

Goal Setting

"When [students] are involved in ... setting goals for future learning, students develop insight into themselves as learners. In addition, both the achievement and their commitment to learning increase." (Stiggins & Chappuis, 2004)

What is a goal? A goal is something you want to reach or achieve. Goals are different from dreams. You may dream of world peace; however, this is not a realistic goal you can personally attain. In order to reach/achieve a goal, there must be steps or actions taken. If you want to accomplish something (your goal), then you must develop a plan and be willing to take the steps to make it happen. It is this willingness to take action that will help you achieve your goal(s).

Guidelines for Setting Effective Goals

Goals must be:

- Specific and your own—not another's
- Realistic—able to be reached by you
- Expressed in your own words—write it down
- Action-oriented, i.e. what action steps do you need to take?
- Time-oriented, i.e. how much time for each step, with an ultimate deadline?

If the goal is a long-range goal, be sure to break it into a series of short-range goals. Establish a plan to reward yourself as you achieve each short-range goal. This provides motivation to keep moving towards attaining the long-range goal by your deadline.

Six Steps to Success

1. What is your goal—be specific? Write it down.
2. When do you want to complete your goal--day, month, year, etc.? Write it down.
3. Create a plan to meet your goal—your action steps. Write the steps down.
4. Imagine yourself reaching your goal – mental pictures can be rewarding!
5. Work towards your goal... don't give up.
6. Goal achieved– take time to reflect, evaluate. Write down your thoughts!

Short-range Goal Example: Earn an "A" on a Chemistry exam. Exam is in two weeks.

Action steps: 1. Attend class; 2. Read text; 3. Take solid notes; 4. Review notes each day; 5. Ask questions for clarification; 6. Become familiar with effective study and test-taking strategies; 7. Form a study group; 8. Request a tutor if material is challenging.

Long -Range Goal Example:

Long-range goal: Become a professional speech-language pathologist. Time frame: 6 years

- Short-range goal: Graduate/transfer from SCC ~ Time frame: 2 years
Reward: summer weekend trip to the beach
- Short-range goal: Graduate with a BS from WCU ~ Time frame: 2 years
Reward: summer week-long trip to the beach
- Short-range goal: Graduate with a MS from WCU ~ Time frame: 2 years
Reward: summer week-long trip to the beach

Begin a rewarding career ~ Save for a 2-week trip to the Caribbean

1. What is your **goal**? Be specific.

2. Is this goal **realistic** – can **you** reach this goal? List personal skills or strategies you might need.

3. **When** do you want to reach this goal? Time frame: deadline _____

4. Create a plan to reach this goal—**action steps**. Write down steps and apply a time frame for each step.

Action Step	Time and/or Deadline
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	

5. What do you need to achieve this goal? Does it depend on anyone or anything else? Write down what is needed and if available: other individuals, resources, information, etc.

6. Is there an obstacle(s) that might create a challenge in achieving this goal? If so, what is the obstacle(s) and what will you do to overcome the challenge?

7. Goal achieved: take time to reflect; evaluate the process and outcome (use additional paper as needed)
