

9-1986

## CC323 Goals for Business Operations and Family Life : Part I Series Overview

Paul H. Gessaman

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist>

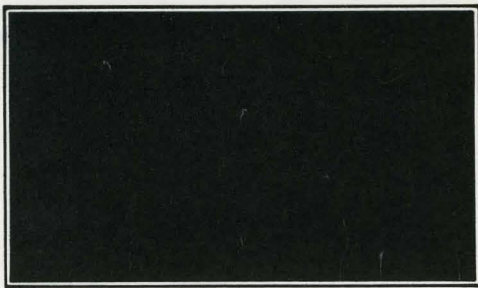
---

Gessaman, Paul H., "CC323 Goals for Business Operations and Family Life : Part I Series Overview" (1986). *Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension*. 3323.  
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist/3323>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Extension at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

AGRI  
S  
5447  
N2C33x

CC 323  
September 1986



UNIVERSITY OF NEBR.  
LIBRARY

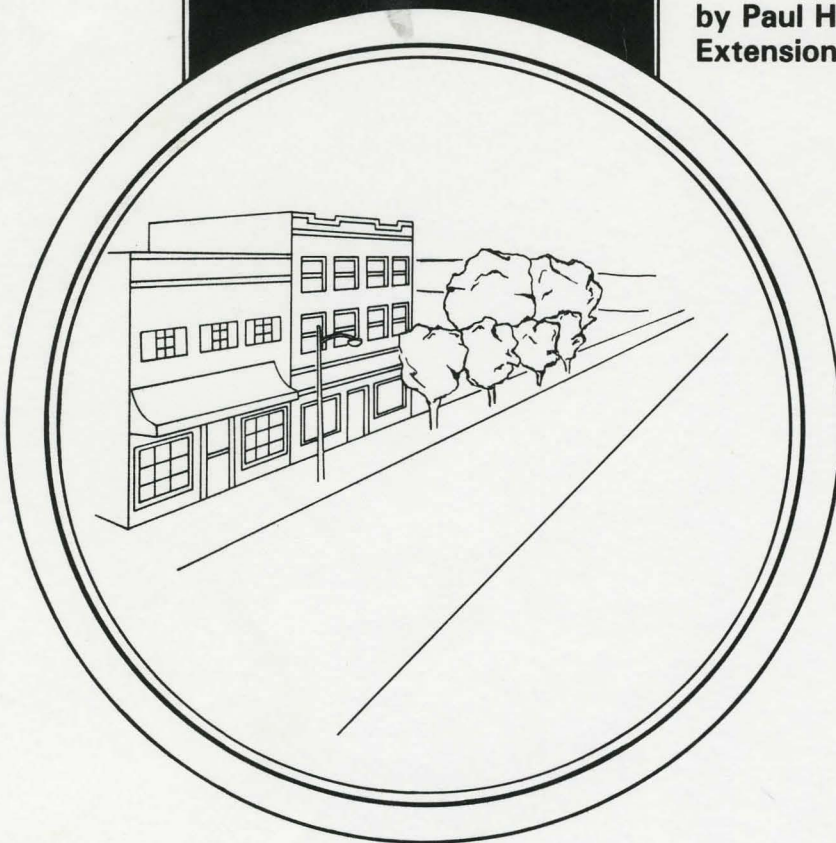
JUN 17 1988

# GOALS FOR BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND FAMILY LIFE



## PART I: SERIES OVERVIEW

by Paul H. Gessaman  
Extension Agricultural Finance Economist



Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Leo E. Lucas, Director of Cooperative Extension Service, University of Nebraska, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.



The Cooperative Extension Service provides information and educational programs to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, sex or handicap.

## GOALS FOR BUSINESS OPERATIONS AND FAMILY LIFE

### PART I: SERIES OVERVIEW

by Paul H. Gessaman  
Extension Agricultural Finance Economist

This is the first of a series of circulars written for use by persons and families who operate small business firms. The series of circulars provides a framework for self-assessment, identification of goals for business operations and family life, priority-setting, and management plan development. This sequence of activities will help you be more effective in managing your business and family life. It is referred to throughout as the "GOALS Process." This series of circulars is called the "Business GOALS Materials."

If you enroll in a program where these circulars are used, you will be asked to complete the GOALS Process in a series of workshop sessions. While local circumstances will determine the exact timing, the GOALS Process will go better if the workshops are held about one week apart. This timing is used because most persons and families need to think, to discuss, and to negotiate the insights gained from one part of the GOALS Process before they start the next part. When workshops occur several days apart, participants' thinking has time to "mature" and the later sessions generally have greater payoff.

This document starts with a discussion of goals and goal-directed management. It is followed by an overview of the GOALS Process, and citations for the circulars included in the Business GOALS Materials.

### THE NATURE AND IMPORTANCE OF GOALS

Individuals and families who operate business firms do so for a variety of reasons. For most people, economic incentives provide important reasons for their work — we all need income to pay for the necessities and the "goodies" of life. But, almost no one operates a business solely for profit, as satisfaction often is found in many aspects of business operations.

For some operators of businesses, social contacts are important. Others may consider the service they provide for others to be the real reason for operating a business. Still others may find family sharing and closeness that grows out of working together is a primary source of satisfaction. Regardless of the exact circumstances, it's important that reasonable balance be maintained between claims placed on the lives of family members by the business unit, and those originating in family life. Identifying and managing to attain mutually supporting business goals and family life goals is one way of achieving reasonable balance in life. The approach used here is intended to do just that. It starts by asking you to think deeply about life and work.

Have you (you and your family) ever pondered questions like these:

- What do I (we) really want in life?
- What am I (are we) really trying to achieve through use of time, effort, money, and management skills?
- What can I (we) do with our time, money, and business operations that will be most productive and worthwhile?
- What should I (we) do in business and family life to effectively use the interests and abilities of all who are involved?
- How can I (we) best build for the future, given our present economic base and the conditions that we now foresee?
- When should I (we) be able to attain the things I (we) want in life?
- What can I (we) do when important things conflict with one another? i.e. How are the inevitable conflicts of life to be resolved?

These questions are not easily answered as they are fundamental questions of life. They are "goal questions" concerned with your present well-being, and your hopes, dreams, and ambitions for the future. It's likely that other persons are involved in the answers to your "goal questions" -- persons whose present situations and hopes for the future are linked to, and affected by, your choice of goals.

As implied by the nature of this discussion, goals are very personal -- they reflect your values and beliefs, the resources you have to work with, and the opportunities and limitations you face. In practice, goals are unique personal statements. They are visions of the future held by each individual, and by persons in each business and family.

In a very real sense, goals are statements of the things that human beings want to attain or achieve in life. As such, goals can provide direction for all your business and family life decisions -- good management IS goal-directed.

Yes, goals are important. It's equally important to recognize that goals, priorities, and management plans are not final and unchanging. The human, physical, and financial resources that one has for business and family life can, and do, change. When economic conditions change; when an associate, co-worker, or employee arrives or leaves; when death claims a spouse or other family member, or a co-worker; or when other changes occur, you'll be working and living under new conditions.

Some of your original goals will continue to be important. Others may become unimportant or infeasible. New interests (and new goals) will emerge, priorities will be changed. The focus of management will change to reflect the new goals and revised priorities. Despite the time and effort required, updating is important. It reconfirms or modifies your goals, strengthens your commitment to priorities, and makes you a more effective manager.

## GOAL-DIRECTED MANAGEMENT

Casual observation and more careful scrutiny of business and family life indicate that there is more to life than making profits. That's not to say that profits are unimportant — everyone knows that profits are vital to present and future well-being. But, nearly every individual, family, owner, and manager wants to achieve more than profits. The "64-dollar question" of life and management is, "What am I (What are we) managing to achieve?"

If things hoped for and dreamed about in life are identified by goals, then common sense tells us, "Manage for goal attainment." It's not a revolutionary idea, nor one that people argue with. But, managing for goal attainment requires that you think in a different way. It requires you to think first about goals, then about business and family life activities needed to attain those goals, and finally about the resources required for business operations and family life activities.

Goal-directed management starts with recognition that each person has goals. Within a business or/and family unit, many goals will be shared. But, there also will be a variety of goals that family members want to achieve. The resulting differences are dealt with through discussion, negotiation, and compromise — social activities required for effective priority setting, and for improved management capability within the family unit.

Management that uses high-priority goals as its source of direction for decisions is called "goal-directed management." Since MANAGEMENT IS A GOAL-DIRECTED ACTIVITY, the quality of thinking used in goal identification is critically important. The issue each person, each family, and each business faces is this:

"Are management goals to emerge from a pattern of decisions occurring over time? Or, are goals to be openly identified, discussed, prioritized, and then used as the bases for management decisions?"

When the goals and priorities come first, the primary basis for goal-directed management is in place and ready to use.

## OVERVIEW OF THE GOALS PROCESS

The GOALS Process used in this series of documents is relatively simple. It starts with self-assessment to stimulate your thinking about the activities in business operations and family life that you enjoy, and to identify those you find less fulfilling. Your thinking about resources and alternatives will be aroused by a series of questions focused on types of employment and locations for living that could be of interest and importance in the future. A framework is provided for identifying goals and initially ranking them according to their importance and/or urgency. Narrative and worksheets in the final parts of the series provide an arena for priority-setting and management plan development.

Throughout the GOALS Process, emphasis is placed on sharing, discussion, and compromise leading to a synthesis of perspectives. In most cases, this series of activities should involve all interested persons in the family and/or business unit. For single persons, discussion with a close friend or

business associate can be very helpful, though careful consideration and thought about the insights generated through work with the GOALS materials can be an adequate substitute.

It's important that persons using these materials be aware of assumptions underlying the GOALS Process. The process assumes these conditions exist:

- People are more motivated, and do better work, when they have work and management responsibilities that they enjoy.
- All adult and mature adolescent family members take part in decisions that affect the family unit.
- Business and family life decisions and actions place competing claims on the physical, financial, and human resources available to those who are in the family unit.
- Goal conflicts and resource limitations can be appropriately dealt with through priority-setting based on discussion, negotiation, and compromise.
- Individuals and family members are more willing to work with goal-directed management if they take part in a formal goal identification and priority-setting process.

This series of circulars assumes that these statements reasonably describe the nature of individuals, families, and businesses using the Business GOALS Materials. If not all of the assumptions apply to you, it's not a cause for alarm. However, you may find some parts of these circulars don't "fit" your situation. If so, use the appropriate parts, and ignore the rest.

The "Business GOALS Materials" were published by the Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service. The series includes these circulars and documents:

- "Goals for Business Operations and Family Life, Part I: Series Overview," CC 323, September 1986.
- "Goals for Business Operations and Family Life, Part IIa: Self-Assessment for the Retailer," CC 324, September 1986.
- "Goals for Business Operations and Family Life, Part IIb: Self-Assessment for the Service Provider," CC 325, September 1986.
- "Goals for Business Operations and Family Life, Part IIc: Self-Assessment for the Manufacturer," CC 326, September 1986.
- "Goals for Business Operations and Family Life, Part IIIa: Identifying Goals for the Retailer," CC 327, September 1986.
- "Goals for Business Operations and Family Life, Part IIIb: Identifying Goals for the Service Provider," CC 328, September 1986.
- "Goals for Business Operations and Family Life, Part IIIc: Identifying Goals for the Manufacturer," CC 329, September 1986.

"Goals for Business Operations and Family Life, Part IV: Priority Setting," CC 330, September 1986.

"Goals for Business Operations and Family Life, Part V: Your Management Plan," CC 331, September 1986.

"The Clam That Steamed People," supporting document for Part II

"Whither Leads the Cowpath?" supporting document for Part III

"Work Is My First Priority," supporting document for Part IV

#### SELECTING YOUR GOALS MATERIALS

As is evident from the circular titles, the Business GOALS Materials contain three versions of Part II and Part III circulars. The subtitle of each version indicates the type of business unit for which it is intended. These versions differ only in terminology, issues examined in the self-assessment, and examples used in the goal identification activities. The GOALS Process used in the three versions is the same.

The intended "flow" of the Goals Process is illustrated on page 6 (Figure 1). The Figure depicts the recommended pathways and combinations of circulars for three major groups of business operators. If, the version you are working with seems inappropriate, examine others and select the version that best addresses your interests and goal-identification needs.

When you have read the background information provided above, and identified the "GOALS pathway" that you intend to follow, you are ready to start with the self-assessment activities presented in Part II.

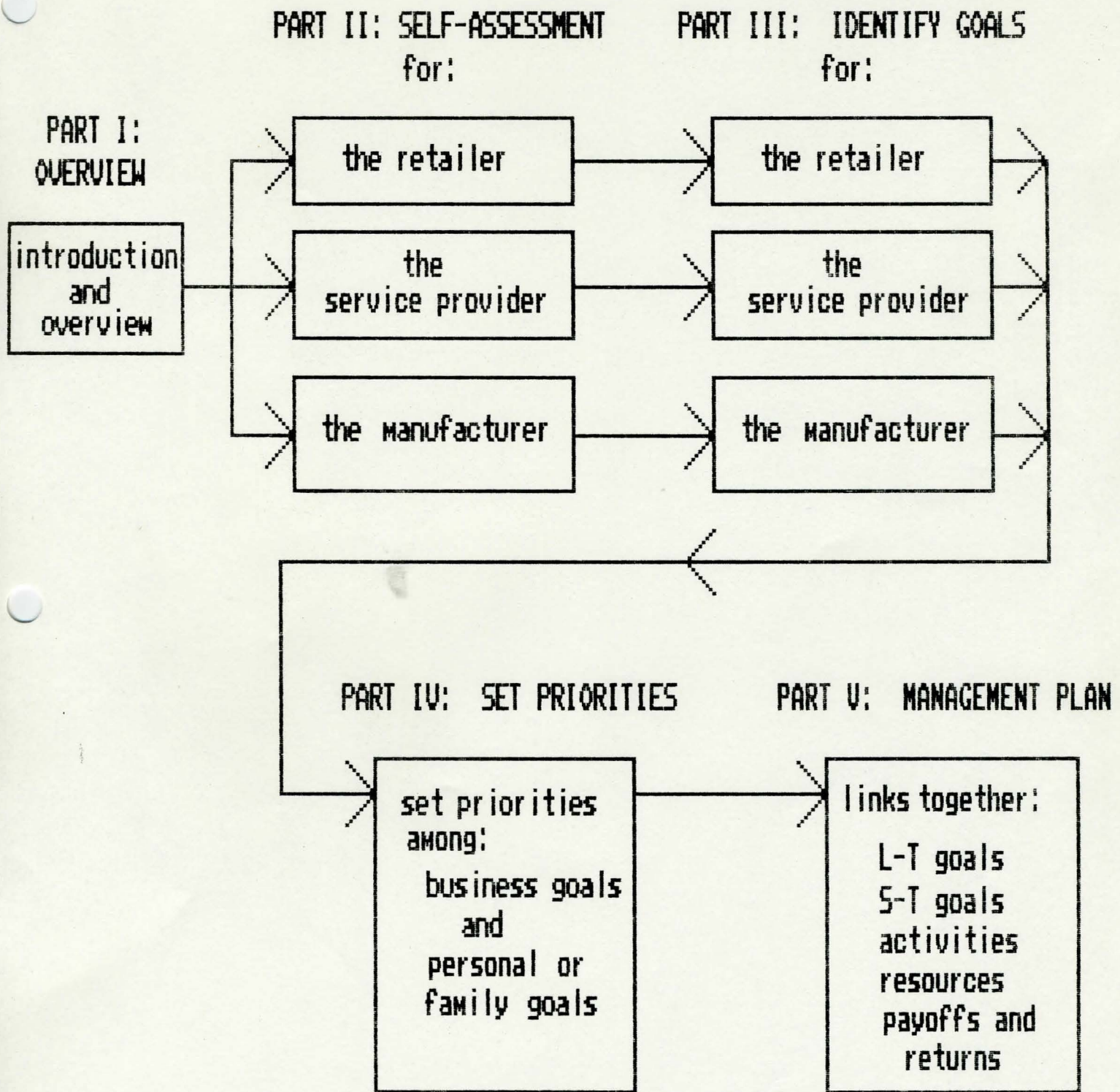


Figure 1. Alternative pathways for completing the Business GOALS Process