SHELF LIFE

GOAL SETTING RECS

What book or resource helped you create a new habit or set new goals, either personally or professionally?

1 THE OFFICIAL BOY SCOUT HANDBOOK by William Hillcourt (Boy Scouts of America; ninth edition, 1978). “My first copy of the Handbook was given to me when I joined the Boy Scouts of America at the age of 12. The handbook not only provided me with direction for my advancement to Eagle Scout over the next six years, it has served as a guide for my whole life. One of the first requirements upon joining the Scouts is to memorize and then explain in your own words the Scout Oath: ‘On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; to help other people at all times; to keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.’ My life’s compass for morals, ethics, and values was set with the priorities of God, Country, Others, and Self. The handbook also provides introductions to practical matters. One example is cooking. The handbook includes guidance for the skills of planning a menu; shopping for food, checking you have the needed utensils, and cleaning and storing it all away afterward. These are skills every child should learn along their path to becoming a self-sufficient adult.”

Edward T. Hart; Assistant Dean for the Law Library and Lecturer of Law; UNT Dallas College of Law Library; Dallas, TX

2 THE GIFT OF FEAR: SURVIVAL SIGNALS THAT PROTECT US FROM VIOLENCE by Gavin de Becker (Dell; May 11, 1999). “Workplace safety is a universal concern. I have worked in many types of libraries during my career, always offering reference where difficult interactions occur regularly. Gavin de Becker’s book empowered me to create two work and life habits: 1) to trust myself and my reactions, and 2) to evaluate every difficult situation with care. In addition to being the ‘bodyguard to the stars,’ de Becker’s career includes very specific work on MOSAIC, a threat assessment tool used by government entities including the U.S. Marshals. In his chapter on ‘Survival Signals,’ de Becker lists methods used by criminals to distract victims from the danger at hand: Forced Teaming, Charm and Niceness, Too Many Details, Typecasting, Loan Sharking, The Unsolicited Promise, and Discounting the Word ‘No.’ Understanding the most common strategies used by criminals helps me avoid reacting based on unconscious bias while at the same time trusting my own instincts in the midst of a difficult interaction.”

Jennifer Laws; E-Resources and Scholarship Librarian; University of New Mexico Law Library; Albuquerque, NM

3 SIX THINKING HATS by Edward de Bono (Penguin UK, May 10, 2016). “Six Thinking Hats provides a framework for systematically working through issues and making decisions. The book stresses an organized approach for thinking, which it describes as ‘the ultimate human resource.’ The six hats are designated by color to help you associate them with the different points of view they are intended to elicit: white hat—neutral and objective, concerned with facts and figures; red hat—the emotional view; black hat—careful and cautious, the ‘devil’s advocate’ hat; yellow hat—sunny and positive; green hat—associated with fertile growth, creativity, and new ideas; blue hat—cool, the color of the sky, above everything else, the organizing hat. Since being introduced to this book and this way of thinking, I try to employ it whenever I have an important decision to make, I find that it really does help you take the blinders off and try to objectively see things from every angle.”

Lisa A. Goodman; Associate Law Librarian for Administration; Lillian Goldman Law Library; Yale Law School; New Haven, CT

4 RESCUE TIME (rescuetime.com). "Time management is an important skill [and challenge] in every industry. For librarians balancing ongoing projects and time-sensitive patron requests, time management is essential. RescueTime is a time management analytics app that ‘shows how you spend your time and provides tools to help you be more productive.’ While the maxim, ‘What gets measured gets managed’ is sometimes taken too far, RescueTime’s detailed reports about how I’m spending my time [based on automatic program and browser tracking] and its customizable tools for restricting distracting websites have helped me make a habit of time management. I procrastinate less, apportion my time more deliberately on a daily and weekly basis, and have generally increased my productivity with the assistance of this helpful app.”

Thomas Druke; Scholarship & Data Librarian; D’Angelo Law Library; University of Chicago; Chicago, IL