



Winnable Game Scoreboard

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Scoreboard = A scoreboard is the dotted line between effective action and desired results. Winning is a habit, not an accident.

How do you keep score?

Many people think of keeping score as something you do when you have an opponent in order to see who has won at the end of the game. That is one kind of score keeping. Another kind could be viewed as more like a speedometer or even a map. It helps let you know how fast you are going and where you are right now. Keeping score is really just a way of making sure you have feedback that allows you to fine tune your game. One of the handy things about defining your scoreboard is that it will compel you to spend some time considering what your game really is. What you are up to, what you are really all about is very much a function of how and when you keep score.

How can you change the way you keep score?

There are many elements to the design of an empowering scoreboard. Like so many things in life, it is a process NOT an event. As your game changes, so will the way you keep score. As you become more effective at this process you will come to realize that simplest and easiest way to change your life or anything in it is to change the way you determine what winning looks like.

Is it satisfying to win your current game?

You may not notice, in fact, few people realize that we are already and always keeping score in some way.

- It may be some unconscious benchmark of where you think you should be at this point in your life.
- It may be by comparing yourself to someone you believe you are better or worse than.
- It may be at least partly, by how much money you have in the bank.

Right now, I am not going to tell you any of these methods are wrong. I do want you to stop and consider how you are keeping score right now without necessarily noticing it and ask yourself “does this way of keeping score empower you?” Does it make you more effective? Are you getting better at your game as a result of the feedback your current system is providing? If you know you are capable of a better game or it is just not that satisfying winning the game you are in – things are not likely to shift that much without a better scoreboard.

How do you know what components to use in your scoreboard?

The components of this design process are contained in many different places on our website. The material is intended to support you in whatever area or stage of design you find yourself in right now. The components are non-linear. In other words, there is nothing you have to learn in a particular order. If you find a particular section helpful. Go there first and use whatever works for you. By the same token, if you find a particular section confusing or unnecessary, simply skip over it. You may want to come back to it later or not at all.

What you are aiming for is an easy to use, actionable feedback system that allows you to recognize and refine effective strategies and behaviors.

Do you have the right scoreboard for your game?

Think of designing the right scoreboard like finding the right ball for the game you are playing. For example, if you were playing golf without a ball at all. You would find it very difficult to improve your game. You could pretend or imagine you were hitting a hole in one from every tee or you could imagine you were always shanking it into the rough. In either case you would have no clue as to how to improve your game.

At the same time, just any ball won't do. Playing golf with a tennis ball, beach ball or football would be equally frustrating or confusing. Getting the right scoreboard is just as important as having the right ball. It is just not as obvious or easy to remember.

How perfect is your scoreboard?

Of course it almost goes without saying but I'll say it anyway: having the most perfect scoreboard is literally and figuratively pointless, unless you use it on a regular basis. Given a choice between a perfect scoreboard you rarely or never use and a merely decent one you are able to add to everyday – ALWAYS take the one you are more likely to use!

Are you focusing on breakthrough or incremental games?

Some successes occur by very small degrees over a long period of time. You need some scoreboard items that are granular enough to identify those incremental gains. On the other hand, some things may not appear to be changing at all and then all of a sudden will show a quantum improvement. Both incremental and breakthrough results are valuable, as long as you don't become attached to one or the other.

How will you celebrate a win?

Winning and rewards go together like milk and cookies. Take the time to do something that makes you feel good; whether it is a massage, an evening out, a shopping spree or a trip. The feedback loop won't be complete until you understand good effort generates great outcomes.

What are your interim wins (short term goals)?

Give yourself a chance to win at something every day. Some of the bigger goals on your scoreboard may take years but winning is an expectation you want to wake up with and a satisfaction you go to bed with every night!

Are you incorporating your scoreboard in your training?

A good scoreboard doesn't just tell you how well you are doing; it can suggest what you could be doing better. Whether it is reading a book, attending classes or finding a role model; without some form of training and development, your success curve will likely flatten out after a while. Try not to ever get complacent with status quo, even when it is very good.

What are you tracking?

Wherever your attention is focused predicts your next likely action. Don't let your awareness drift randomly. Keep your attention on doing what is working not what doesn't. That is what a scoreboard is for.

Who looks at your scoreboard?

A scoreboard can be tremendously useful for bringing a team together. If you and your fellow players are looking at different scoreboards, it is unlikely you will have an effective team. If there are other people who would like to know you are winning, share your scoreboard with them as well.

How frequently do you check your scoreboard?

The interval between your action and the intended outcome is not always easy to predict. If you look too soon, you might assume something didn't work. On the other hand, if you wait too long, you might not see what actually produced the result. Cause and effect are easier to grasp when you understand root cause analysis.

How is your personal scoreboard different from the team scoreboard?

It's obvious there are some things you do as an individual and others as part of a team. Your individual success may forward the intentions of the team and the team efforts should always be in alignment with your objectives yet you may need separate scoreboards to keep accountabilities clear. In some cases, your personal and team scoreboards may be nearly identical except for the fact that your personal scoreboard will include elements concerning your individual well being and fulfillment (i.e. weight, happiness, relationships).

Are you willing to win?

Everyone thinks they are willing to win until it actually starts to happen. When you look closely you may realize that what intimidates some of you about winning is not so much the effort as the outcome. Losing gives you permission to stay where you are. Winning calls you to a higher level. Before you start, be sure you want the next level and everything that comes with it!

How can you avoid zero-sum games?

A zero-sum game, very simply, is one where in order for you to win – someone else has to lose and vice versa. Good scoreboards focus on you improving over your last effort, not beating someone else. The person or team you want to focus on beating is your own results from yesterday, last month or last year.

How do you score your mental game?

Your attitude isn't always an easy thing to quantify. Try to connect it with your actions.

- Are you getting things done on time?
- Are you taking care of yourself?
- What do you know is likely to happen when your attitude is less than optimal?
- What do you know will happen when your attitude is good?

Try to have at least one or two of those things on your personal scoreboard.

Do you need to track errors, turnovers or screw-ups?

Are you improving? The main reason to track then is to learn from them. I am personally a big fan of coactive coaching wherein you only focus on the things you are doing right. In some cases, however, it may be helpful to consider certain types of errors in the context of patterns. If something critical isn't happening or going right over and over again, you definitely want to be able to see when that shifts in either direction.