

I want your career and life to change. I want you to get obsessed and focused on a goal. This is the only conceivable way your career is going to go to the highest level possible. Find a goal that charges you up then go all out in achieving this goal. Create desire. Nothing happens without strong desire. If you are meandering in your life, everything will change if you get a strong desire.

Several years ago, I was in Chicago visiting a recruiter from our firm there. My company was small at the time, employing around six or seven people at most. I was a recruiter at the time and enjoyed my job and was committed to it. But the idea of getting people jobs had yet to become an all consuming desire. A woman from the Chicago area had been calling me in Los Angeles asking me to help her with her [job search](#) for weeks. I told her that I would meet with her the next time I came to Chicago. The woman had been an attorney at Motorola for most of her career and had recently experienced a series of incredible tragedies. Her husband had just died of a heart attack while playing tennis. Her son was handicapped and her mother was dying in her house and was hooked up to respirators as she was living out her last days. Worst of all, Motorola had recently done a massive downsizing and eliminated her job. She had no savings and incredible expenses associated with taking care of her handicapped son.

I remember that I met her at the Sears Tower for coffee. She looked very professional, but in her face I could see a tremendous amount of pain. We talked for over an hour and she repeatedly asked me what I could do to help her. At the time, employing normal recruiting methods, there was absolutely nothing I could do to assist her in [getting a job](#). The situation saddened me and made me feel like my life was meaningless and that I was a failure. Here was someone who wanted to work, whom I couldn't help. It was an awful feeling and it made me feel in many respects that the profession of recruiting was not what I should be doing if I couldn't help every single person out there. I thought of my own mother who was also widowed by her second husband. I thought of all the people out there who want to work but cannot, and over the next several weeks my desire to help this woman and others turned into an obsession. I wanted to do things differently. I wanted to ensure that people who wanted to work could. I remember sitting with that woman like it was yesterday and how she cried. I remember how it was so hard not break down in tears and hug her.

While I'm not telling you about this to sell services, over the next year I started companies such as [Legal Authority](#) (to assist attorneys with marketing themselves by direct mailing employers) and [LawCrossing](#) (which gathers every open legal job it can find on the Internet and puts these jobs in one place). Within one year, I had increased the size of the company from seven to over 100 people and it kept growing. I soon launched businesses like [EmploymentCrossing](#) (to gather jobs in every field) and [EmploymentAuthority](#) (to assist executives with mass mailing) because my desire to help people get jobs had become an obsession. I really became obsessed with what I am doing and still am to this day. I have become both loved and hated for my obsession. In business, I frequently do everything I can to push people out of my way who stand between me and this obsession. Simultaneously, I have done everything within my power to ensure I'm getting people jobs.

I want people to know how to get jobs, not just from understanding how to search, but how to control their minds. I write about this daily. I read books faster than I can order them. I do tele-seminars. I work on my own mind, so I can help others. My desire to get people jobs is a massive obsession. It is all I think about. I think about it seven days a week and I work seven days a week.

Has this been good for me? Yes. My life has meaning and I feel like I am accomplishing something of great significance. I want to work all the time to forward your goals and I frequently get up at 3:00 am, then 4:00 am, then 5:00 am turbocharged to go to work because I am so enthusiastic about trying to help you. I need to force myself to go back to sleep, so I can get a decent night's rest. I think about people like the woman who couldn't find a job and what I can do to change that every day. You need to have an all consuming desire for what you're trying to achieve. You need to find a desire that moves you. No matter how smart you are, no matter what's happened to you in your life, you can do great things if you put a massive desire behind your wishes. Wish big and create a desire, and your life and career will never be the same.

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