

Seven Steps to Goal Setting

There is a very simple process in seven steps that you can go through to set any goal whether personal or professional. To be effective, the goal you choose must include all seven of the following steps:

- **Identify your goal by writing it down**
- **Set a deadline for the achievement. Put a date on it.**
- **List the obstacles to overcome in accomplishing your goal.**
- **Identify the people and groups you need to work with to reach your goal.**
- **List the skills and knowledge required to reach your goal. What do you need to know?**
- **Develop a plan of action to reach your goal.**
- **Write down the benefits of achieving your goal. ("What is in it for me?")**

On a periodic basis, it is important to re-evaluate your goals to make certain that they are in alignment with what you truly value and want out of life. Remember, goal-setting is a life-long process. Once you have completed one goal, be sure to replace it with something else. This way you will always reap the benefits that goal-setting provides.

Self Motivation and Goal Setting

Without self motivation you will not achieve your goals. As the saying goes, "if it's to be it's down to me". Motivational speaker David McNally sets out a number of 'rules' for motivation.

First, **our motivation can only come from inside ourselves.** Why? Because motivation is an internal force that drives individuals to act in order to achieve a specific goal. Two people might read the same book, or listen to the same inspirational speaker but respond differently. One person might feel motivated to act, the other might not.

Second, you must have a **big enough 'reason why'** in order to feel motivated. Your reason why must provide a 'meaningful motive'. It can be useful to look for a reason that's bigger than yourself. For example, you may want to earn enough money to take care of your family - not just yourself. So David McNally's advice is to dig deep into the truth of what you want. This is why it's so important to choose goals to which you feel 100% committed.

Third, you **need to believe that your goal is attainable.** Either that or your fear must be so great that you will try anyway. Without this fear or belief self motivation is difficult to maintain. Given that you probably don't want to live with feelings of dread, let's take a look at belief. You can start by looking for evidence within yourself that you can achieve your goal. You can then back this up by seeking support, mentors and role-models, either directly or indirectly through books and audios.

Fourth, your **environment is an influence** on motivation. That's a key reason why you need to choose your friends and colleagues carefully. This doesn't have to mean saying goodbye to the people you know now. But consider whether it would be **helpful to make new contacts.** Again, books and audios can be very supportive when you are looking to new ways of thinking.

Finally, there is a difference between motivation and inspiration. Inspiration is getting in touch with our human spirit, whereas motivation is the driving force to move towards our goal. Inspiration can certainly help self motivation - and we can look outside ourselves for help with inspiration. So speakers like David McNally might help us feel inspired. It is then up to us whether to decide to be motivated to take action to achieve our goals.

Developed by the

Office of Student Retention

Wallace State Community College—Hanceville



Tips for Setting Goals



Personal Goal Setting

Why do you need to set goals? Goals are powerful because they give our energy a specific focus. Goals enable us to sort out what's important in our lives and what isn't. Goals are not cast in stone; they are changing and should be revisited—and revised—often. Remember, you will not pay a price for setting goals, you will pay a price for not setting them. We can choose to get caught up in the everyday activity of our lives without feeling any real sense of purpose or we can choose to accomplish something meaningful with our lives that give us a sense of direction and self-motivation.

Let us take a look at a few of the other benefits of personal goal-setting:

Know, be, do and have more

Use your mind and talents fully

Have more purpose and direction in life

Make better decisions

Be more organized and effective

Do more for yourself and others

Have greater confidence and self-worth

Feel more fulfilled

Be more enthusiastic and motivated

Accomplish uncommon projects

References: <http://www.onlinewbc.gov>,
<http://www.smccme.edu>, <http://www.make-your-goals-happen.com>

Goals must be:

Long term - to provide you with a vision of what you want to do in your lifetime.

Short term - to provide you with gratification, to keep you going on a day-to-day basis.

Realistic, achievable and challenging - to balance the need to provide yourself with challenges as well as the need for success.

Flexible - so you can revise goals as your life changes, as priorities change and as new opportunities arise.

Precise and measurable - so you know *exactly* what you need to do, with deadlines.

Your goals - no one else's. They must reflect *your* learning style and the way *you* to operate.

In writing - to make them real. Goals aren't real goals until they're written down - don't be afraid to put your dreams in writing.

There are two kinds of goals: **outcome** goals and **performance** goals which involve actual tasks.

Outcome goal for my computer course: I'm going to get a 3.75 in my computer course this semester.

Performance goal: I'm going to utilize all available lab time, ask my instructor about specific concepts I don't understand and review regularly, not just before quizzes or exams.

Outcome goal for English: I'm going to get at least a B+ on my next paper.

Performance goal: I'm going to improve my English grades by improving my essay writing techniques. I'm going to learn to organize my information clearly before I start writing. I'm going to proofread my work, finding common mistakes.

Outcome goal for Math: I'm going to earn an A in my math course.

Performance goal: I'm going to improve my grade by studying and working on math problems at least an hour and a half every day. I'm going to do all chapter problems, not just the assigned ones. I'll work with tutors in the Tutoring Center whenever needed.

If you achieve the tasks in your **performance goals**, you will achieve your **outcome goals**.

Identifying Important Goals

One question a lot of people ask is how to know if a goal is good or bad. In other words, how do you discriminate between the really important goals and the "nice to have" but not really important ones?

You will know whether or not a goal you have chosen is important by answering these five questions.

- **Is it really MY goal?**
- **Is it morally right and fair?**
- **Are my short-range goals consistent with my long-term goals?**
- **Can I commit myself emotionally to completing the project?**
- **Can I visualize myself reaching this goal?**

If you have answered "No" to even one of these questions, you may want to reconsider this goal. In the short-term it may appear to work for you, but in the long run, you may be exposing yourself to a lot of unnecessary conflict and frustration.

Be sure to set big goals as well as multiple goals. Big goals force you to reach in and use the potential that is inside of you. Long-range goals help you to overcome short-range failures. They can also help you to change your direction without going back on your decision.

Whether or not they ever reach the goals they have set, people who set big, long-range goals have been found to have higher self-confidence, higher self-esteem, and greater personal motivation. The bottom line is that more than half the rewards and benefits achieved from goal-setting come from actually taking your first step in that direction, regardless of the consequences.