

Goal Setting



Goals are not New Years resolutions! Read on to find out how to write goals that you can actually live up to and complete.

Having goals is something that allows a leader to look back up and reorient their work on pre-established guidelines as opposed to “in the moment” feelings. Goal setting is a process that takes time and reflection. As you write your goals, think about why they are important to you and what will provide sustained motivation to achieve the goals. The more you are able to define why the goal is important, the more you will develop a sense of purpose and direction from these goals. Sharing these goals with a partner can prove to be beneficial if you need to be held accountable for achieving your goals.

S.M.A.R.T. Goals:

Specific
Measurable
Attainable
Realistic
Timely

Specific goals are easier to accomplish than general goals. “Saving money” is not as specific as “Save \$50 per week for 5 weeks into my savings account for a rainy day fund.” Specific goals answer the following questions:

- *Who: Who is involved?
- *What: What do I want to accomplish?
- *Where: Identify a location.
- *When: Establish a time frame.

*Which: Identify requirements and constraints.

*Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal.

Measurable goals help you know whether or not you are actually going to achieve your way and help to evaluate your process along the way. By having measurable goals, you are able to stay motivated and reach smaller target goals along the way. To determine if your goal is measurable, ask questions such as: How much? How many? How will I know when it is accomplished?

Attainable goals are not too lofty or easily reachable. You are the best judge of how high a goal should be set. As you come to reach your goals, they will seem like less of a challenge. That does not mean your goals are too high. Instead, you have developed greater capacities to reach your goals such as confidence, attitude, and abilities. If you are usually a 3.2 average GPA student, aiming for a cumulative 3.85 in one semester is not attainable. However, you may be able to raise your cumulative to a 3.4 in one semester.

Realistic goals are ones that you are actually able to achieve, want to achieve, and are willing to achieve. Low set goals require little effort and motivation. Your goal is realistic if you truly believe that you can get it done. You will also want to consider what conditions and structures need to exist for you to reach this goal.

Timely goals are centered around creating a time frame for you to achieve your goals. If someday you want to learn guitar, you may never get around to doing it. However, you could have a goal to learn 10 guitar chords over Christmas break. A timeframe allows you to set progress points and stay on track.