

What Method Should You Use To Come Up With A Stretch Goal? Select An Answer: A) 80/20 B) One-third Two-third

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When setting ambitious targets for personal growth, team performance, or organizational success, determining the right method to formulate a stretch goal is crucial. The choice between the 80/20 principle and the One-third Two-third approach can significantly influence motivation, focus, and overall outcomes. This article explores these two methods in detail, helping you decide which strategy best suits your needs for creating effective stretch goals.

Understanding Stretch Goals and Their Importance

Before diving into the specific methods, it's essential to understand what stretch goals are and why they matter.

What Are Stretch Goals?

Stretch goals are ambitious objectives that push individuals or organizations beyond their current capabilities. Unlike regular targets, stretch goals are designed to challenge the status quo, foster innovation, and inspire higher performance.

Why Set Stretch Goals?

- Encourage Innovation: Pushing boundaries often leads to creative solutions.
- Boost Motivation: Challenging goals can energize teams and individuals.
- Achieve Breakthroughs: Stretch goals can result in significant progress that surpasses expectations.
- Identify Capabilities: They reveal what is truly possible under optimal effort.

The Two Popular Methods for Setting Stretch Goals

Choosing the right method depends on the context, the nature of the task, and the organization's or individual's capacity for risk and ambition. The two primary approaches are:

- The 80/20 Principle (Pareto Principle)
- The One-third Two-third Method

Let's explore each in detail.

The 80/20 Principle (Pareto Principle) Method

Overview of the 80/20 Principle

The 80/20 principle posits that roughly 80% of outcomes result from 20% of efforts. Applied to goal setting, this approach suggests focusing on the most impactful efforts to achieve significant results.

How to Use the 80/20 Method for Stretch Goals

1. Identify Core Activities: Determine which 20% of activities will generate 80% of the desired results.
2. Set Ambitious Targets for These Activities: Increase the scope or intensity of these high-impact efforts.
3. Evaluate Feasibility: Ensure that the increased effort remains realistic within resource constraints.
4. Monitor and Adjust: Track progress, and be prepared to recalibrate efforts to stay aligned with the stretch goal.

Advantages of the 80/20 Method

- Focuses efforts on high-leverage activities.
- Helps prevent burnout by avoiding overextension on less impactful tasks.
- Facilitates strategic prioritization.

Limitations

- May overlook less obvious opportunities outside the core 20%.
- Risks over-concentration on familiar activities, possibly limiting innovation.

The One-third Two-third Method

Overview of the One-third Two-third Approach

This approach involves dividing your current performance or resources into three parts:

- One-third as the baseline or current level.
- Two-thirds as the stretch or aspirational level.

The goal is to set a stretch target that is two-thirds higher than your current baseline, encouraging significant growth while remaining attainable.

Implementing the One-third Two-third Method

1. Assess Current Performance: Establish a clear baseline of your current capabilities or results.
2. Calculate the Two-thirds Increment: Determine what a two-thirds increase would look like relative to your baseline.
3. Set the Stretch Goal: Define this increased target as your aspirational goal.
4. Develop Action Plans: Identify steps necessary to reach this elevated level.
5. Review and Adjust: Regularly evaluate progress and adjust efforts as needed.

Advantages of the One-third Two-third Method

- Provides a clear, measurable growth target.
- Balances ambition with realism.
- Encourages sustained effort over time.

Limitations

- Might set goals that are either too conservative or too aggressive if baseline assessment is inaccurate.
- Less flexible in addressing complex or unpredictable environments.

Comparing the Two Methods

Aspect	80/20 Principle	One-third Two-third Method
Focus	High-impact activities	Overall performance increase
Ambition Level	Can be highly ambitious if core activities are optimized	Moderately ambitious, proportional to current baseline
Flexibility	Allows prioritization but may overlook broader opportunities	Clear percentage increase, straightforward to implement
Complexity	Requires analysis of activities and outcomes	Requires accurate baseline measurement
Suitable For	Strategic initiatives, innovation-driven projects	Personal development, team performance, incremental growth

Which Method Should You Use? Making the Choice

Choosing between the 80/20 principle and the One-third Two-third approach depends on several factors:

Consider Your Goals and Context

- Innovation and Breakthroughs: If aiming for disruptive innovation or significant breakthroughs, the 80/20 principle helps focus on high-impact efforts.

- Incremental Growth: For steady, measurable improvement, the One-third Two-third method offers a clear and attainable target.

Assess Your Resources and Capabilities

- If resources are limited, focusing on the most impactful activities (80/20) ensures maximum return.
- If resources are sufficient, setting a proportional growth target (two-thirds) can motivate sustained effort.

Evaluate Your Risk Tolerance

- The 80/20 method may involve higher risks if you push beyond proven activities.
- The One-third Two-third approach tends to be more conservative, reducing the risk of overextension.

Align With Organizational Culture

- Innovative cultures may favor the 80/20 approach to challenge norms.
- More conservative organizations may prefer the clarity and structure of the One-third Two-third method.

Practical Tips for Implementing Your Chosen Method

For the 80/20 Principle

- Regularly analyze activities to ensure focus remains on high-impact tasks.
- Use data and metrics to identify the most influential efforts.
- Be prepared to pivot if the high-leverage activities change over time.

For the One-third Two-third Method

- Ensure accurate baseline measurement for realistic goal setting.
- Break down the stretch goal into smaller, actionable milestones.
- Celebrate interim successes to maintain motivation.

Case Studies and Examples

Case Study 1: Tech Startup Using 80/20

A tech startup identified that 20% of its features contributed to 80% of user engagement. By focusing all development efforts on enhancing these features, the team set a stretch goal to improve

user engagement by 50%. This targeted approach led to rapid growth and product-market fit.

Case Study 2: Personal Fitness Goal with One-third Two-third

An individual currently running 10 miles weekly set a stretch goal to increase their weekly mileage by two-thirds, aiming for approximately 16-17 miles. This clear, proportionate target motivated consistent training, leading to improved endurance over several months.

Conclusion: Tailoring Your Approach to Achieve Success

Both the 80/20 principle and the One-third Two-third method offer valuable frameworks for setting effective stretch goals. The choice hinges on your specific objectives, resources, risk appetite, and organizational culture. The 80/20 approach is ideal when focusing on high-impact activities and driving innovation, while the One-third Two-third method suits scenarios requiring steady, measurable growth.

Ultimately, the key to successful stretch goal setting is understanding your current situation, clearly defining your ambitions, and selecting the method that best aligns with your strategic vision. By doing so, you maximize your chances of achieving extraordinary results and pushing beyond perceived limits.

Remember, the most effective stretch goals challenge you enough to inspire effort but remain within the realm of possibility, fostering growth, motivation, and sustained success.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a common method to determine a stretch goal?

A) 80/20

Which approach helps in setting ambitious yet achievable stretch goals?

A) 80/20

When selecting a method for a stretch goal, what does the 80/20 rule emphasize?

It emphasizes focusing on the 20% of efforts that will yield 80% of the results.

Between the options 80/20 and One-third Two-third, which is more widely used for setting stretch goals?

A) 80/20

How does the 80/20 method assist in goal-setting?

It helps identify the most impactful tasks to push towards a stretch goal.

Is the One-third Two-third method a common strategy for establishing stretch goals?

No, the 80/20 rule is more commonly used.

What principle is behind the 80/20 method in achieving stretch goals?

Prioritizing the key efforts that produce the majority of results.

Why is the 80/20 rule suitable for coming up with stretch goals?

Because it encourages focusing on high-impact activities that significantly advance progress.

Additional Resources

Stretch Goal is a term frequently encountered in project management, personal development, and organizational strategy. It refers to an ambitious target set beyond the initial objectives, designed to push boundaries and stimulate innovation. When choosing how to establish such goals, the method you employ can significantly influence the motivation levels, resource allocation, and overall success of your endeavors. Among the common approaches are the 80/20 principle and the one-third/two-thirds method. In this article, we will explore which method is most suitable for coming up with a stretch goal, analyzing their principles, benefits, drawbacks, and practical applications.

Understanding the Methods for Setting a Stretch Goal

Before diving into the specifics of each approach, it's essential to understand the rationale behind setting stretch goals in general. These goals are designed to challenge teams or individuals, foster innovation, and drive significant performance improvements. However, the method used to determine the level of ambition—be it the 80/20 principle or the one-third/two-thirds approach—can determine whether the stretch goal becomes an inspiring challenge or an unattainable obstacle.

The two methods under consideration are:

- A) 80/20 Principle
- B) One-third/Two-thirds Approach

Each has a distinct philosophy and application process, which we will examine in detail.

Analyzing the 80/20 Principle in Setting Stretch Goals

Overview of the 80/20 Principle

The 80/20 principle, also known as Pareto's Law, states that roughly 80% of effects come from 20% of causes. In goal setting, this principle suggests focusing on the critical few tasks or areas that generate the most significant results. When applied to stretch goals, the 80/20 approach emphasizes maximizing impact by identifying and pushing the most influential factors.

How it applies to stretch goals:

- Focus on the most impactful activities
- Set ambitious targets based on high-leverage areas
- Push for substantial improvements in key performance indicators (KPIs)

Pros of Using the 80/20 Principle

- Efficiency: Concentrates efforts on activities that deliver the most value, making the pursuit of a stretch goal more targeted.
- Realism: Helps set challenging but attainable goals by focusing on the areas with the highest potential.
- Motivation: Achieving significant impact in crucial areas can boost morale and confidence.

Cons of Using the 80/20 Principle

- Over-simplification: May neglect smaller but important factors that contribute to overall success.
- Potential complacency: Focusing only on high-impact areas might lead to overlooking opportunities for broader growth.
- Limited scope: The principle may constrain ambitious stretch goals to areas where significant gains are already known, potentially limiting innovation.

Practical Application

When applying the 80/20 principle to set a stretch goal:

- Identify the 20% of activities or factors that produce 80% of current results.
- Analyze whether these areas can be pushed further to generate even greater impact.
- Set ambitious targets that challenge these high-impact areas without neglecting other essential factors.
- Regularly review and adjust based on progress and emerging insights.

The One-Third and Two-Thirds Method for Establishing Stretch Goals

Understanding the Approach

The one-third/two-thirds method involves setting a goal that is either one-third or two-thirds of a particular baseline or previous achievement. This approach is often used in incremental planning, resource allocation, or scaling strategies. When applied to stretch goals, the method encourages a balanced view—either aiming for a modest increase (one-third) or a substantial leap (two-thirds).

Key features:

- One-third approach: Setting a goal that is approximately 33% above the current baseline.
- Two-thirds approach: Setting a goal that is roughly 66% above the current baseline.

The choice depends on the desired level of challenge and risk tolerance.

Pros of the One-Third/Two-Thirds Method

- Clarity and simplicity: Easy to calculate and communicate.
- Progressive challenge: Allows for incremental or bold targets depending on the chosen fraction.
- Flexibility: Can be adapted based on the context or specific circumstances.

Cons of the One-Third/Two-Thirds Method

- Potential under- or over-ambition: The fixed fractions might not suit all situations, leading either to goals that are too easy or too daunting.
- Lack of strategic focus: The method emphasizes proportional increase without necessarily considering impact or strategic importance.
- Risk of complacency: A one-third increase might be seen as too modest, reducing motivation, while

a two-thirds leap could be perceived as unrealistic.

Practical Application

- Determine the current baseline for a relevant metric or capability.
- Decide whether a one-third or two-thirds increase aligns with strategic priorities and risk appetite.
- Set the stretch goal accordingly:
 - For conservative scaling, aim for a one-third increase.
 - For aggressive growth, aim for a two-thirds increase.
- Monitor progress and adjust if initial assumptions prove overly optimistic or conservative.

Which Method Is More Effective for Coming Up With a Stretch Goal? A Comparative Analysis

Choosing between the 80/20 principle and the one-third/two-thirds method depends largely on context, organizational culture, and the nature of the goal.

Comparison table:

Criteria	80/20 Principle	One-Third/Two-Thirds Approach
Focus	Impact-driven, prioritizes high-leverage areas	Proportional growth based on baseline
Complexity	Moderate to high, requires analysis	Simple calculation, easy to implement
Flexibility	High, adaptable to various contexts	Moderate, fixed fractions may limit nuance
Suitability for Stretch Goals	Best when specific high-impact areas are known	Suitable for incremental or bold scaling
Risk and Challenge Level	Can be tailored to challenge impact areas	Easy to set, but may need adjustments

Which method is best?

- For organizations or individuals aiming to maximize impact and focus efforts where they matter most, the 80/20 principle tends to be more effective. It encourages strategic prioritization, ensuring that the stretch goal pushes the most influential aspects of performance.
- For those seeking simplicity and clarity, especially in resource-constrained environments or when quick decisions are needed, the one-third/two-thirds approach offers a straightforward way to set ambitious or moderate goals.

Hybrid Approach:

Some experts recommend combining these methods—using the 80/20 principle to identify key areas and then applying the one-third or two-thirds increase to set specific targets within those areas. This hybrid strategy leverages the strengths of both approaches.

Practical Recommendations for Setting Effective Stretch Goals

1. Assess Baseline Metrics Carefully:

Understand your current performance levels thoroughly before choosing a method.

2. Align with Strategic Objectives:

Ensure the stretch goal supports broader organizational or personal ambitions.

3. Balance Ambition and Realism:

Use the 80/20 principle to target high-impact areas but set achievable increments—either one-third or two-thirds—to maintain motivation.

4. Consider Risk Tolerance:

If your environment is highly uncertain, a more conservative goal (one-third) may be appropriate. For highly confident teams, a two-thirds leap can motivate greater effort.

5. Iterate and Adjust:

Regularly review progress and be willing to recalibrate goals to stay challenging yet attainable.

6. Communicate Clearly:

Transparency about how the goal was set encourages buy-in and facilitates collective effort.

Conclusion: Which Method Should You Use To Come Up With A Stretch Goal?

Deciding between the 80/20 principle and the one-third/two-thirds approach hinges on your specific context, strategic priorities, and risk appetite.

- If your goal is to push the most impactful areas and you have the analytical capacity to identify them, the 80/20 principle provides a strategic, impact-oriented framework. It allows you to set ambitious yet focused stretch goals that can lead to significant improvements.

- Conversely, if you prefer simplicity, quick implementation, and straightforward scaling, the one-third/two-thirds method offers a clear, easy-to-understand way to define your stretch targets, whether modest or aggressive.

In practice, a hybrid approach often yields the best results—identifying key leverage points through the 80/20 analysis and then applying proportional increases to set concrete goals. Ultimately, the most effective method is one that aligns with your organizational culture, resource availability, and long-term vision.

In summary, for strategic, impactful stretch goals, the 80/20 principle generally offers a more nuanced and powerful approach. However, for clarity and ease of use, the one-third/two-thirds method remains valuable, especially in environments requiring rapid decision-making. Consider your unique circumstances, and don't hesitate to combine these methods for optimal results.

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