Why Most Business Owners Miss Their Goals — And How to Fix It

A Simple Framework That Makes Hitting Your Goals Predictable

Introduction

Dear Friend,

This framework will show you how to set goals you can actually reach—and how to build the habits that make progress automatic.

Stay to the end, because I'll give you a simple but powerful application you can use immediately to bring this into your business.

Let's begin.

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The Mistake I Made

A few years ago, I set ten goals for the year.

Meaningful goals. Goals I genuinely cared about.

And do you know how many I reached?

Not a single one.

I felt frustrated and confused. I was working hard, staying busy, doing everything I thought I should do. Yet nothing on that list became reality. I even told myself I would stop setting goals altogether, because what was the point of writing goals I never reached?

But the real problem wasn't discipline.

It wasn't motivation.

It wasn't me.

It was the way I was setting goals in the first place.

Most people set goals the same way I did back then: hopeful, ambitious... and completely disconnected from the daily actions that actually create results. That's why goals feel inspiring in January and discouraging by March.

So I created a simple framework that changed everything for me. A way to make goals predictable. A way to turn intention into weekly movement. A way to finally bridge the gap between what you want and what you actually do.

And here's the good news: you don't need more time, more discipline, or more pressure.

Looking back I measured the wrong things in my businesses for years. I told myself I was being analytical and data driven.

I had dashboards.
I checked revenue, profit, cost per lead, monthly sales.
I thought I was on top of everything.

But all those numbers were only showing me what had already happened. They were a record of yesterday's decisions. By the time something looked

bad, it was already too late to fix it.

I was always reacting.
Always a step behind.
Always busy firefighting.

I realized that I was running my business while looking in the rear-view mirror. And that is a very exhausting way to lead.

Maybe you have felt the same. Working harder, measuring more numbers, yet still not feeling in control.

Here is the turning point. There is a simple distinction that changed how I think about performance, decision making, and growth:

There are numbers that describe the past.

And there are numbers that shape the future.

Lagging indicators and leading indicators.

Once you see the difference, you finally understand what to measure, where to focus, and how to grow with confidence instead of stress.

And everything becomes clearer.

The Lagging Indicator Trap

Let us start with the numbers most people obsess over.

Revenue.
Profit margin.

Customer churn.
Cash position.
Close rate.

These are lagging indicators.

They measure outcomes after they happen.

Think of driving a car. The rear-view mirror tells you where you have already been. It is useful. You need it. But stare there too long and you will end up in a ditch.

Lagging indicators answer questions like:

- Did the business perform?
- Did the strategy work?
- Did customers stay or leave?

They show the truth. But always too late.

This is why many business owners live in a constant cycle of reacting:

Revenue drops. Panic.

Profit disappears. Panic.

Clients cancel. Panic.

By the time the number reveals the problem, the damage is already done.

Rear-view leadership is exhausting.

Lagging indicators are essential.
They are just not enough.

The Indicators That Predict the Future

If lagging indicators show the past, **leading indicators predict the future.**

A leading indicator is a measurable action that strongly correlates with a result you want later.

Leading indicators allow you to adjust before you crash.

They put you in control of the future.

Lagging Indicators = Success Goals

Leading Indicators = Success Activities

The Correct Use of Both

Lagging indicators measure performance.
Leading indicators drive performance.

Use lagging indicators to answer:

- Is the business working?

Use leading indicators to answer:

- Are we doing the activities that create success consistently?

When a lagging indicator is off, the problem always hides in the leading indicator.

- If revenue is down today, outreach was down weeks ago

- If churn is high, client success actions slipped earlier

- If profit collapses, efficiency eroded long before it appeared in the report

Lagging indicators reveal symptoms.
Leading indicators reveal causes.

And this is critical when managing a team.

Not everyone can be held accountable for revenue.

But everyone can be accountable for sales calls made.

Manage results only, and morale dies.
Manage actions and outcomes together, and people perform.

The 80/20 of Leading Indicators

Not all activities are equal.
A small number of actions drive the majority of results.

This is the 80/20 principle:
20 percent of your effort creates 80 percent of your outcomes.

In business, these high-impact actions often require less energy but deliver a stronger payoff.

I call them asymmetric actions:

Low effort.

Low risk.

High return.

Your job is to identify the few actions that create the biggest effect.

Focus on them. Systemize them. Repeat them.

This is how you build leverage into your business — and avoid wasting time on work that does not move the needle.

Practical Examples for Business Owners

A good leading indicator must meet four criteria:

(1) High probability of influencing the desired result

(2) Fully within your team's control

(3) Measurable

(4) Ongoing, not a one-time action

Let us make this simple and concrete.

Sales

• Lagging: Revenue

• Leading: Messages sent, calls booked, proposals delivered

Marketing

• Lagging: Qualified leads

• Leading: Landing page views, email opt-ins, content pieces published, ad spend.

Operations

• Lagging: Project completion rate

• Leading: Tasks completed on time, playbooks followed, response times

Fulfillment

• Lagging: Client retention

• Leading: Onboarding completion, check-ins, time to first win

Team

• Lagging: Performance

• Leading: Weekly reviews, KPIs updated, number of 1:1 conversations held

The difference is not small.
The difference is everything.

Build Your Scorecard in Three Steps

If you want to apply this today, here is the system:

Step 1: Select 5 to 7 lagging indicators

- The numbers that define success for the business.

Step 2: Choose 1 (for complex goals 2-3) leading indicators for each

- The specific weekly activities that drive those results.

Step 3: Review weekly

No scoreboard. No accountability.
No accountability. No improvement.

Do this for twelve weeks and you will not recognize your business.

Success Goals & Success Activities Application

This tool helps you define the right numbers to track every week, so progress becomes predictable and your team knows exactly what creates success.

Step 1: Define Your Success Goals

(Lagging Indicators)

Pick 5 to 7 measurable results that define success for the business. These are the outcomes that show whether the strategy is working.

Write yours here:

Success Goal (Lagging Indicator)	Current Baseline	12-Week Target	Owner
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			

Step 2: Identify the Success Activities

(Leading Indicators)

For each goal, choose 1 (or for complex goals up to 3) weekly activities that are:

✔ Strongly predictive of reaching the goal
✔ Fully in your control
✔ Measurable
✔ Repeated regularly (not one-offs)

Fill in the weekly activities linked to each goal:

Goal #	Success Activities (Leading Indicators)	Weekly Target	Owner
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			

Step 3: Weekly Review

Once per week, update the numbers.

Ask two simple questions:

1.   Are we doing the work that drives success? (If not,   fix activity first)

2.   Are the activities creating results? (If not, adjust and improve the activities)

12-Week Outcomes Reflection

At the end of 12 weeks:

- Which activities proved the strongest?

- What should we continue, improve, or eliminate?

- What new patterns or leverage points emerged?

Write short reflections:

Wins:

-
-
-

Lessons:

-
-
-

Next Adjustments:

-
-
-

One final reminder

When a result is off, the problem always hides in the activity.

You are building a business that grows before the revenue shows it.